THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHER CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR MALAYSIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, the public schools are government schools under the centralized national education system. The private schools selected in this study are Malaysian Chinese Independent Secondary Schools (MICSS). They are self-funded and supported by a Board of Directors from the Chinese community. These schools are under the umbrella of Dong Zong. This is a case study that explores teacher, school administrator and educator perceptions of teacher professional development. There are, therefore, differences in perceptions on a pressing need for quality teachers who can enable quality learning both in the public and private sectors through teacher professional development that draws from the positives of existing models and practices. This case study aims at developing a "framework" for Teacher Professional Development of secondary school teachers in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to examine how teacher professional development, carried out by selected public and private secondary schools in Malaysia and in some selected countries in the international arena, under the Ministry of Education. As a qualitative study, data was obtained through interviews and analysis of documents across the hierarchy of the public and private institutions. In addition, data obtained through interviews with officers of different sectors of the Ministry of Education and officers from Dong Zong were analyzed and theorized holistically in an integrated coverage of five different periods ranging from 1970 till 2019. Subsequently, significant development in the local scenario and emerging global trends that impact on teacher professional development were also studied and incorporated into the synthesis. The comparative analysis of data as a result of the study, in the context of the proposed teacher continuous professional development framework, consisting of three dimensions of teaching - professional accountability, professional knowledge and professional competence, grounded in ten principles as the guidelines for a growing stage of novice teachers to competent teachers, reflected a consensus among the selected stakeholders, educationists and experts in the field of teacher education that the Teacher Continuous Professional development (TCPD) Framework can be implemented in consultation with appropriate government authorities can be used as inputs elements into conceptualizing a practical TCPD Framework.

APPROVAL

I certify that I have supervised / read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, as a thesis for the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfillment of the PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the program and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BPG (TED)	Bahagian Pendidikan Guru (Teacher Education Division)
BPK (CDD)	Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum (Curriculum Development Division)
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DONG ZONG (DZ)	United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia
EPRD	Education Planning Research and Development
IAB	Institut Aminnuddin Baki (Institution of Aminnuddin Baki)
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
JPA (PSD)	Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (Public Service Department)
IPGM (ITEM)	Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia (Institution of Teacher Education Malaysian)
IPTA	Institut Pendidikan Tinggi Awam (Public Higher Education Institute)
IPTS	Institut Pendidikan Tinggi Swasta (Private Higher Education Institute)
JPN (SED)	Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri (State Education Department)
KBSR	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah rendah (Primary Integrated Curriculum)
KBSM	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (Secondary Integrated Curriculum)
MTS (SGM)	Malaysia Teacher Standards (Standard Guru Malaysia)

MEB	Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025)
MICSS	Malaysian Independent Chinese Secondary Schools
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education, Malaysia
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
NEP	National Education Philosophy (1996)
NPE	National Philosophy of Education
NPE	National Policy Economy
PPD (DEO)	Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah (District Education Office)
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PPGB	Program Pembangunan Guru Baru (Program for New Teacher Development)
PIPPK	Pelan Induk Pembangunan Profesionalisme Keguruan (Master Plan for Teacher Professional Pathways
PTE	Philosophy of Teacher Education
PTM	Program Transformasi Minda (Program Intellectual Transformation)
PD	Professional Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (National Secondary Schools) (Public Schools)
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TCPD	Teacher Continuous Professional Development
TPCK	Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge
TPACK	Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Teaching, by tradition, is touted as a "noble" profession which was previously known as "noble" vocation. Teaching, as a vocation, is among one of the world's oldest professions. It provides a popular avenue for many who aspire to "teach" – to interact with, shape the character and behavior of, and impart knowledge and "current affairs" to different age-schooling students, usually within the confines of the physical structure and organizational administrations of the school systems wherever they are located. More significantly, is the fact that those who are interested in being and aspire to be teachers often dedicate their working lives to pursue a life-long employment-career with public or/and private education organizations owned and operated by the state and federal governments or local community-based associations respectively. And this has always reflected the dualistic education system in which teachers have successfully delivered their services in the public interest, particularly in subsequently become captains of industries, community leaders, government servants and nation leaders, including successive generations of teachers.

Fundamentally, teachers are dedicated to nurturing and developing students at all levels of schooling to become productive and responsible citizens in their

respective communities, societies, country-nation as a whole. In his/her delivery of their vocation (now known as profession) and consistent responsibility have always been the foundation values of the teacher. He or she is usually held in high esteem. Respect and commendation may have wavered over the years since the early days in the twentieth century where societal or national change has been slow and gradual rather than at a fast-track pace like the twenty-first century transformational changes.

Also, whether a teacher is "born" or "made" the individual and the teaching vocation are synonymous with innate capabilities or acquired skills respectively that gradually shape and mature the personality or competency of the teacher respectively to effectively and efficiently deliver his/her assigned responsibility and duties. This has resulted in the respect and "noble" identity of the teacher – in today's context, this reverence is akin to "corporate image" or "branded image" of the teaching profession. The fact remains that a "born" (natural) teacher or a "made" (trained) teacher is the hallmark of a life-long, dynamic and evolving tri-learning processes of learning, unlearning and relearning that eventually mould, crystalize, and "brand" the teacher and the teaching profession into an invaluable lynch-pin in the education-schooling chain of teachers-students chain of relationships with various communities, organizations, associations and governments to produce wealth-creation and value-adding economic activities and other support-driven productivity. This is evident in any country's periodic economic development plans which acknowledge the contributions of the teaching profession, including the need to continually provide teacher professional development and progressively improve the professionalism of the teaching profession and teacher welfare.

Thus, teaching professional development has been a pressing issue which demands global consensus and understanding that it shapes teacher professionalism, and is a crucial factor for quality education. Teacher quality very much depends on teacher professional development. Therefore, it is often said that the quality of students' learning does not go beyond the quality of the teachers' professional knowledge and competence. On World Teacher's Day (2015) Educational International quotes that,

> "Quality teachers are increasingly recognized as the most important factor in children's learning – and thus, in improving educational attainment levels, increasing the ability of young people to participate in society and today's knowledge economies, boosting productivity and prosperity".
>
> (Educational International, 2015)

1.1 Background of the Study

Hargreaves (1994) is of the view that "teachers don't merely deliver the curriculum. They develop, define it and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shape that kind of learning that young people get". Hence, teachers have to provide the scope and opportunity for students to generate quality learning which empowers and enables them to continuously improve. This process involves a shift from declarative knowledge to functional knowledge, from "knowing that" to "knowing how". The changing role of the teacher has moved from adopting new knowledge from others to adapting from others knowledge to suit our context and

now the focus is on providing opportunities for creating new knowledge, developing new skills and disposition for the 21st century learners. In other words, the role of the teacher has transformed from mindless learning to focus on Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and now to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). In relation to this, Stenhouse (1985, p.3) expressed his view on the role of teacher as follows:

> The responsibility of teachers, at all levels, is to free students from the insularity of their own minds, prevent them from lodging in the comfortable branches of the teacher's thought and try instead to foster a less cautious exploration of knowledge; one that confers on those who seek it, in a spirit of critical enquiry, the power of its use.

In a nutshell, it can be perceived that teacher's role and responsibilities have evolved from an implementer of educational policies and curriculum specifications to one that requires the teacher to have positive values, be knowledgeable, competent and be the forefront of knowledge. To ensure this, the teacher must be committed to lifelong learning and also be able to facilitate his/her students to generate, acquire, and manage knowledge. Consequently, teachers are also required to be continuously engaged with thinking not only to enhance their own personal and professional potential, but also to enhance the knowledge creation capacity of their students. It is obvious that classrooms are no longer just sites for curriculum implementation but should be viewed as laboratories for pedagogical experimentation involving a discourse between teachers, learners and knowledge based on pedagogical reasoning and action. "To act pedagogically" means to "empower learners", by engaging and enabling them in the process of learning. Hence, there is a pressing need to re-

conceptualize the notion of teacher professionalism and the relationship between theory and practice in teacher professional development in education in relation to developing minds and knowledge workers.

Shulman (1987) emphasized that the pedagogical knowledge of teachers relates to the ability of teachers to commute from being able to comprehend subject matter for themselves to becoming able to elucidate subject matter in new ways, reorganize it and partition it, clothe it in activity and emotion, in metaphors and exercises, and in examples and demonstration so that it can be grasped by the students (p.12–13). Shulman (1987) also contends that:

> Teachers need to have the ability to present ideas in order to provoke the constructive processes of their students and not to incur student dependence on teachers or to stimulate the flatteries of imitation…… the key to distinguishing the knowledge base on teaching lies at the intersections of content and pedagogy, in the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge she or he possesses into the form that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to variation in ability and background presented by the student (p.14–15 & 20).

It is apparent that teachers have an important role in helping to nurture and develop the kind of human capital that is required for the knowledge era. It is imperative that a beginning teacher has to be a growing teacher who strives for continuous improvement of his/her professional knowledge, skills and disposition. The teacher also needs to keep abreast with current development in order to facilitate meaningful learning for his/her students. This is related to teacher professional

development and teacher professionalism. It involves the development of the teacher from a novice to a competent teacher and finally to an expert in his/her profession. Therefore, at the end of the study, this development can be viewed in the context of ten principles of teacher continuous professional development (TCPD) which aligns with professional learning on work, which is highlighted in the context of teacher professional knowledge, teacher professional competence and teacher professional accountability (Eraut, 1994). The framework will emerge from the findings of the study.

1.2 Problem Statement

Teacher professional development (TPD) has many definitions, it is referred to as in-service training, on-job training, staff development and so forth, but it is undeniable that TPD impacts on teacher quality, teacher performance and teacher professionalism. Caena (2011) contends that teacher continuous professional development has become imperative and crucial to any teacher and it is an essential element which influences the quality of education and students' achievement. The Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013–2025) also focuses on the teaching profession in terms of enhancing teacher quality and increasing the status of teaching as a profession of choice.

More often than not, complaints about teacher knowledge, skills and accountability from various interested parties are obvious. This issue arises due to the limited scope and opportunities for teacher professional development in both public

and private institutions. The need to have a systematic and integrated framework for teacher professional development and professionalism is crucial. There is a need to enable teachers to move from depending on technical rationality to reflection so that they can become thinking teachers who nurture and develop thinking students. The concern about education for either teachers or students has generated tremendous debate pertaining to quality education in Malaysia. It is essential to explore and understand the measures that are being taken, by both the public and private sectors, to improve the quality of teachers. In the Malaysian context, the requirement to be a professional teacher builds on the Philosophy of Teacher Education (PTE) 1982, National Philosophy of Education (NPE) 1988 and 1996, Malaysian Teacher Standards (MTS) 2009 and the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013–2025).

In initial teacher training program, teachers are equipped with knowledge, skills and values that prepare them as beginning teachers ready to serve in schools. However, what is learned in pre-service courses need to be further developed through continuous improvement, for example, an in-service teacher should continuously participate in courses, seminars, and conferences in order to adapt to the changing dynamics of the education world. Only through continuous development, teachers can move from being novice teachers to competent teachers. Advancements in technologies have also impacted on teacher professional development and students' learning. However, awareness of the role of technologies in teaching and learning has not been effectively translated into pedagogical practices (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Therefore, introducing ICT to the educational process is not enough. The question of what teachers need to know in order to appropriately incorporate technology into their teaching has received a great deal of attention (U.S. Congress

Office of Technology Assessment, 1995; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1997; International Society for Technology in Education, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2000; Zhao, 2003). It has become clear, however that the primary focus should be on studying how the technology is used (Carr et al., 1998; Koehler & Mishra, 2009, 2013).

There is a need to ensure that teachers not only know the "what of" technologies enhance in teaching and learning but also the "how" of it in order to use technologies as an effective enabler of teaching and learning. Hence, Koehler & Mishra (2009, 2013) have introduced technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK) which amalgamates technologies with Shulman's (1987) pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) to enable effective and meaningful learning for the students.

Teachers need to be lifelong learners and growing teachers. But in reality, many pressing questions still exist in relation to teacher continuous professional development. For example, many teachers are unaware of the avenues for professional development and their career path, more so in the private sectors. In the Malaysian context, MICSS has over four thousand nine hundred teachers who teach over eighty thousand students. This is a significant number. Teachers crave for professional development opportunities. However, they are restricted due to various factors like time, money and other personal constraints. The Ministry of Education has its elaborate professional development and career pathway plan for teachers that will help them from beginning to visionary teachers, from implementers to holistic thinkers. This professional development plan is also connected to the career path of