

The implications of a changing value system for policy and practice of teacher education curriculum in Malaysia

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Teacher education programmes the world over are based on national ideologies, policies and development plans. They are grounded in the culture of knowledge espoused by the major stakeholders (Bruner, 1996). The culture in turn is based on the value system espoused by the stakeholders concerned and this value system is incorporated and reflected in the teacher education programmes, particularly its curriculum and the management and development of the curriculum. A value system is in essence the ordering and prioritization of the ethical and ideological values that individuals or society hold. However, value systems are not something static. On the contrary they are dynamic and ever changing. In view of the emerging trends and challenges of globalization (Friedman, 2004), it has become necessary to view teacher education within the wider context of both the professional community and society at large. The state and nature of the rapid change requires teacher education to be more outward looking and be geared towards enabling teachers to be engaged in constant professional learning and self- improvement.

Keywords: Values; teacher education; curriculum.

Introduction

As much as teacher education should focus on educating teachers to be involved with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Boyer, 1990), building collaborative cultures, engaging in interactive professionalism and sharing practical know-how and empirical knowledge for the advancement of teaching and knowledge (Darling Hammond & Cobb, 1996), teacher education must also be sensitive to changing values and value systems of society, the nation and individual learners, so as to ensure that teachers and teaching remain relevant to the context. This involves opening up teacher education curriculum policies and practices to critical scrutiny and making it accessible for change and use by others in the teaching fraternity.

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Introduction

Teacher education programmes are grounded in the value system and culture of knowledge espoused by the major stakeholder. This paper compares the values underpinning secondary teacher education curriculum policy and practice in Malaysia with the perspectives on teacher education held by some significant stakeholders and emerging global trends in teacher education. It draws from a research on *The Implications of a Changing Value System for Policy and Practice of Teacher Education Curriculum in Malaysia (1980-2011)*. The research was funded by Sultan Idris Education University.

The methodology

The study is about understanding the changing value systems, particularly in relation to student learning and secondary teacher education curriculum. Given that the focus of the research is to look into the changing value system and secondary teacher education curriculum from the perspective of the significant stakeholder, the research was necessarily qualitative in nature. The study was context bound, it involved the use of inductive logic and the accuracy of data verified through triangulation. The study has methodological flexibility in that it is sensitive to evidence and the analysis of data involves the weaving of data obtained from different methods and sources to get a clear descriptive understanding of the focus of the study, *vis-à-vis* the research questions of the study. Ontologically, the nature of reality in the study is subjective and multiple in that involves the analysis of information from various documents and perspectives obtained by interviewing different stakeholders. In addition, the researchers were the main instruments because the description and interpretation offered are predominantly those of the researchers, although measures were taken to reduce researchers' bias by adhering to research ethics and also descriptive and interpretive validity. Epistemologically, the knowledge offered by the study is obtained from analysis of documents and interaction with stakeholders through interviews. In terms of axiology, the study is value laden and biased, in that it represents the values of the stakeholders which may include their personal biasness. In this context, the role of the researchers was to look at the data critically and objectively to ensure that the data analysis and interpretation is data driven, that it emerges from the data. This necessitated the need to use the personal voices of the stakeholders.

Data was collected from relevant documents and interviews of significant stakeholder (Patton, 1990). Choice of respondents was purposive. Analysis was guided by the demands of the research questions. Data and methods triangulation was used to enhance the validity of the findings. Respondent validation was carried out to validate the findings of the study in terms of descriptive and interpretive validity (Maxwell, 1992). The research also adhered to ethical principles of doing qualitative research. Data was collected by two major methods: Document analysis and Interviews. The documents analysed were categorized as National Policy Documents, Education Policy Documents, and Teacher Education Documents. Two types of interviews were conducted: depth individual Interviews and focus Group Interviews. The focus group interviews involved 50 secondary school teachers and 15 students who had completed secondary schools not longer than 2 years. Depth interviews involved asking open-ended questions, listening to and recording the answers, and then following up with additional relevant questions. The interviewee also probed beneath the surface, soliciting

detail and providing a holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view. The depth interviews also involved the use of interview protocols or interview guides. Depth individual interviews were conducted with five selected categories of stakeholder respondents. A total of 21 interviews were conducted. It involved 2 politicians, 5 teacher educators, 7 educationists, 2 school principals and 5 NGO professional institutions representatives.

The findings

The findings of the study indicate that the value system of students and teachers and even parents are changing. The students are into a new culture of learning characterized by high touch and high-tech and this has implications for the vision of learning and philosophy of teaching espoused by teachers. In addition, the impact of globalization and the growing influence of materialism among parents appears to be impacting negatively on the work culture of teachers. There appears to be a shift towards quality of high grades, away from quality of learning. The paper proposes an alternative framework for transforming teacher education so that it meets the demands of the changing values and culture of learning of students. It argues the need for an inquiry driven teacher education curriculum that will facilitate the nurturing of teachers who can liberate, emancipate, empower and enable their students. Although anchored in the Malaysian context, the findings have implications for teacher education worldwide.

The Malaysian context

Malaysia is focusing on developing minds that will enable Malaysia to be an effective player in the global market. Vision 2020 (Mahathir, 1991) emphasizes the need to move from being a consumer society to that of a knowledge generating society. The role of teachers in developing this society is of prime concern to the nation. The ability to think critically and creatively and to reason logically constitute the template for developing a nation that will be able to not just adopt or adapt borrowed knowledge but that which will be able to create and market its own knowledge. It is in this context that it is crucial for teachers to continuously improve the quality of their practice. Inquiry based teaching grounded on empirical foundations have become a necessity.

For long teacher education curriculum in Malaysia has been developed as a reaction to changes in the school curriculum and the demands of schooling. However, globalisation and the increasing prominence of pragmatic philosophies is continuously impacting on and changing the existing value system. Society is made up of people, including students. This has made it imperative for teacher education to adopt a proactive approach to teacher professional literacy. The basic questions that this paper addresses is whether teacher education, particularly its curriculum, is actually delivering what it is supposed to deliver and if the epistemology of practice is congruent with the demands of changing philosophies and value system of the emerging generation.

Essentially teacher education has to be based on the value system of the society in which it is located. As stated earlier, the era of globalization necessitates teacher education to be sensitive to changing value systems in the global era of global context too. Teacher education in Malaysia, over the past forty years, is supposed to have been based on the value system proposed by Rukun Negara, 1971 (the national ideology), the recommendations of the Cabinet Report (1979), the National Philosophy of Education

(1988,1996), Philosophy of Teacher Education (1982), the challenges of Vision 2020, the Conceptual Model of Teacher Education (1995) and the Malaysian Teacher standards (2009). However, the basic problem or issue that has got to be addressed is whether teacher education curriculum has been sensitive to the changing value system over the four decades. In this context, there is a pressing need to address and review the conceptual and theoretical framework of teacher education in Malaysia vis-à-vis the changing value system so as to ensure that teacher education policies and curriculum has the potential to manage emerging trends in the value system and offer teacher education that is relevant to changing value contexts.

Teacher Education in Malaysia can be viewed according to various periods stretching from the pre-independence era to the present period. The development of teacher education in Malaysia has been dictated by the demands of the educational system prevalent during particular periods. The educational system in turn has been influenced and shaped by political, economic and social factors. The changes in the political economic and social structures invariably brought about changes to the educational system including the purpose and direction of teacher education based on the value system espoused by the changes.

Values underpinning secondary teacher education: Interface between policies and perceptions

Malaysia needs teachers with vision - as good teachers make good schools and a good nation. The Philosophy of Teacher Education (1982), clearly aims at developing a teacher *who is noble in character, progressive and scientific in outlook, committed to upholding the aspirations of the nation, and cherishes the national cultural heritages, ensures the development of the individual and the preservation of aof a united, democratic, progressive and disciplined society* (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 1982, p.14).

Teacher qualities

A retired teacher educator is of the view that:

a teacher has to have mastery of the subject he teachers. That is the most important criteria. But nowadays, many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of or mastery of their subject they teach. This may be due to many reasons. Firstly, they may be teaching subjects that they have been trained to teach. For example, a moral teacher may be teaching history or a science teacher teaching mathematics. Hence, when the teacher has sufficient subject matter competency he will not be able to provide proper guidance and will depend on guide books or workbooks. This becomes more serious when the teacher is not willing to learn new things and just teaches according to the textbooks. Most teachers are not life-long learners in terms of the subjects they teach, but may be just interested in collecting degrees at the masters or doctorate level. (E-TE1)

This view was supported by a politician who has served as a professor of education. He seems to think that teachers don't seem to have the required knowledge. In his opinion on the quality of teachers:

I think the quality of teachers has come down, because you see.. I mean I talk to students, they said that some of the teachers, particularly science teachers, do not have sufficient knowledge and also lack competency in teaching the subject.. Sciences and Maths teachers, they don't seem to have the knowledge. So this is sort of comments I get from some students. So, it is all reflects on the quality of teachers. (E-POL1).

Teacher academic quality also depends on the life-long learning opportunities being provided to them and also their attitude in attempting to learn new things. In this respect, a Teachers' Union leader expressed her views as follows:

What we get feedback from experienced teachers, they say that new individual teachers are not doing a lot of reading. Their reading is very limited. They just do their work only. That's all. They don't try to have self development. So, what is lacking for present teachers is that interest in self development to improve their teaching. (E-U)

Another educationist, a professor of education is of the view that,

The occupational world of the teacher demands that teachers continuously upgrade their knowledge. They should seek knowledge and competence from various sources and avenues. They should involve in syatematic training and continuous professional development courses to further refine and strengthen their knowledge and competences. The must strive towards excellence in teaching. (E-PF1) Translated

This sentiment was also echoed by a leader of another NGO leader. He suggested that, 'Teacher need to constantly learn-to learn and relearn. This is not happening. Teachers do not read (NGO-CA-1).

The basic value is that teacher need to have mastery subject matter and have the passion for teaching.

Professional qualities and professional knowledge

Dedication, sensitivity, awareness of national needs, positive attitude towards learning and innovativeness are professional qualities of teacher as identified in Malaysia's Teacher Education Philosophy.

It is quite natural for one to expect teachers to be dedicated to their profession. In cultures such as in Malaysia which is multi-racial society, teaching is almost synonymous with dedication. As such, it is normal for someone to expect that value in teachers and also compare the present generation of teachers with teachers of yesteryears, in relation to their dedication.

For instance, a former Director-General of Education suggested that, *Teachers today will be judged by commitment to their job* (E-DG1). In relation to this, a former politician and cabinet minister, believes that teachers of yesteryears were more dedicated compared to the present ones. She also believes that the society then placed a

lot of emphasis on dedication of teachers to accord the profession with the much needed respect. In her opinion,

The teachers of yesteryears were dedicated. They were really committed to the profession and society very much respected the teaching profession. Not all present day teachers are that dedicated, there are those who became teachers just to get a job and look upon their profession just as a job and task and not as a profession. If given a choice they do not want to be teachers. (POL2)

A mentor teacher is of the view that teachers have always to be sensitive to the learning environment and also the needs and responses of their students. *A teacher has to be always thinking on her feet. This is where the teacher has got to practice what Schon (1983) has referred to as reflection-in-practice. (E-MT)* A former teacher educator added that a teacher has to have the capacity for, what Elliot (1993) refers to as, *situational understanding and situational judgment. This relates to the importance of awareness and the need to be sensitive to the learning context and learners. (E-TE1)*

An experienced teacher Educator attributed the limited world-view of teachers to other shortcoming as follows:

It is because our teachers of today are so limited in their world and links across subjects and domains of learning that they are not able to engage in trans-disciplinary teaching, they are unable to synthesize across subjects, discipline and domains of learning. That means they do not have the professional competence to teach in an integrated and balanced manner. As required by the National Philosophy of Education. When they cannot synthesize, they cannot conceptualise, and when they cannot conceptualise, they cannot create or innovate, when they cannot innovate, they do not have ownership of their teaching. When they do not have ownership of their teaching, they lack confidence and this affects their teacher efficacy, the ability to communicate and interact in the knowledge generating and dissemination context (E-TE2)

Another retired teacher educator added,

Teachers teach in silos, they unable to enrich the teaching and learning by drawing from diverse sources of knowledge. For example, from my experience of observing teachers during practicum, I find that teachers are unable to put into practice all the theories, concepts and principles that have learnt in colleges or universities. They do not know how psychology of learning relates to pedagogical skills or sociological perspectives on students and are unable to conduct their teaching based on a synergy of different foundations of education. They also do not know how to relate the real world to their teaching context. So what happens is fragmented teaching that offers a fragmented view of learning. (E-TE3)

A principal said,

They are basically textbook teachers who employ a very technical and mechanical approach to teaching. When I asked one of them, what is your theory of teaching that you are using? He was unable to answer. They lack awareness of the basis and basics of their teaching. They also lack pedagogical content knowledge. You know... being able to solve problems on calculus is different from being able to teach students how to solve problems on calculus. (E-P).

At this juncture it will be pertinent to view some of the views expressed by students from schools who just joined the university for their Bachelor of Education degree programme.

My history teacher is all about memorizing notes. He gives and explains notes and guides us on how to answer questions. It is so boring. I do not know why we have to learn history. It is a subject about dead people and past events, said one student. (FGI-S1) Yes, it has got no relevance to me. I love maths and physics. History has got no market value. What can you do besides may be becoming another boring history teacher, interjected another (FGI-S2). Yet another student said, I do not mind history, it is easy to score in history. The questions are basically the same always and are very predictable. (FGI-S3) I like something that challenges me, makes me think, I like to be involved actively in the process of learning, not being told what to do and given lessons on note taking or underlying facts in the book, said yet another student (FGI-S4). My teacher talks about thinking out of the box, but he is still very much in the box as far as his teaching methods concerned. He talks about being 'hands on and minds on' but he does not provide us the scope and opportunity to think. I don't need to think out of the box because my box is much bigger than his. (laughs) (FG-S5)

It is apparent that the stakeholders value the importance of teacher professional knowledge and the need for teachers to continually develop their professional knowledge base. Hence the crucial function of teacher education is to nurture teacher educators and teachers who can develop their own professional identities and expertise and not become clones immersed in a “dependency culture” producing technicians who look for prescribed and pre-structured solutions. Essentially, curriculum literacy depends on the ability and commitment of teacher educators and teachers to function as reflective practitioners who continuously reflect for action, reflect in action and reflect on and research their practice. There is a pressing to develop minds, to nurture thinking teachers who have the capacity for organic literacy which is an integral part of curriculum literacy.

Social qualities and societal values

Awareness of the environment and tolerance are social qualities of a teacher as identified in Malaysia's Philosophy of Teacher Education. Most of these qualities also fall under professional qualities of a teacher and have been discussed earlier in this

paper. It is also important to investigate how and why the value systems in the society have changed over time. More importantly, the question is how changing values have impacted on the expectations of various stake-holders in the field of teacher education in Malaysia.

In this respect, a former Director of the Teacher Education division of the Ministry of Education, explains,

Normally the problem I think that in terms of values system. They may not have the necessary input to ensure that they will carry out they can implement the knowledge that they required because to me I think to acquired knowledge is one thing but it is quite another thing to be able to guide the children on point of a moral value system . I think this is the problem that we are facing today in society. People might jump to conclusion that a society in which we are today faces problems which are reflections of the shortcoming of the action/implementation system. (E-TEDD-1)

Another former Director of Teacher Education relates the significant change in the value systems which are very closely related to the expectations of parents. What parents use to expect in the past and what they expect of their children now have, in his opinion, impacted on the value systems surrounding the expectations on teachers.

Well, I think most of it is geared towards academic expectations. See, when parents send their children, most of them are talking about achievement and many of the parents do not allow any deviation. Not too keen in their children getting involved in extra curricular activities. So, teachers try to meet the demand at the sense lah. We hear complaints about teachers giving private tuition and not being committed to teaching in school or spending extra time with their students in school. I'm not to sure how many persons are involved. May be quite a significant number. Again what parents want are good grades and results. So they are willing to pay for the private tuition and as long as they are willing to pay, teachers will offer private tuition because that is a source of lucrative income for them. When you compare the school results today with past years, you find that, in terms of achievement grades, I think most student must be doing better than what we did in school in the past days. But I'm not too sure whether that is a proper yardstick. On the contrary we get many complains about our students not being able to perform in real life situations and work place. I suppose, getting grades and being able to perform in real life contexts may be different. (E-TEDD2)

Personal qualities

The personal qualities and touch of the teacher plays a crucial role in motivating and inspiring the students to learn. It also determines not only the way students learn but also the kind of learning they acquire. The personal qualities of a teacher that have been in the Philosophy of Teacher Education are: warmth, fairness, flexibility, sense of humour, dedication and tolerance.

Lipman (2003) identified three dimensions of thinking that a teacher needs to practice. Besides critical and creative thinking, he also identified 'caring thinking'. Characteristics of caring thinking are: being appreciative, active, normative, effective and empathic. Above all, teachers are expected to act on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that would lead to appropriate levels of achievement for *all* their pupils. *Caring* is a particular kind of relationship between the teacher and the student that is defined by the teacher's unconditional acceptance of the student, the teacher's intention to address the student's educational needs, the teacher's competence to meet those needs, and the student's recognition that the teacher cares. The available measures of caring are not as well developed as the measures of student learning, particularly among beginning teachers. This has implications for teacher education.

An experienced teacher is of the opinion that,

The teacher has to be able to resonate with her/his students. The teacher must be able to engage the students in learning. This requires warmth. The students must feel comfortable and secure in the company of the teacher. I say this because some teachers try to get the students by instilling fear in them or by belittling them and some call this reverse psychology. If you use these methods it may become counter-productive in making our students meek or make them rebellious. This is not good for the future manpower needs of the country. (E-T1)

This relates to Andy Hargreaves views 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 shapes the kind of learning that young people get. (Hargreaves, A. 1994)

Hence, if the teacher thinks that learning has got to be vertical where the students need to be taught, not educated, then the teacher will not relinquish his control of the class and his students. He will not entertain interactive learning and become a facilitator of learning but choose to be the fountain of knowledge whose duty is to fill the empty minds of the students. Although the National Philosophy of Education and Philosophy of Education calls for a more open, co-operative and collaborative to learning, in reality many teachers still want to dictate to the students. This is evident from both students and mentor teachers. The mentor teacher said,

They are reluctant to accept that they are co-learners with the students and that the students can also teach them a thing or two. Especially in the

era of internet and global networking where the students obtain information and knowledge faster from many sources. (E-MT2)

My experience with my add maths teacher is that she wanted me to solve the problem following her method. But my brother who is an engineer taught me an easier method, To my surprise, the teacher did not allow me to use the easier method. She still wanted me to use her method. May be she did not understand the easier method.... (FGI-S2)

Table 1. Interface between policies and perceptions

Value System based on Policy	Value System According to Perceptions of Stakeholders
Academic Qualifications Mastery of subject matter (degree)	Academic Qualifications Mastery of subject matter (degree)
National Values (Rukun Negara) Belief in God Loyalty to King and Country Upholding the Constitution Rule of Law Good Behaviour and Morality National Unity Maintaining a democratic way of life Create a just society	National Values Good and loyal citizens Understanding of national goals and aspirations Patriotic
Professional Qualities Dedication Sensitivity Awareness of national needs Positive attitude towards learning Innovativeness I	Professional Qualities Dedication Sensitivity Awareness of national needs Positive attitude towards learning Innovativeness i
Social Qualities Innovativeness Morality Adapatability Leadership Awareness of the environment Tolerance	Social Qualities Innovativeness Morality Adapatability Leadership Awareness of the environment Tolerance
Personal Qualities Warmth Fairness Flexibility Sense of humour Firmness Dedication Tolerance	Personal Qualities Warmth Fairness Flexibility Honesty Sense of humour Firmness Dedication

	Tolerance Caring
Impact of Globalization Meet demands of borderless world and global village Need to be effective global player Global worker Knowledge Worker willingness to collaborate and cooperate Acquire and apply Connectivity and networking skills ICT Literate	Impact of Globalization Meet demands of borderless world and global village Need to be effective global player Global worker Knowledge Worker willingness to collaborate and cooperate Acquire and apply Connectivity and networking skills ICT Literate
Professional Knowledge Knowledge of curriculum Knowledge of Teaching Knowledge of Assessment	Professional Knowledge Knowledge of curriculum Knowledge of Teaching Knowledge of Assessment Pedagogical Content Knowledge
Value System based on other factors	Increasing workload and deprofessionalization Restricted to extended role of teachers. The pressure of technical accountability system and excessive monitoring The command and control system Overloaded and fool-proof curriculum Contradiction between constructivist approaches and behaviorist measurement Changing culture of learning of the Y and Z generation.

It is apparent that there are plenty of similarities between the value system espoused by teacher education policy and the value system expressed through the perceptions of the different stakeholders. The basic question is that is there a change in the value system? If so, what is the source of change and what are the implications for future secondary teacher education curriculum? The curriculum of teacher education is to be founded on National policies and aspirations, the National Philosophy of Education (1996), the Philosophy of Teacher Education (1982), Malaysian Teacher Standards (2009), Teacher Professional Knowledge Base, the different qualities and characteristics required of a teacher and the demands of global trends. In addition the teacher education curriculum has to develop teachers who can translate the school curriculum, be it the Integrated Primary School Curriculum/Standards Based Primary School Curriculum or the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum/Standards Based Secondary School Curriculum, into the desired learning for their students, The teacher education curriculum of IPGs and UPSI are based on this. If so, then why is there an increasing dissatisfaction about the decreasing quality of teachers, particularly among parents in the urban areas? The curriculum designed has passed through stringent quality

control measures, where is the ‘slip between the cup and the lip’? What remains as rhetoric and what is the reality? Is the issue of one pertaining to curriculum implementation or management when seen in the context of the actual initial teacher education process or are there other factors that impact on the practice of the teacher in the context of the school and classroom?

Changing times and changing trends are continuously posing new challenges to teachers and teacher education. The role of the teacher has not only evolved from that of a restricted professional to an extended professional (Hoyle, 1980) but also from that of an implementer of educational policies and curriculum specifications to one which requires teachers to be knowledgeable and skilled at facilitating the generating, acquisition and management of knowledge. The teacher is required to be continuously engaged with thinking not only to enhance her/his own personal and professional potential but also to enhance the knowledge creation capacity of her/his students. Classrooms are no longer merely to be conceived as sites for curriculum implementation but are to be envisioned as laboratories for pedagogical experimentation engaged in the discourse of pedagogical reasoning and action (Shulman,1987), aimed at continually enhancing the capacity and quality of situational understanding and judgment by engaging in the process of critical and creative thinking. That is fine but when the workload of teachers is further compounded by the increasing administrative demands being made on teachers the teachers are at a labyrinth whether to give priority to their professional development or pay more attention to the command and control demands of a highly centralized system of education. Increasing priority to meet administrative demands and the need to teach to the test to perform well in the examination league tables, and the introduction of more technical accountability systems is increasingly deprofessionalizing teachers. Teachers are beginning to adopt a more technical and mechanical approach to teaching and learning based on technical rationality on not reflection and inquiry. This will not only be detrimental to the quality of their practice but also the quality of learning that they can offer to their students. Obviously this is bringing about a negative change in the value system of teachers vis-à-vis their role and responsibilities.

Yet another change in value system is happening among students, particularly those from the Y and Z generations. Their learning cultures have changed from rote learning to high-tech and high-touch and to hands-on and minds-on approaches. They do not like to be told, they prefer experiential and inquiry based learning, learning that is challenging, relevant and up-to-date. Having students engage in the learning experience is necessary to ensure that they will learn the new objectives presented to them. Teaching in the 21st century is difficult because students receive so much stimulation from television, computers and other electronic devices that many find school dull. The challenge for teachers today is to make lessons relevant to students' everyday lives. Making these connections will ensure that students are engaged in learning and will retain the important objectives covered each day.

The students they expect the teachers to be relevant and up-to-date and not preach in classrooms but offer them opportunities to develop their minds, skills and values. This poses serious challenges to existing practices of teachers who are very much traditionalist in terms of their teaching methodology and methods and are rather reluctant to venture out of their comfortable cocoons. Such teachers are unable to adapt to change and also lack coping skills. They are fast becoming archaic and fossilized.

Value systems have certainly changed over time. These changes have brought significant implications for teachers and teacher education. It is quite obvious that society has developed higher expectations of teachers today as compared to yesteryears.

One could observe the various expectations on teachers in relation to the change in value system over time. There seems to a consensus among the respondents that teachers possess the knowledge, especially knowledge in the subject matter they have been trained to teach. However, there seems to a call from most of the respondents which require teachers to be able to learn on an on-going basis. Particularly, they have recommended that teachers need to read to gain knowledge, other than their routine professional duty of teaching.

There is also consensus among the respondents that teachers are now expected to play a multitude of roles more than yesteryears. For example, they need to be counselors and motivators to their students. They are also expected to instill patriotism among students and contribute towards nation-building. In this context, there are those who think that teachers are able to cope with the ever-changing environment in schools, and others do not think so.

In relation to this, there have also been a number of issues raised about the quality and characteristics. Although, teachers today are better prepared academically compared to teachers of yester-years, this does not necessarily mean that teachers are of higher quality compared to teachers of yester-years. It is important that teacher education pays serious attention to ensure that society gets high quality teachers. Teacher education needs to ensure teachers, through pre-service and in-service courses continuously upgrade their levels to maintain a high level of professional integrity.

It was also found that the respondents raised concerns over the change in value systems in the society. They accept the fact that the expectations of parents on their children in relation to schooling have changed significantly over time. This, they claim, is the main reason why there is a higher expectation of teachers today. It seems that there is also a serious need to address concerns raised in relation to the changing value system in the society.

These findings bring ever-growing call to teacher education to address very serious concerns raised by various stake-holders. It is time that teacher education take note of these issues and respond quickly in a comprehensive manner. Any changes made to the existing system need to be approached in a systematic and comprehensive manner. It is now imperative that teacher education respond to the calls by the stake-holders

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