

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why This Research?

1.1.1. The research questions

In 2002 and 2003, the School Development Division, Education Manpower Bureau Hong Kong enacted a new policy with the document “Personal Growth Education” (2004, revised version) which is one of four key parts of the new Comprehensive Student Guidance Service. The education programme consists of four key learning areas (Appendix F1): personal development, social development, academic development, and career development. The aims of Personal Growth Education are:

- (a) to implement school-based Personal Growth Education for the developmental needs of all students;
- (b) to develop and maximise student potential and to help them build the basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the four areas of personal, social, academic, and career development through planned and progressive key learning areas;
- (c) to conduct Personal Growth Education through classroom learning, short-term and structured courses, group activities, assemblies, cross-curricular activities, etc.;
- (d) to design and develop various learning and guidance sessions/ activities in a gradual and progressive approach with reference to the developmental needs of students;
- (e) to enhance learning motivation of students through interactive and cooperative learning programmes;
- (f) to encourage self-exploration and reflection, with an emphasis on active experiential learning; and
- (g) to enhance applications in daily life through connecting learning content with life

experiences and events.

The development of Personal Growth Education (hereafter, PGE) was a micro-curriculum initiated by the Discipline and Guidance Section of the Education Manpower Bureau. I conducted this research as a frontline student guidance teacher. It was challenging to study this topic in primary schools, record and analyse what actually happened during its development process, make conclusions about its significance with regard to actual responses and limitations and difficulties of the stakeholders, such as upper managers, middle managers, frontline teachers, and students, for the educational system of Hong Kong, and explore the feasibility and best implementation strategies for the innovation. The research questions for this study were:

Research Question One (RQ1): Is PGE development a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?

Research Question Two (RQ2): What are the significances of developing PGE as the first formal guidance curriculum for the education system in Hong Kong primary schools?

1.1.2. Personal motivation

As Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan (1996, p.5) states,

the importance of schools is to make education a continuous process, addressing the personal, social, physical and intellectual needs of young people at each particular stage in their development.

I totally agree with this because of my personal experiences and my career in education: I grew up in a typical conservative family with my parents, grandparents, and sibling. My parents educated us by being strong traditional and authoritative figures through one-way communication. In my childhood, my demanding parents

gave me no hugs, no communication, and no sharing except for punishment with a rattan switch to encourage me to be a good child. Then, I tried hard to earn their praise and encouragement with my hard work in school. My parents did not know how to love us and express themselves, and I dared not share with them my fear and loneliness. Even when I was bullied by my classmates at my primary school, they gave me no guidance. From kindergarten to secondary school, my parents stressed only obedience, discipline, diligence, and being a good girl. Those were their rules.

I was supposed to be a good and obedient student in my primary school, but my childhood was not happy, because I was bullied and teased by classmates who were jealous of me. I felt helpless to deal with social difficulties because I had limited survival skills. The condition continued in my early secondary school life. I face my devastated miserable social life alone, and found it difficult and frustrating to collaborate with others, especially when I was exploited and betrayed by my classmates. My weak social skills were mainly attributable to my personality and my parents, who forbade me to expose myself to different social activities. In addition, I found the learning style of religious education and general studies, which teaches students survival skills, to be excessively rigid. However, this guidance was not included in the secondary school curriculum. I felt lost in my secondary school life and struggled with public examinations and personal growth during adolescence. My interest in studying declined; consequently, I felt inferior, diffident, lonely, and helpless due to my low self-esteem. Finally, I failed to gain admission to a university, at which point I suffered from the lowest self-esteem of my life. Luckily, my outstanding performance in Education College rebuilt my self-image and gave me confidence later. At that time, I started to wonder about education and my past school life. What had I learned? Why should I learn it? The most disappointing part was that it was difficult to meet the “good” teachers; half of them were the “teaching robots”

who cared only about the syllabus and examination results. I was fed up with this inhumane and indifferent attitude!

After I started my teaching career, it was not an easy life. I learned everything from the beginning. Ultimately, teaching was an interesting and challenging job for me: I further explored my creativity in teaching, and my confidence was enhanced. With regard to the office politics and social difficulties I encountered, I understood that one's capability does not secure success, which is indeed a matter of opportunities, social relationships, emotional and adversity quotients, and so forth. In the competitive working environment, it is silly to think that someone will care or mentor you—that is the reality!

To challenge myself, I studied abroad and changed my career. I found my new self at that time. Then, I experienced the ups and downs, learned to accept challenges, to be strong and tough to restart my life as a student guidance teacher. Moving onto this career path was the turning point in my life. It is a job that demands a high emotional and adversity quotient and the ability to reflect. I underwent changes during the training period. It refreshed me and gave me new impetus for this challenging job. The power sustained me, gave me confidence, resilience, persistence, and stronger belief, and let me learn about multi-dimensional thinking, empathy, congruence, and showing more respect to others through appreciation and active listening. I started to understand what real success is, real love is. When Personal Growth Education (PGE) was firstly enacted, I said to myself, "Why does it come so late? I have been waiting for you for ages!"

My personal and career experiences have caused me to reflect about the concept of growth through education. What is growth? From my point of view, it is growth of a

person from birth to death. It is a continuing process: it cannot be assumed and preset, but it lets us experience things. It mixes with our firsthand feelings, perceptions, reflections, reviews, and improvement. The speed of our growth differs because of our environment, temperament, self-esteem, and a number of unpredictable factors. Good PGE must cater to the needs of children and complement their lives and cognitive and social development in order to meet the expectation about school detailed by Hargreaves, Earl, and Ryan (1996, p.5).

1.1.3. Reflection on the introduction of personal growth education in schools

Introduction of the PGE stirred up limitless reflection in me about personal growth and education. In the past, our education system did not emphasise personal growth education with intention. Both moral and religious education adopts direct talk, which gives students the concepts and rules on paper only. What is the most effective way to educate students about growth and values? I had a deficit in my personality and growth partly because of the inadequacy of the educational system, including the lack of life or personal and social education.

As a researcher and counsellor in school, I have high expectations for the introduction of PGE because I believe that PGE is what a student or a human basically needs to gain from education. I hope PGE can encourage students to learn more than the present curriculum, to face the ups and downs in life, to have more understanding of themselves, to express and love themselves and others, to reconstruct their inner self and their outside network, and to feel the warmth and hope around them. Ultimately, I hope PGE can let student learn about love, care, and respect with open-mindedness, empathy, and genuineness. In spite of the good intentions of the curriculum, difficulties during implementation are inevitable. These difficulties arouse my interest

in investigating feedbacks about this curriculum during implementation and the sustainability of the curriculum at the critical moment of education and curriculum reform since 2002.

There are significant contextual factors associated with the changing educational system and curriculum as depicted in the following section.

1.2 Needs of Our Children and Curriculum Reform in Hong Kong

1.2.1 Our children today

Are our children really happy? Do they benefit from the Hong Kong educational system? Luk-Fong (2001) comments that “the education system of Hong Kong is one that characterised by certification, selection and credentialism....A hidden curriculum is that education is for earning but not for learning”. Shek and Chan (1999) finds that most parents regard having good academic results as an important attribute of the ideal child, and they do not emphasise so much the importance of the development of non-academic attributes in children. Ng (2005) points out that the typical sources of stress experienced by senior primary students in Hong Kong, they are the academic stress from parental pressure, examinations, parental conflict, familial relationships (McNamara, 2000), and environmental concerns. Luk-Fong (2001) also cited the “hurried child” phenomenon of Elkind’s (1981) main thesis, which states that children are forced to grow up under circumstances where in which they are deprived of their childhood. Elkind mentions that changes in family structure, information overload, and the school are factors which that work together to force children to grow up fast..... Alternatively, schools may reconsider their roles in providing care and continuity for their students in support of the family. As observed, local parents tend

to ask for more and more support for their children from schools and other external resources to make up for their own diminished care for their children. To a certain extent, this is reasonable, but it raises other risks when the parents just yell their main reason (“Busy!”), particularly considering the growing crisis in family malfunction and dissociation.

In 2000, Fok finds that the general delinquent behaviours of primary school students are low learning motivation, violence, and school rule violations which may be caused by some psychological problems like low self-esteem, self-centredness, and weak emotion management. These psychological features are the superficial signals only; they could be attributed to the child’s family background and structure, the parenting skills, or parents’ relationships. HKFYG (2000) also finds that about 500 teenagers aged from 10- to 19 perceived that success implies good academic result (44%), a good family (40%), and being good in sports (26%), and vice versa. A survey about the happiness of the children in Hong Kong was done by The Democracy Party in 2001 for 477 children aged from 5- to 15). It shows that the happiness of children depends on their social life (22.5%) and academic results. The statistics from the Education Department (2002) shows that the six major problems of the primary and secondary school students come from learning, behaviour, family, emotion, physical health, and social life, with 60% citing behavioural problems and 17% citing difficulties with learning. In particular, the figure about family problems is increasing. Hui (2002) reflects that teenagers’ problems are mostly due to family, peer relationships, school, courses, and their ability and efforts, especially in the low ranking schools. Simultaneously, other local surveys (YMCA, 2002; Caritas, 2002; HKFYG, 2004; and Media Connection, 2003), which were done in different areas in Hong Kong, have shown similar results. Some teenagers adopted negative ways of solving their problems like avoidance, delinquent behaviors, or damaging themselves

to relieve the pressure. This shows that some lacked problem-solving skills.

Of the negative problem-solving skills, there are surveys reported by DAB (2002), Wong's study (2002, 2003), and the University of Hong Kong (2003). The survey done by DAB (2002) with over 800 teenagers from 25 secondary schools shows that more than half of the respondents had participated in delinquent events more than once, including fighting, cheating, and destroying public assets. The study finds that their performance was closely related to the educational background of their parents and their family relationships. Over 30% of them had joined the drug party, going to pubs and discos with friends. Wong's studies (2002, 2003) find that about half of over 10,000 respondents from 39 primary and 47 secondary schools were involved in different forms of bullying. About 22.5% of the respondents from primary schools suffered from physical bullying. The University of Hong Kong (2003)'s report further shows that the prevalence of suicidal ideation and behavior among high school students were 17.8% (had considered suicide), 5.4% (were planning to commit suicide), 8.4% (had attempted suicide once or more) and 1.2% (required medical care after suicide) in 2001 among 2,586 high school students from Form 3 to Form 7.

This data shows the urgency of the collaboration among society, the schools, and families to deal with the growing problems teenagers have with appropriate measures and to review the effectiveness of the current policy. It indicates that social life, family relationships, learning, and even outlook are the major concerns of the teenagers. Moreover, the negative problem-solving skills, life values, and self-concepts drive them to depression, bullying behaviour, suicide, and addiction to drugs and electronic games.

1.2.2. Curriculum reform in Hong Kong

Therefore, in order to better equip our teenagers the knowledge, generic skills, positive values and attitudes, curriculum reform in Hong Kong began in 2002. However, little is known about the relationship between PGE development and the curriculum reform. The following section illustrates how PGE meets the aims of the curriculum reform and details the potential difficulties of PGE development with regard to cultural hindrance and preliminary feedback of curriculum reform in 2002 happened simultaneously.

Do the aims of PGE coherent with the education and curriculum reform? The Education Commission's reform proposals express the aims of education for the Hong Kong educational system in the 21st century are:

To enable every person to attain all-around development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills, and aesthetics according to his / her own attributes so that he / she is capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change; filled with self-confidence and team spirit; willing to put forward continuing effort for the prosperity, progress, freedom and democracy of their society, and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large (EC, 2000b).

The Basic Education Guideline (CDC-ED, 2002) outlines the seven learning goals for students:

1. recognise their roles and responsibilities in family, society, and the nation;
2. understand their national identity and be committed to it;
3. develop a habit of reading independently;

4. engage in discussion actively and confidently in English and Chinese;
5. master independent learning skills;
6. possess foundation knowledge in 8 Key Learning Areas; and
7. lead a healthy lifestyle and develop an interest in and appreciation for aesthetic and physical activities.

The overall aims of the school curriculum are delineated:

The school curriculum should provide all students with essential life-long learning experiences for whole-person development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics, according to individual potential, so that all students can become active, responsible and contributing members of society, the nation and the world. The school curriculum should help students to learn how to learn through cultivating positive values, attitudes, and a commitment to life-long learning, and through developing generic skills to acquire and construct knowledge. These qualities are essential for whole-person development to cope with challenges of the 21st century. A quality curriculum for the 21st century should therefore set the directions for teaching and learning through a coherent and flexible framework which can be adapted to changes and the different needs of students and schools

(CDC-ED, 2001a).

It shows that the introduction of PGE (Appendix F) has met the educational aims of Hong Kong in the 21st century, as well as the first and seventh learning goals. It also indicates that it achieved the overall aims of the school curriculum to equip students with generic skills, positive values, and attitudes within a flexible framework. Despite

the grand objectives mentioned above, some scholars have different perspectives. For instance, Poon-McBrayer (2002, p. 4) states that the globalization of capitalism has exerted its influence on Hong Kong, and its education provision and the reform proposal has much in common with reforms implemented in other countries. The reform proposals have been subjected to a considerable criticism. For example, it has been claimed that education is for prestige, and learning is for earning. Cheng (2001) argues that academic achievement is still the main focus in the competitive culture of the entire education system. Fok (2004, p. 204-212) points out that the value orientations of Hong Kong's education reform lie in its economic and social significance, which can endanger other equally educationally valuable activities such as democratization, diversity, and equal opportunities. Hence, it is unclear whether the contextual and cultural factors, such as the emphasis on academic results, in Hong Kong hinder PGE development, which mainly focuses on the personal and social development of students.

In addition, the introduction of an innovation approach implies that change will occur in the system. Many stakeholders wonder what will happen when a new curriculum is introduced in schools. Tan (2002, p. 210-213) points out five tensions in the process of education reform: the tensions between conservation and innovation; between competition and collaboration; between diversity and uniformity; between priorities of the policy makers and the frontline workers; and between elitism and equity. It is unclear whether these tensions will influence PGE development as well. Fok (2001) states that these five tensions are indeed the tensions for a paradigm shift. Cheng (2006b) also questions the priority, degree of recognition, uniqueness and current problems of educational reform in Hong Kong. Whereas the workload and pressure on teachers was one of his key concerns, it mainly comes from the introduction of Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA), integrated education, increasing

non-teaching duties, promotion of school-based curriculum, crisis of closing schools, negative competition among schools, and over-emphasis on accountability, internal and external evaluations. A study done by a local teacher organisation (Hong Kong Professional Teachers Union, 2003) shows that non-teaching duties have increased to 30-40% of the whole. Sixty percent of the teachers feel pressured by the drastic change. This affects both the teaching and guidance work that teachers do. The studies showed that about one-fifth of teachers have psychiatric or emotional problems. The enormous pressure can readily be imagined. Team spirit is declining. Teachers perceive the insufficient consultation, unreasonable planning, and mismatch of resources negatively. Moreover, the adaptability and capacity of teachers are overlooked as are the crisis of school closing and pressure for Benchmark Test. Ng (2006) also mentions that the biggest crisis of education reform was that we do not fully consider the reality and the practical situation of society.

PGE was proposed to promote the well-being of our future generations. However, some question whether it is the right time to make one additional micro-reform in schools. It is unclear whether it will become another burden for teachers and schools. The consultation paper of *Learning to Learn* (CDC-ED, 2001b, p. 11) highlights the dynamic balance between the theoretical perspectives of curriculum development (Figure 2.1). It depicts the needs of intensive teacher training, smart resources allocation, and demanding leadership to strike for the balance between desirability and feasibility, central curriculum and school-based curriculum, and specialist development and holistic development and among the academic, personal, social, and economic goals of the curriculum. These issues are of the greatest concern to this study about PGE development—to determine whether the balances can be struck.

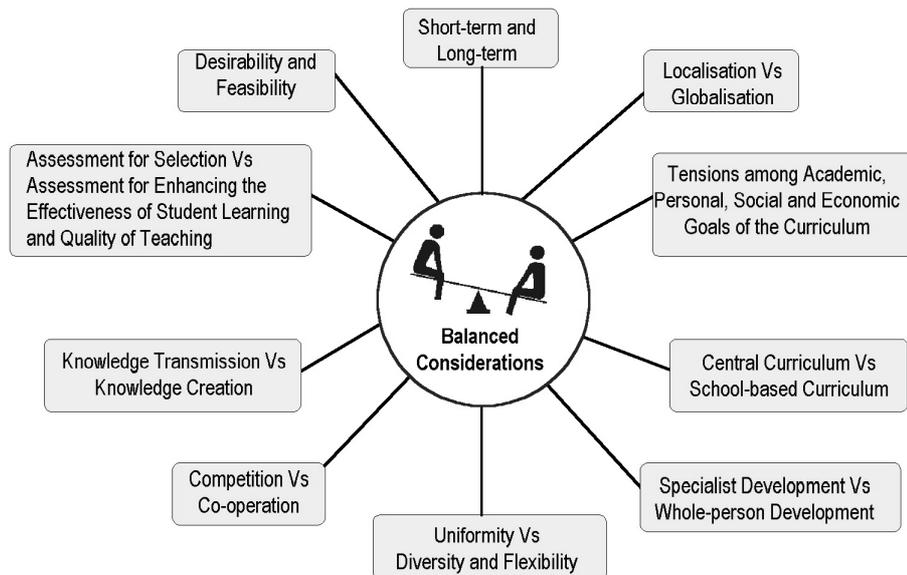


Figure 1.2 Balanced Consideration (extracted from CDC-ED, 2001b, p. 11)

1.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter briefly describes the research questions, new policy regarding PGE development, needs of teenagers, and personal growth education. Indeed, the introduction of PGE is consistent with the educational aims of Hong Kong for all-around development and the transmission of positive values and a balanced and healthy life. However, it is initiated with the curriculum reform simultaneously. It is unclear whether busy teachers and schools can effectively implement this programme. The following chapters examine whether this innovation can succeed.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter introduces the history of school guidance services in Hong Kong as well as the criticism and difficulties associated with guidance implementation. Then, it illustrates the features, learning theory, and pedagogy of PGE. Finally, the school-based curriculum development of PGE and the relationship between PGE and the formal curriculum are discussed.

2.1. Development of School Guidance Services in Hong Kong and Other Countries

PGE has been a key part of school guidance services in Hong Kong since the 2002/2003 school year. This section reviews school guidance development and describes the difficulties faced by student guidance teachers in policy implementation in some countries in order to provide the background information for PGE development.

2.1.1. The current development of school guidance services in Hong Kong

The development of guidance services in Hong Kong schools began in the 1950s. Since 1969, counselling in Hong Kong has evolved slowly from a social service agency called the “Federation of Youth Groups” (Leung, 1996). The Student Guidance Service was introduced by the government in 1978 (Social Welfare Department, 1977). Over the past 30 years, the changes in school guidance services in Hong Kong have involved resource input (including the change of manning ratio) and ideology (from remedial to preventive and developmental). The turning points happened in 1990 and 2003 with the introduction of the Whole School Approach

(hereafter, WSA) to guidance and Comprehensive Student Guidance Service, respectively.

The Whole-School Approach (WSA) to guidance was first introduced as an educational policy in *Education Commission Report No. 4 (ECR4)* (Hong Kong Education Commission, 1990). The concept was defined as the involvement of all teachers in the identification of students with problems and offering assistance. In ECR4, the WSA to guidance was described:

All teachers play a vital part in helping students to recognise and overcome their problems. Being in the front-line, teachers are often in a better position to identify students in need of help and to offer assistance. Teachers, however, require the leadership of the School Principals and the full support of the management, to create a positive environment in the schools in which students' problems are responded to in a positive and constructive manner.

Its meaning was further elaborated in *Guidelines on Whole School Approach to Guidance* for secondary school (ED, 1992, 1995) in Hong Kong: “the Whole School Approach to Guidance involves all teachers and school personnel who, under the leadership of the School Head, work together to create a positive school environment and assist all students to be aware of and to overcome their adjustment and developmental problems” (para. 1.1).

With regard to the student guidance policies in Hong Kong issued from 1986 to 2003 by the Education and Manpower Bureau, Yuen (2006) concludes that the guidance approach shifted from remedial to preventive and developmental and from reactive to proactive. Growth and learning of students are emphasised instead of improvement of

their disruptive behavior and low motivation in learning. Moreover, the concepts of collaboration, awareness, evaluation and review, integration with teaching, and learning and management are also included.

Entering the new millennium, the Student Guidance Service and Education Manpower Bureau (EMB) started to implement a Comprehensive Student Guidance Service programme (EMBSGS, 2003; EMB Circular no. 19/2003) in primary schools in 2002/2003. According to the revised Personal Growth Education document (School Development Division, May 2004), the objectives of student guidance services in the context of education reform in the 21st century are:

To promote whole-person development and life-long learning so that students can attain balanced development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics and be capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to changes, thus preparing them to meet all the challenges towards adulthood. It states that some countries have actively pursued personal growth education in schools to help promote the healthy development of students. (p. 2)

The Comprehensive Student Guidance Service document (EMBSGS, 2003; EMB Circular no. 19/2003) made strong reference to the model developed by Gysbers and Moore (1981) in the 1970s. Gysbers (2002) points out that the idea of a comprehensive school guidance programme is as a way to bring all school personnel together. Gysbers and Henderson (2001) further indicate that the primary goal of a comprehensive school counselling programme is to support student growth in academic, career and personal-social domains. These programmes allow school counsellors to shift their focus away from reacting to crisis towards becoming

proactive about student needs related to achievement (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

Gysbers (2002, p. 5) presents his model for a comprehensive guidance programme that consists of three elements: content, organisational framework and resources (as shown in Figure 2.1, adapted from Gysbers, 2002, p. 29). Firstly, the content implies the skills and knowledge that the young people need. Secondly, the organisational framework involves two components: structural components and programme components. The structural components contain the definition, assumptions and rationale for the programme design. The programme components are different delivery forms of guidance services. These include the guidance curriculum (i.e. the PGE stressed by EMBSDD, HKSAR); individual planning, which is closely related to career development and applies mostly to the secondary students or the primary students at high levels; responsive services, which include the individual and group counseling services, referral and consultation; and the system support, which includes some strategic and sustainable development for guidance services. Thirdly, the resources are human, financial and political.

Comprehensive Guidance Program Elements

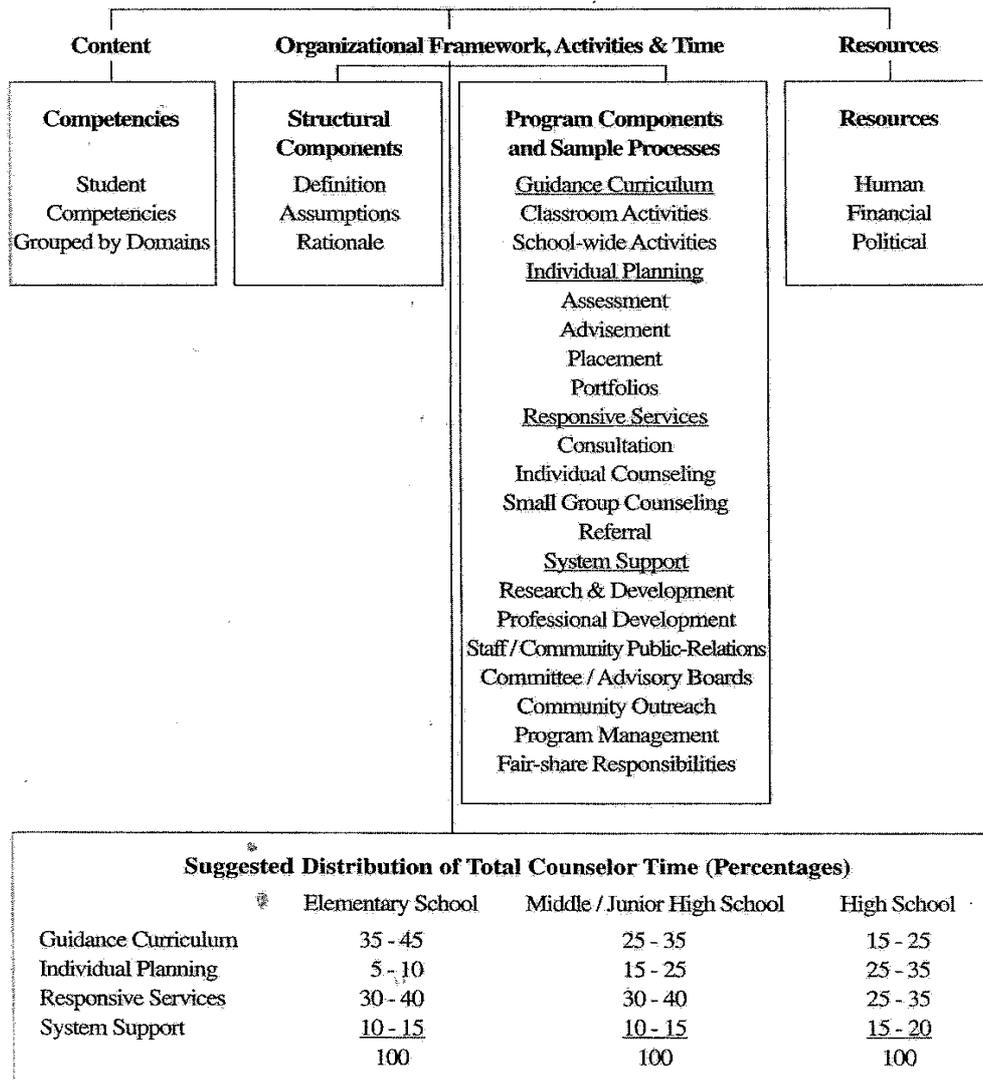


Figure 2.1 Comprehensive Guidance Programme Elements (adapted from Gysbers, 2002, p. 29).

Gysbers (2002) states the difficulties of launching such programmes, which are time, resources (personnel required and financial support) and political support. He thinks that there is a need to restructure schools to incorporate comprehensive school guidance programmes to accommodate the delivery of life skills. He emphasises that ongoing collaboration is essential to achieve the goals of the holistic approach to guidance.

The Comprehensive Student Guidance System issued for primary schools (EMBSGS, 2003; EMB Circular no. 19/2003) defines four domains of service: policy and organisation, supportive service, personal growth education and responsive service. Compared to Gysber's model, "personal growth education" and "responsive service" proposed by EMB are similar to the "guidance curriculum" and the "responsive service" defined by Gysber, respectively. "Supportive service" is similar to "system support". "Policy and organisation" implies the cultivation of school culture, setting up a guidance team and system as well as a mechanism for self-evaluation.

With regard to the progress of the Comprehensive Student Guidance System, Lee (2005) reports that a study of 600 student guidance teachers serving primary schools in 2003–2004 shows 96% of the schools had guidance teams, and 12% of the teams were headed by the school principal or the vice principal. PGE was implemented in 99% of the schools (cited in Yuen, 2006, p. 47).

2.1.2. General criticism of the guidance policy in Hong Kong in terms of the Whole School Approach to guidance

Despite the grand mission of and the preliminary satisfactory statistics from the Comprehensive Student Guidance Service (EMBSGS, 2003; EMB Circular no. 19/2003), it is unclear whether the new proposal can overcome the past criticisms of guidance development. In fact, the policy document (EMBSSD, 2004 & EMBSGS, 2003) may overlook complex issues, such as the linkage of the guidance system with the school system and subsystems, feasibility of the involvement of all stakeholders, and tension of manpower and resources. This section details the criticisms of the guidance policy and the difficulties confronted by student guidance teachers as the programme organisers.

There has been criticism of the development of student guidance services in primary schools since the 1990s, especially with regard to the mode of implementation. Shek (1999) warns that the undesirable development of guidance and counselling in Taiwan is attributed to “the heavy workload of teachers, lack of understanding of counselling in the school setting, inadequate training for counselling personnel, lack of coordination, over-emphasis on academic excellence, and government-directed development of counselling.” Unless counselling aims to enhance the academic performance of students, it may not be thought of as helpful and necessary (Shek, 1999). Hence, the question is whether it would be easy for counsellors in the school system to maintain a balance between the need for economic and manpower development (i.e., good academic achievement) and the need for holistic personal development (which may not have a direct contribution to economic growth) (Shek, 1999).

About the Whole-School Approach to guidance mentioned, Hui (1991) points out that it can be realised only when committees in schools work in harmony. Senior teachers in charge of various committees need to work together and agree on the principles, aims and focus of guidance. The Whole-School Approach to guidance is hoped to be the solution by many educators. In a seminar presentation to Hong Kong teachers on “A Whole-School Approach to Guidance”, Watkins and Wagner (1992) analyse the WSA to guidance from the different levels within schools:

1. Guidance at the organisation level includes:

- school ethos, climate, policies;
- physical and environment setting of the school;
- management system;
- curriculum.

2. Guidance at the classroom level includes:

- guidance during all subject lessons;
- guidance during specialist guidance lessons, i.e., from assemblies, class periods.

3. Guidance at the individual level is:

- offered by class teachers;
- offered by guidance teachers;
- offered by others, such as school social workers.

Watkins and Wagner (1992) emphasise that the delivery of guidance requires 3Cs: “Clarity” about school goals, guidance policy; “Communication” among teaching staff and between the senior management and the teaching staff; and “Co-ordination” amongst the subject panels and, various functional committees. McGuiness (1989) worries WSA would end up with only a “supplementary vitamin approach” if the school is not wholly involved in the guidance programmes. Hamblin (1989) reminds it is necessary to build a team for such collective practice. Meanwhile, the school administrators play a significant role in guidance too, as they act as coordinators and collaborate on provision, which ensures that pupils are kept under review, the progress is monitored, and resources are available and fully used (Dean, 1989). Yu’s (1995) study suggests that collaborative management, a caring climate and positive relationships could explain the success of the implementation of personal and social education. Gysbers (2002, p. 28) also agrees that ongoing collaboration is the critical element in realising the Whole School Approach to guidance.

Prior to 2002, the so-called WSA guidance activities in Hong Kong were largely in the form of annual events, such as Courtesy Campus, which included competitions among students and classes, slogan design, lyric writing, and storytelling. These programmes

were primarily launched at the organisation level. They lasted from several weeks to one year, but lacked continuity. In addition, they extended beyond the regular curriculum. As a result, the effectiveness of these programmes was questioned. Young (1994) criticises that the implementation of WSA was sporadic and uneven. Chow (1998) comments that the WSA to guidance advocated since 1992 was segmented, discontinuous, fissured, non-systematic; the concept of the WSA was immature and lacked a holistic plan and development strategy. Though the WSA to guidance intends for all teacher involvement or with integration of guidance themes into subject teaching, this view was not necessarily shared by other teachers (Hui & Lo, 1997). Some scholars have criticised the official proposal of the WSA for the absence of a theoretical framework (Lam, 1995). Teachers commented that the target behaviour was rather short-lived though majority of students felt that they had benefited from the WSA programmes (Yao, 1995). This suggests that attention should be given to what way the developmental guidance activity is introduced in schools (Hui & Lo, 1997), and guidance may never be effectively implemented without genuine support from the teachers if it is only a top-down administrative policy (Lo, 1995, p. 113). McNiffi (1988) states that change is usually resisted unless it is developed from a perceived need within the organisation. Further development of a whole-school approach to guidance demands building awareness among all teachers as well as the school management.

However, Hui (2002) states that the WSA to guidance as a system of management involves whole-school planning, administration, and a positive school climate. The successful factors of the WSA to guidance are teachers' acceptance of their role in guidance, cooperation among teachers, communication and coordination among the school's functional teams, support of the school's principals, the guidance team's acting as a catalyst, a caring and inviting school ethos, and a well-defined school

policy. In 2002, Hui's study reveals that there was still an overall mismatch between teachers' beliefs about a whole-school approach and their perceived school reality; the majority of teachers did not regard their schools as practising the WSA to guidance. Stelzer (2003) finds that there are great differences between teachers and counsellors in their approaches to school counselling and guidance, he suggests that the school counsellor should be proactive and arrange more training programmes for the school personnel.

Therefore, the WSA to guidance is a demanding cross-team activity that requires intensive collaboration between counsellors and teachers. It has been constantly stressed by EMB. In addition, it is the fundamental concept for the Comprehensive Guidance System. However, it is unclear whether PGE can become one of the key components of the Comprehensive Guidance System's triumph over the past failure of WSA to guidance. The purpose of this study is to examine the results of implementation.

2.1.3. Difficulties confronted by student guidance teachers in other countries about guidance implementation

Watkins (1998) points out that the role of the guidance specialist as leader, coordinator, and supporter is an important factor in developing a whole-school approach. This section discusses the difficulties faced by guidance teachers. Results of studies by Shek (1999), Chen (1999), See (2004), Yuen (2008), and Lau and Fung (2009) show different levels of school guidance/counselling development in some East Asian countries. In particular, there are differences in organisation and similarities among school counsellors/guidance teachers in guidance implementation.

In Taiwan, Shek (1999) finds that the undesirable development of counselling was attributed to the heavy workload of the teachers, lack of understanding of counselling in the school setting, inadequate training for counselling personnel, lack of coordination, overemphasis on academic excellence, and government-directed development of counselling. Chen (1999) also argues that, although the Education Bureau of Taiwan attempted to integrate the three concepts (teaching, discipline, and guidance) in schools, it was unsuccessful because of the ambiguity associated with the implementation. Finally, teaching and discipline took over the status of guidance and blurred the identity of guidance teachers in the 1990s. Consequently, guidance teachers became a deprived group. Desirable professional development has gradually occurred in the new millennium (Chen, 1999)

In Japan, Yagi (2008) points out that the school counselling team includes a licensed clinical psychologist, a social worker and several trained teachers and nurses. Hence, the team provides frontline guidance and counselling; specific guidance about discipline, educational life, and personal, social and academic problems; health services and psychological treatment to students.

In South Korea, full-time registered school counsellor positions were established in the schools in 2005. However, the work environment, insufficient training, heavy workload, role ambiguity, and lack of coordination among school staff caused difficulties for the school counsellors who were carrying out their remedial-reactive roles only.

In Malaysia (See, 2004), the school counselling system developed in the early 1970s, all school counsellors are registered or licensed. Since 1996, they have worked as full-time counsellors with teaching duty for three areas: academic, career, and

psychosocial and mental health. Their workload is heavy and professional.

In Mainland China, school counselling has been led by the central government since the 1990s. The Ministry of Education released the official documents of a “mental health education” curriculum to the schools in 2002, with emphasis on study skills, human relationships, and emotional and personal growth, which is taught by untrained teachers. Some trained certificate teachers are appointed as psychological counselling teachers for “mental health education” (Jiang, 2005; Yu & Wang, 2002).

Moreover, the guidance curriculum is present in different forms in different countries, including the PSHE in the UK, life skills education in the United States, PGE in Hong Kong, and mental health education in China. If the guidance curriculum is implemented by the guidance/counselling personnel or a guidance team, who should be a trained teacher, registered and licensed counsellor, social worker, or clinical psychologist. Due to the worldwide trend in changing guidance services, there has been a shift from remedial to developmental and from individual students to the whole school in countries, such as the UK, the United States, and Hong Kong. Simultaneously, this change brings about the problems of heavy workload, role ambiguity, role transition, role drift, collaboration, misunderstanding of teachers, and burnout in guidance professionals.

About the pressure and the workload of guidance teachers, Paisley and Mahon (2001), Sears and Granola (2002) and the State of Texas (2002) point out the problem of role ambiguity of school counsellors, as they are asked to deal with excessive administrative duties that hamper job functions. Ritchie (1994) notes that counsellors “must demonstrate that the practice of counseling is significantly different [from] the practice of psychology or other licensed professions” (p. 15). Pate (1995) explicitly

warns that “despite the reality of specializations, the counseling profession does not have a consistent method of recognizing specializations” (p. 181) and is in a “muddled state” (p. 183). Leung (1996) suggests four areas to improve counselling professionalism, including theoretical identity, client population, training and professional certification, and research on counselling. Leung (1997) suggests that the EMB should offer more training programmes for the serving SGTs to enhance their time management, communication and social skills so as to assist them in establishing and maintaining effective human relationships. Moreover, a licensure system for guidance professionals could be considered like some Asian countries.

This section describes the development of school guidance and counseling in Hong Kong and some Asian countries. It also details the difficulties faced by school counsellors. This study further explores whether and how the identified difficulties experienced by guidance teachers affect PGE development.

2.2. Introduction of Personal Growth Education

The introduction of PGE in the form of lessons is one of the important preventive and developmental guidance activities for WSA to guidance. This section introduces the history, official framework in Hong Kong, learning theory, pedagogy, and relationship of PGE to the central curriculum.

2.2.1. Brief introduction of personal growth education

Guidance curriculums like PGE emerged for several reasons. Considering the worsening situation of teenagers’ problems mentioned in the first chapter, many researchers have found that academic achievement makes no independent contribution

to success in life in the early time (Heath, 1977; Kohlberg, 1977; Nicholson, 1970, as cited in McGuinness, 1989). Some suggest that schools should develop a curriculum which helps students know more about themselves and society (HMI, 1979; NAPCE, 1986; Watkins, 1985), student discipline and guidance should permeate the regular curriculum and become an integral part of it (Slee, 1988), to convey the rules and values as the “hidden curriculum” (Docking, 1980; Jones, 1989). McGuinness (1989) suggests that a balanced curriculum should contain deliberately constructed strategies to develop academic and socio-emotional competence. Borders and Drury (1992a) highlight the goals of a guidance curriculum that enhances the academic results of students, fosters the moral development of students and develops their self esteem.

To address the personal and social development of students, Watkins and Wagner (1992) recommend guidance curriculum as one of the WSA strategies that inserts a curriculum into the regular curriculum and allows the concepts of guidance and counselling to penetrate every classroom. Watkins (1994) stresses the importance of adopting a holistic view for WSA to guidance and suggested that it had to be “comprehensive in its clientele”, “developmental in mission”, and “distributed in mode of delivery”. Watkins (1998) also proposes the use of the terms “cross-curricular” or “inter-subject themes” with whole-curriculum dimensions (p. 170).

About the development of the “whole-curriculum view of guidance” or the “comprehensive school counselling programme”, different approaches were applied in the UK and the United States in the last century. In the UK, this kind of approach is based on the belief that adults have a duty to teach children moral values, shape their behaviour and help them to develop good habits (Wynne, 1991, p. 143; Kilpatrick, 1992, p. 15). It is in form of a curriculum with core values for students to study directly (Lickona, 1996). The instructional process includes problem solving,

cooperative learning, experience-based projects, integrated thematic learning and discussions about putting virtues into practice, as well as more formal instruction. In the United States, there is a similar practice called “circle time” conducted in groups, not in big classes. Circle time helps pupils to express their feelings, gain a sense of belonging, and develop qualities such as trust, responsibility, empathy, cooperation, caring behaviour and respect for others through personal reflection and values verification. From the case studies of Reich (1994) and Curry (1997), circle time is found to contribute to the development of personal identity, to increase self-awareness, to foster democratic values and to train children in the complicated rules of social interaction.

Gysbers and Henderson (2000), Wittmer (2000), and Myrick (2003) also support an organised, planned, and sequential guidance curriculum. In Hong Kong, Hui (2002) also points out that there is an urgent need to enhance the guidance curriculum formally or informally, so that guidance can be delivered at the whole-school level for all students. She suggests, “Schools should adopt a “whole-curriculum view of guidance”, identifying and co-ordinating contributions from various aspects of the school, instead of merely focusing on the contribution of subjects in the delivery of guidance” (Hui, 2002, p. 78).

PGE was the first formal guidance curriculum in Hong Kong to meet the developmental needs of students. According to Best (1996), there are a number of concepts used to discuss meeting the needs of children. They include pastoral care, guidance, counseling, affective education, and PSE. These terminologies are related to PGE in several ways.

The American Psychological Association¹, Schmidt (1996), and McGuiness (1998) define counselling as a demanding remedial activity and process that involves relationship building and a great deal of complicated planning and strategies to help the clients to develop and make positive change. Different scholars, such as Wilson (1945), Mathewson (1962), Miller et al. (1978), and Watkins (1998), have various interpretations of guidance. However, they agree that guidance is a means of exploring one's potential and maximising his/her personal development. Further, Lang (1995) and Young (1994) suggest that the goals of guidance are remedial, preventive, and developmental, whereas PGE functions as preventive and developmental guidance at the classroom level. Preventive guidance is more proactive, focusing on anticipating the "critical incidents" that students may experience and teaching them effective coping strategies (Best, 1999). On the contrary, developmental guidance aims to help students to develop self knowledge, self-esteem, and character formation (Shertzer & Stone, 1981; Wu, 1993).

In the United States, the term guidance is used to describe programmes that support students' personal, social, and vocational development (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Pastoral care is similar to PGE, as it stresses personal and social development through education. In the UK, the term pastoral care is used to refer to the structures that schools adopt to help teachers to promote students' personal and social development. It is a type of PSE. WSA aims to meet the personal-social needs of students and teachers. (DES, 1989) states that the goals of pastoral care are to promote students' personal and social development and foster positive attitudes through the quality of teaching and learning, nature of relationships among pupils, teachers, and adults other than teachers, arrangements for monitoring students' overall academic, personal, and

¹ *Adopted by the ACA Governing Council, October 17–19, 1997*

social progress, specific pastoral structures and support systems, and extra-curricular activities and the school ethos.

Affective education is another term for growth education or life skills education. It is part of the educational process related to the attitudes, beliefs and emotions of students. The personal and social development, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships of students are important in affective education. It can operate on at least three levels (individual, group, and institution) with different time scales (Lang as cited in Yuen et al., 2003).

In sum, counselling, guidance, pastoral care, personal social education, and affective education aim to promote students' growth and development to different extents at various levels. Counselling refers to the caring service to meet the individual's psychological needs. Guidance and pastoral care emphasise students' personal and social development with clear goals (remedial, preventive, and developmental) and personal, social, vocational, and affective development. Beyond the collective terms, the background theories for PGE include developmental psychology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, and counseling psychology. Bronfenbrenner (1979) states that "human development is the process through which the growing person acquires a more extended, differentiated and valid conception of the ecological environment" (p. 27). PGE plays an important role in facilitating the growth of children to meet their needs in primary schools by emphasising the moral values developed from elementary concepts, such as moral reasoning (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1970), justice, honesty, and friendship.

In Hong Kong, the Education Department introduced the *Teaching Kit on Whole School Approach to Guidance* in early 1997 to encourage schools to promote

developmental guidance programmes and to enhance the academic, communication and problem-solving skills of students. In 2002, PGE was enacted to execute WSA to guidance in Hong Kong in the form of curriculum. It consists of four key learning areas (Appendix F1):

1. Personal Development (includes self-concept, problem-solving, self-management)
2. Social Development (includes acceptance and respect of others, communication skills and sociability, coping skills and conflict management)
3. Academic Development (includes study skills and learning attitude, school success and pleasant school life)
4. Career Development (life planning/commitment, working attitude and career awareness and information)

2.2.2. The learning theory and pedagogy of personal growth education

The PGE is a curriculum that allows students to learn and internalise new concepts, values, and skills about personal growth through different games and activities. In Section 6 of EMBSDD (2004), Section 6, it briefly illustrates three teaching and learning strategies for PGE: guidance and encouragement, good communication and open-mindedness, debriefing and self-reflection. Teachers or guidance personnel are encouraged to equip students with effective communication skills, which include:

“attentive listening”, “reflection of feelings”, “techniques to express oneself and be receptive to others” views and opinions”, “make good use of encouragement”, etc., to “not only create a caring and trusting atmosphere in class, but also encourage students to actively participate in classroom activities”;

and to “keep an open mind, share their personal experiences and feelings with students as well as appreciate and accept the students as individuals”. Moreover, teachers or guidance personnel are reminded to “be more efficient in time allocation and help students to share, discuss and reflect upon themselves in order to learn effectively.”

Based on the guidelines above, this section further explores the relationship between constructivism, experimental learning theory, and PGE, issues associated with curriculum design and interactive pedagogy, debriefing, internalisation, instructor-student relationships, and level of effectiveness of the guidance programme.

Experience, sharing, and reflection are the key elements of PGE that are consistent with the concept of constructivism. Von Glasersfeld (1989) describes constructivism as a “theory of knowledge with roots in philosophy, psychology and cybernetics” (p. 162). In the constructivist perspective, knowledge is constructed by the individual through interactions with the environment and from experience. Teachers of PGE are requested to act as facilitators to encourage students to discover principles for themselves and to construct knowledge by solving realistic problems. Vygotsky’s work on sociocultural learning explains how the interactions of children with significant people, such as adults, more capable peers, and cognitive tools, are internalised to form mental constructs in the sharing period of PGE. That process is called scaffolding, which is an important concept for social constructivists. It involves guiding the learner from what is presently known to what is to be known and allows students to perform tasks beyond their present abilities (Vygotsky, 1978).

Jonassen (1994, p. 35) summarises what he refers to as “the implications of constructivism for instructional design”. The following principles illustrate how

knowledge construction can be facilitated which are largely coherent with the principles of the PGE: (1) provide multiple representations of reality; (2) represent the natural complexity of the real world; (3) focus on knowledge construction, not reproduction; (4) present authentic tasks (contextualising rather than abstracting instruction); (5) provide real-world, case-based learning environments, rather than pre-determined instructional sequences; (6) foster reflective practice; (7) enable context and content-dependent knowledge construction; and (8) support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation.

PGE as a type of PSE, its pedagogy should be pupil-centred, active, participatory, and experiential. Claxton (1984) suggests that personal and social education should adopt an experiential approach to learning. Experiential learning theory (ELT) utilises the basic learning concepts of PGE. It builds on the work of learning and development theorists, such as John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, William James, Carl Jung, Paulo Freire, and Carl Rogers (Kolb & Kolb as cited in Yeganeh, 2006). The theory provides a framework for understanding both the cyclical nature of experiential learning and individual learning tendencies, the latter being referred to as learning style. Kolb (1984) conceptualises learning styles as dynamic states resulting from a learner's preference to resolve dual dialectics of experiencing/conceptualising and acting/reflecting. These four learning modes anchor the cycle of experiential learning. When learners touch on all four learning modes, they experience the full cycle of learning and are more likely to be responsive to contextual demands (cited in Yeganeh, 2006, p. 4). Knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). There are six characteristics of experiential learning:

1. It is a process, not an outcome,
2. It derives from experience,

3. It requires an individual to resolve dialectically opposed modes of adaptation,
4. It is a holistic integrative process,
5. It requires the interplay between a person and the environment, and
6. It results in knowledge creation.

(Kolb, 1984; Kayes, 2001, 2002 cited in Yeganeh, 2006, p. 4)

The following model shows the four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations.

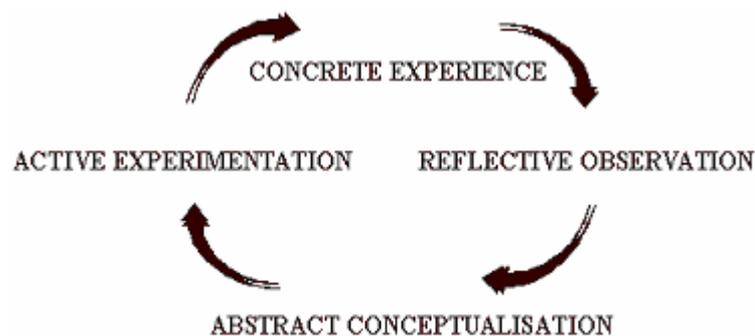


Figure 2.2 Experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984).

In addition, the following elements of PSE suggested by Ryder and Campbell (1988) and large group guidance skills described by Myrick (1993) should be addressed in PGE lesson design and teaching. Ryder and Campbell (1988) suggest the following five elements for PSE:

- Values: valuing of self (self-esteem and self-respect), personal values, social values, balancing principles and consideration of values in given contexts.
- Relationships: emphasis on self in relation to others, relationship between people or groups at a micro- and macro-level.

- Skills and processes: communication, decision-making (assessment of motivation, influences, consequences); problem solving (analysis of strategies); reflection (reasoning, rationality, clarification); transfer (making connections, being adaptable).
- Knowledge base: content, concepts, knowledge and body of facts derived from the disciplines of philosophy, psychology and sociology. It is the learning about the learner himself/herself.

Due to the large group of guidance features of PGE, the following important skills mentioned by Myrick (1993) should be considered and addressed: (1) using an urgent case as the content of the lessons, (2) enhancing the self-understanding of students so that they achieve their individual targets in the growing process, (3) understanding students through their non-verbal expressions, and (4) using praise to enhance student participation. This requires changes in the pedagogy of teachers.

Further, to facilitate successful experimental learning, the instructor-student relationship and in-depth debriefing in PGE lessons are emphasised by EMB. Regarding the similar approach of “circle time”, Dixon (1981) and Lang (1996) suggest that the attitude, enthusiasm, and social and communicative competence of the teacher are vital to the success of circle time. They also emphasise the need for considerable teacher preparation, open-ended questioning, clarifying, summarising, building on pupils’ contributions and encouraging students to respond to one another (Clare et al., 1996). The attitude of the teacher should be open and non-judgmental. They should work alongside students in order to co-construct the story with them, acknowledge the student’s moral choices, actions, and feelings, and understand the moral lessons inherent in these stories (Tappan, 1991; Tappan & Brown, 1996). To enhance interactions, discussion, and reflection, effective pedagogies, such as role

play, drama (Winston, 1998), mock parliaments, educational games, simulation exercises, practical activities, cooperative learning, project work, group work, pupil-directed research, problem solving, critical reasoning, theme days, and dilemma discussions are encouraged. These are viewed as more effective than academic courses in promoting the development of moral reasoning (Rest & Thoma, 1986, DeHaan et al., 1997), especially with regard to training in problem-solving skills.

With regard to the debriefing or reviewing skills stressed by EMB, Greenway (2004) defines that reviewing is a process the purpose or effect of which is to enhance the value of a recent experience. This includes reflection, communication, analysis, feedback and any looking ahead that arises from such processes. Alternative terms are “processing”, “debriefing” and “reflection”. The term “reviewing” applies both to what the learner does and to what the facilitator does. Instead, Greenway uses four Fs to represent the four steps (facts, feelings, findings and futures) of reviewing in his website as follows (from website of active-reviewing²), which is similar to Kolb’s experiential learning model: concrete experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations :

- i. Facts: Feedback in this zone represents the neutral and superficial feedback which is based on information picked up by observation only.
- ii. Feelings: Feedback in this zone involves revealing something about what is going on under the surface. It does not involve judgments such as “I feel that ...”
- iii. Findings: Feedback in this zone can generate resistance because it involves being judged by others. People are generally less resistant to positive feedback and are more likely to listen, accept and use feedback if they

² Website of "the ACTIVE REVIEWING guide": <http://reviewing.co.uk/learning-cycle/feedback-methods.htm>:
debriefing skills website

have specifically asked for it, for instance, seeing and hearing yourself or receiving feedback in response to a specific question that you have asked.

- iv. Futures: Feedback in this zone can take many forms. It is generally based on how people respond to your attempts to tell or show them what you intend to do in the future.

In addition, Mak and Tang (2007) list the five principles of debriefing, which are space, positive orientation, attentive listening, choice and exchange, that reminds of the important attitudes of teachers in guidance activities and also PGE teaching. In short, it is S.P.A.C.E.:

1. Space implies appropriate design, room, length, environment, sense of security and even chances for all.
2. Positive Orientation implies positive, appreciative words, genuine and open attitude for any critique and comment, with no violence allowed.
3. Attentive Listening implies respect for the one who shares and to be attentive as a listener or a facilitator.
4. Choice implies the choice to share to different extents and to go into depth after we get the consent of the participants, and
5. Exchange implies the even chance for sharing, encouraging exchange between a speaker and listeners, all participants being focused, but not the facilitators, allowing the presence of different points of view, aims on exchange, support and encouragement.

It is important to determine how much the students learned. One of the main concerns in PGE lessons involves the internalisation of new values, attitudes, and skills. Internalisation implies that the cognitive development of children occurs mainly from the outside in through their gaining knowledge from the environment. Vygotsky (1934,

1962) argues that children learned from the environment and interactions with people (as cited in Cheng, 2006a). Anderson et al (2001) illustrate five levels in the affective domain that describe the way in which people react emotionally and their ability to feel another living thing's pain or joy. They include receiving, responding, valuing, organising, and characterising. Whereas the last two levels are important to allow students in PGE lessons to reflect and apply what they learned, the affective objectives involve awareness and growth in attitudes and feelings. That is, PGE also facilitates metacognition, which involves critical thinking that is necessary for analysis and evaluation of oneself. It is interpreted as "cognition about cognition" (Cheng, 2006a, p. 279). PGE helps children to reorganise, reflect, and evaluate their experience through activities and the debriefing process.

However, it is unclear how effective the PGE curriculum is. Section 7 of EMBSDD (2004) suggests that assessment could be done via (1) portfolio on student's personal growth, (2) teachers' observation, (3) peer evaluation, (4) parent evaluation, and (5) self-evaluation. With regard to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the guidance programme, Yuen (2007) integrated ideas from Borders and Drury (1992b) and Callahan (1993) to illustrate that effective evaluation of a guidance curriculum in schools consists of (1) meetings for programme evaluation, (2) appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative data, and (3) collaboration between students, teachers, and parents. The following section includes details about these three elements:

(1) Meetings for programme evaluation, the followings show the checklist for teachers and SGTs to evaluate:

- Ideology and targets: what they are and to what extent they have been achieved?
- Evaluation of students' need

- Curriculum design: the appropriateness of the design and content and the inter-relationship of different sections of curriculum, in order to meet the needs of students.
 - Teachers and SGTs: selection, training and the role of teachers and SGTs during the process
 - Administration of the programme: has the whole school understand, accept and ready to implement the programme with clear labour division, financial support and evaluation system?
 - Selection of appropriate evaluation tool: it includes use of right tool and evaluation the programme with pre-test and post-test.
 - Follow up plan: to work out the suggestions to follow up
- (2) Appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative data
- Use of the data from Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) or other qualified test
 - Use of qualitative data including teachers' observations, open-ended questionnaires, focus group and personal diary of students.
- (3) The collaboration between students, teachers and parents facilitates the dialogues between the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents and SGTs) and provides a platform for continued communication that will support sustainable development of the curriculum. (Sagor, 1999; Zunker, 1994)

Both EMBSDD (2004) and Yuen (2007) suggest qualitative, rather than quantitative assessment. Lau (2007) agrees that the guidance curriculum is about growth and living; therefore, it may be inappropriate to use test scores as evaluation tools, given that observation about changes in students' attitudes is important; he also emphasised that all activities are opportunities to involve students. Lau adds that the message that is conveyed is important and suggests that it should emerge from students' experiences

and reflections through the debriefing process.

Nevertheless, the exact timing and extent of the assessment and factors, such as family education and peer and media influences, are other factors that impact the affective performance of students. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the guidance programme is a complicated issue. This study was done between 2002-2007 to triangulate the feedback from different stakeholders and to explore the themes that emerged regarding the applied strategies.

This section describes the conceptual background of the learning theory of PGE. The curriculum design of PGE was partly based on the literature, with its emphasis on the importance of debriefing, internalisation, and the instructor-student relationship. The following chapters explore the practical situations at the school and classroom levels and examine the extent to which the stakeholders respond and perform.

2.3. School-based Curriculum Development of Personal Growth Education and its Relationship with the Formal Curriculum

As mandated in EMBSDD (2004), all guidance teachers must implement PGE for all levels in schools in three years' time (2002–2005). This suggests that guidance teachers have to develop, lead, and manage a school-based curriculum and train all teaching staff for this new programme. In Section 8 of EMBSDD (2004), it states, "Schools can develop the school-based PGE according to their aims, culture, characteristics and students' needs". However, it is unclear whether this school-based curriculum can be successful, given the previous failure of the WSA to guidance in Hong Kong. The following section illustrates the key elements that may affect the development of a school-based curriculum including the findings of several recent

studies.

2.3.1. School-based curriculum development

With regard to curriculum development, Stenhouse (1975) defines a curriculum as “an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice” (p. 4-5). He also claims that:

a curriculum should be grounded in practice. It is an attempt to describe the work observed in classrooms that it is adequately communicated to teachers and others. Finally, within limits, a recipe can varied according to taste. So can a curriculum. (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 4–5)

This means that a curriculum should be designed for the needs of students and be open for discussion and continuous improvement. Elliott (1994) further argues that curriculum should include a dialogue between students and teachers: “The curriculum, as the language of education, not only refers to things in the world, its contents, but also marks the stance the teacher is to adopt towards the use of the students’ mind in relation to them” (p. 43-69).

Concerning school-based curriculum development, Elliott (1998, p. 183) proposes that in an ideal school, “the pedagogical practices of teachers are not shaped by an organisation defined in terms of power relationships, but one which maintains the conditions of free and open critical discourse which is the production of a “rational consensus” grounded in the democratic values of freedom, equality and justice”. He notes, “It is essentially the theory that pedagogical change fundamentally involves the collaborative reconstruction of the professional culture of teachers through the

development of discursive consciousness” (Elliott, 1998, p. 188). He suggests “the role of [the] facilitator [is] to help with the beginning of the reform, together with triangulation methods to get points from different stakeholders for further development” (Elliott, 1998, p. 188). In the implementation of the curriculum, all affected parties, including parents and students, should be involved (Watkins et al., 1987, Jones, 1989, Turner, 1996). Ideally, the curriculum will be modified continuously by the professional teachers and the related stakeholders. These argument and proposal had inspired the basic concepts for school-based curriculum development.

In Hong Kong, the idea of school-based curriculum development (SBCD) appeared in the document “*A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong*” (*the Llewellyn Report*), released in November 1982. In the report, it suggests that “genuine drive towards school-based curriculum selection and adaptation, together with school-based programme and pupil evaluation, would open up new horizons for teacher participation” (Visiting Panel, 1982, p. 58). In the CDC Report, “*Learning to Learn: The Way Forward in Curriculum Development*”, SBCD is defined as “the outcome of a balance between guidance from the CDC and the autonomy of the school and teachers” (CDI-ED, 2000, p. 70). In the course of SBCD, schools are advised to refer to the following guidelines:

- Follow the direction and learning targets of CDC
- Help students achieve learning targets
- Build on strengths of schools and needs of students
- Develop teachers and collaborate with other partners
- Vary the choice of subjects/organisation of contents
- Develop learning, teaching and assessment strategies

- Adapt learning resources
- Use time flexibly
- Reflect and improve based on informed practice

(CDC-ED, 2000, p. 70)

Therefore, the vision, culture, and leadership of the school may affect school-based curriculum development. In the context of PGE development, leadership employs two perspectives: leadership for guidance development and school-based guidance curriculum. Principals have the roles of facilitating, monitoring and supervising SGT's work, while SGTs are responsible "to organise, design and launch PGE for students to cultivate their interpersonal skills as well as their skills in self-understanding, pursuing life-long learning and meeting life challenges" (EMBSGS, 2003, 2.23 (a) i). Schools are cautioned not to overload SGO/SGT/SGP with PGE, since "the effectiveness and extensive implementation of PGE hinge on the active involvement of all teachers" (2.23 (a) iii).

In terms of curriculum leadership, Doll (1996) mentions the factors affecting the quality of curriculum leadership are the perception of curriculum leadership, the definition of and expectations for the role of curriculum leadership, leadership style, the potential difficulties of a curriculum leader and their performance and directions. Hall (1996) points out that a curriculum leader should lead the design, development, improvement, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum.

Cai et al. (2005) conclude that the changing concepts of curriculum leadership range from the responsibility of principal and administrator (Bailey, 1990), to the involvement and effort of teachers (Elliott, Brooker, Thurlow & McInman, 1996). This implies that the success of a curriculum is the effort input of all the staff in a

school. Hence, Cai et al. (2005) believe that a curriculum coordinator should be an enthusiastic educator, a good role model for teachers, a proactive learner, and a critical, reflective thinker. He/She needs to think all-round, listen to opinions carefully and contemplate duly before taking action; solve conflicts and coordinate different parties; care for the stress and pressure of teachers and be empathetic; balance different opinions and find consensus and solutions with teachers; manage human resources well; and be a trustworthy administrative person, to gain the support of principals. However, some factors affect curriculum leaders (Cai et al., 2005). These include personality, age, personal experience, position of curriculum leaders and empowerment from principals (those can affect the leadership style and performance), and time constraints that limit the extent of discussion and monitoring. Moreover, the harmonious culture of schools and comprehensible instructions are other key factors in curriculum leadership. Cai et al. (2005) recommend the following strategies and the approaches the curriculum leaders can use:

1. Stepwise approach: to develop the professionalism of teachers.
2. Proactive approach: to build up the visions and characteristics, and analyse the situations to direct the school-based development on the right track.
3. Group development approach: let teachers at the same level or in the same subjects work together for the curriculum.
4. Modelling approach: use the successful cases of other schools as models for reference at the beginning.
5. Job allocation approach: clearly allocate jobs and other resources for teachers and curriculum coordinators (hereafter, CC(s)) to let them feel secure and with room for curriculum development
6. Integration approach: CCs should analyse and integrate all kinds of curricula developed by teachers and avoid overlapping parts of them.

7. Guidance approach: CCs should give guidelines to teachers in the curriculum planning meetings. After that, they will get used to it and share freely.
8. Enhancement approach: let parents understand what is going on in the curriculum reform.

Natural adaptation approach: let teachers get used to appraisals before the policy is implemented.
10. Sustainable development approach: review the curriculum regularly.

This study investigates whether SGTs can shoulder all the tasks to develop PGE and how much the principals and the middle management support PGE development.

2.3.2. Constraints in school-based curriculum development

If PGE is implemented as a school-based curriculum, what will be the constraints? Morris (1996) finds that most schools do not have a well-developed system for planning their own programmes to meet students' needs, and as a result they tend to rely heavily on the central curriculum designed by the CDC. Moreover, teachers in general lack knowledge and skills in curriculum development (Law & Yu, 1995; Morris, 1995), and as the senior management, which play a nominal role, gives inadequate support (Morris, 1996). Besides, teachers' general attitude towards innovations is negative and they tend to ignore innovations or only make minor adjustments when necessary (Morris, 1996).

Collaboration is claimed to be an important element to make WSA to guidance succeed in school in the early section. Collaboration is also regarded as the involvement of all teachers in help-related exchanges, and these interactions would

lead to improvement in teaching and learning (Rosenholtz, 1989). It Collins (1999) shares the view that the school experience of affective education could be quite fragmented. Many schools have a pastoral care co-ordinator responsible (with a team of teachers) for the provision of programmes within a pastoral care system. However, many schools have no formal provision, with PSHE requirements met with religious or other curricula. Morris (1995) shares the same view and remarks that for many teachers, curriculum development is “more a private business than a collaborative exercise” (p. 9) and that teachers often work in isolated contexts. Indeed, it is a world-wide problem. According to the findings of two separate pieces of research conducted in the United States by Goodlad (1984) and Rosenholtz (1989), the culture of the majority of schools studied was negative in that it was not conducive to collaborative effort and teachers were mostly working in isolation.

This section describes the possible constraints in school-based curriculum development with other studies. Findings suggest that they primarily rely upon the central curriculum, inadequate skills of teachers and managers, problems with collaboration, and isolated culture of teachers.

2.3.3. Recent Studies related to the personal growth education

In Hong Kong, researchers have conducted studies about guidance curriculum since the mid-1990s, prior to the formal enactment of the PGE. Lo (1995), Yu (1995), and Hui (1997) studied the implementation of developmental guidance programmes and find that the success of these programmes depended upon the school context, collaborative management, a caring climate, and positive relationships in the schools. Hui (1998) points out that the guidance curriculum was still “underdeveloped” in Hong Kong schools.

At the time of the writing of this thesis, more data were published from “*The Life Skills Development Project*” conducted by the Faculty of Education of Hong Kong University since 2003. This project is carried out with the support of EMB as a study about guidance curriculum in both primary schools and secondary schools. Life skills are defined as the everyday competences that facilitate an individual’s academic progress, personal and social development, and positive career planning. Examples include study skills, work habits, interpersonal relationship skills, knowledge of self and others, self-management and leadership skills, financial management, decision making, and problem solving (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Yuen et al., 2003). This study (Yuen et al., 2006, p.15) finds that self efficacy tends to decline a little bit as the students (P4 to P6 students) get older after taking the life skills development course for one year. It also indicates that there may be a reciprocal relationship between effective life skills and positive relationship of the students in schools. Nevertheless, it implies schools have the responsibility “to foster positive interpersonal relationship between teachers and students and among students” (Yuen et al., 2006, pp. 17, 61). As this study (Yuen et al., 2006) cannot display the drastic change of students over a period of one year, it suggests a longitudinal study for long-term effects of guidance and counselling programmes and the implementation of comprehensive school guidance programme in Hong Kong (Yuen et al., 2007, p. 17) and an in-depth study about management input (Lee, 2005). Hopefully, this study can partially achieve this suggestion.

Lau’s (2005) research about PGE implementation also aimed to collect the opinions and comments of nine teachers through a short PGE training course and its practice in schools. He concludes with several important findings:

1. Misunderstanding about the PGE: most teachers do not understand the PGE including the aims, the content and the skills, mainly because they lack the related training and the curriculum is designed and written by guidance professionals, which reduces the chances to understand the PGE more.
2. Lack of resources and support for the PGE: lack of training and support in curriculum design is the main problem and teachers feel anxious about. At that time, the training and resources available were very limited with differences in quality and may not match the needs of schools.
3. Lack of sense of recognition: most of the teachers just feel that the PGE is “something” more in the timetable. Their high involvement is not found. They feel ambivalent towards the presence of the PGE and find it difficult to motivate each other to participate actively.
4. Time constraints: most teachers in this study claimed that they have no time to deal with the PGE because of the time pressure to deal with other reforming issues.
5. Teachers’ quality: about half of teachers believe that teachers’ quality is the basic element for the success of the PGE, i.e. their values, understanding their students, teacher-students relationship, presentation and experience. The individual difference among teachers affects the effectiveness and development of the PGE.
6. The attitudes of students and parents: teachers are worried about the attitude of academic performance-oriented parents not feeling that the PGE is important for their children. Therefore, the PGE could be marginalised, especially in the higher forms.

Lau points out the problems of quality, training, teachers’ skills and acceptance of the PGE, lack of resources and support, time constraints, and the attitudes of students and parents. Therefore, it is interesting to explore how guidance teachers overcome the

difficulties in different contexts.

It is important to consider which strategies should be applied for successful implementation. EMBSDD (2004) highlights the importance of the PGE because it allows the schools to implement the PGE in their own way. However, some issues, such as the contextual factors, constraints, and role transition of SGTs, might have been overlooked. Moreover, the guidelines about the strategy, allocation of time, manpower and resources, teacher training, curriculum design and modification/integration, team management, and sustainable development of the PGE are unclear (EMBSDD, 2004). The “optimistic and experimental” tone of the document seems to imply that PGE is “flexible” to be executed and may let SGTs be frustrated.

2.3.4. Orientation of the personal growth education in the formal curriculum

It is unclear whether PGE has any place in the formal curriculum or whether it is a stand-alone programme in primary education. EMBSDD (2004) encourages integrating PGE into other learning areas, such as General Studies (GE), Moral and Civic Education (MCE), and even Chinese or Physical Education, via cross-curricular activities. It is important to find a feasible way to orient PGE. With regard to integration, Lau (2007) predicts the outcomes of different delivery methods of the guidance curriculum. He argues that if the guidance curriculum was in an integrated form, there would be no need to create a new curriculum that might create problems with resource allocation. However, integration requires collaboration and consensus among teachers. Otherwise, overlapping or ignorance with regard to content may occur. The teaching quality and the learning outcome cannot be secured unless these conditions are met. Some teachers may also ignore the guidance content by finishing

their subject syllabus first, thereby failing to achieve integration. If the guidance curriculum is implemented independently, time allocation will present the greatest challenge. However, it can make the guidance curriculum more important, distinctive, and systematic. If schools can allocate the manpower appropriately, they can achieve a quality outcome.

Pring (1984) suggests that the integration of personal and developmental education into the curriculum could be achieved by placed it in various disciplines across the curriculum. He opposes setting up a single and separate subject for it. Pring emphasises the fact that it does not require a revolutionary change in the system to provide guidance. Instead, it requires a way of approaching old subjects of relevance to young people. Developmental education can be purposefully diffused into the existing subjects. It is an issue of cross-curriculum collaboration. Galloway (1990) also stresses that curriculum planning was a joint responsibility. McGuinness (1989) proposes the infusion of guidance themes into the academic curriculum as a way of achieving a whole-school approach which involves all teachers and all students.

With regard to the suggestions above, integration seems possible. The potential pros and cons of integration of PGE with will be further explored in the subsequent sections and chapters. The following section briefly describes the relationships between PGE with MCE, GS, PSHE, and religious education (in terms of Christianity).

2.3.4.1. Moral and Civic Education development and PGE

Among all subjects, the one with strong ties with PGE is MCE. *Primary Education and Pre-primary Services, The Curriculum* (ED, 1981, p.14) states, “Moral education

has recently attracted considerable interest in connection with the increasing problems of juvenile delinquency and crime. Guidelines are being prepared to assist schools in this difficult area of education.” This initiated MCE development in Hong Kong. The Civic Education Guidelines (ED, 1996) state that civic education aims “to enable students to understand how the individual, as a citizen, relates to the family, the neighbouring community, the regional community, the national community and the world” (p. 5):

In the case of Hong Kong, the civic learner needs to know the cultural and political identity of Hong Kong as a Chinese community, as a British colony for a certain period, and as the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region [HKSAR] of China from July 1997. At a time of political transition, we need our citizens to actively adopt a new national identity and to be participative and contributive to bring about smooth transitions, to sustain prosperity and stability and to further improve the Hong Kong society. (p. 21)

Parallel to the development of guidelines and teaching material on personal and social education, the Education Department has also recognised the need for students’ whole-person development. In particular, the official document *School Education in Hong Kong* (Education Commission, 1993) includes a statement of aims: “The development of the full potential of every individual child, so that our students become independent-minded and socially aware adults, equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which help them to lead a full life as individuals and play a positive role in the life of the community” (p. 8).

The Education Commission Report No. 7 (Education Commission, 1997, p. 8) echoes the same aim by saying that “traditional Chinese values towards a whole-person

education of a child include moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic development.....Our society needs committed citizens and needs to develop fully the potential of its students”.

In the Basic Education Curriculum Guide (CDC-ED, 2002e), a migration strategy was suggested. Re-focusing, re-organisation and re-engineering of MCE in schools were proposed through a more practical approach. Re-focusing puts emphasis on the five priority values and attitudes (they are the responsibility, commitment, respect for others, perseverance and national identity). Re-organisation requires the adoption of a Life Events Approach, while re-engineering enhances the whole-school approach. All these are strongly recommended to be done through joint partnership and collaboration of the different key players. In CDC-ED (2002e), PGE and the role of SGTs are rarely mentioned. It states that PGE could be an independent programme of MCE (p. 14), guidance teachers could be allowed to be MCE coordinators (p. 18) or a post to collaborate in the theme-based learning activities (p. 19).

2.3.4.2. Personal, social and humanities education (PSHE) development and PGE

Another area strongly related to PGE is Personal, Social and Humanities Education (hereafter, PSHE), which is similar to General Studies (hereafter, GS) in primary schools, in which the strand termed “personal and social development” is well related to the values and attitudes, and the generic skills emphasised in the curriculum guidelines of PSHE and GS. “Personal and social development” encompasses the emotional, affective and health aspects of education (McLaughlin & Byers, 2001). The six strands of PSHE serve the purpose of “linking the development of competence and skills, values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding into a holistic learning

process” (CDC-ED, 2002a, p. 23) for Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE) in the Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1–Secondary 3). Figure 2.3 is adopted from Chan (2006) and depicts the strands, values and attitudes and the generic skills of PSHE proposed by the EMB.

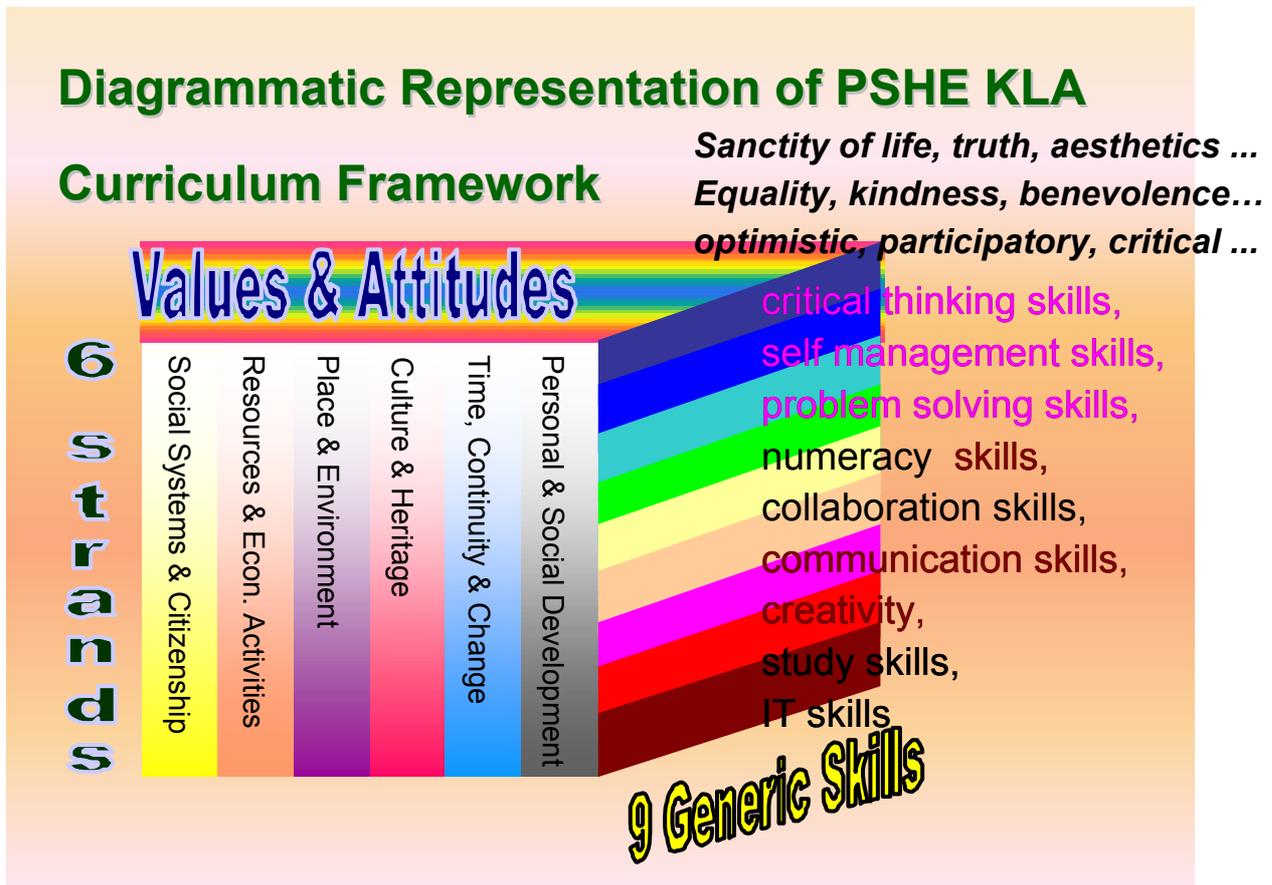


Figure 2.3 Diagrammatic Representation of PSHE Key Learning Area Curriculum Framework. (adapted from Chan (2006))

By examining the difference between GS and PGE, I compared the proposed PGE curriculum framework and a set of sample GS textbooks (Chui & Cheng, 2004) designed in accordance with the GS syllabus. The findings show that the weighting of PGE elements in the textbook is presently obviously. Further, there is a U-shaped distribution of PGE elements from P1 to P6, with the lowest proportion in the middle levels. PGE may help to remedy the situation at the middle levels to meet the needs of student in Levels 3 and 4. Moreover, there is room for improvement, especially in the

means of internalisation of the positive values and behaviour and the guidance for in-depth debriefing.

2.3.4.3. Recent reform in religious education (Christianity) in Hong Kong

Given the religious backgrounds of Schools A and B, the discussion of RE in this study is in terms of Christianity and the related research and documents. In the view of the Catholic Church, RE has been regarded as a “major vehicle for moral education for many years” (Priestley, 1987, p. 107). Beck (1998) argues that the relationship between religion and morality is by no means clear-cut. The values most frequently mentioned by RE are “awareness of spirituality”, “tolerance”, “respect for others”, and “love” (Taylor, 1989). Nevertheless, Ng (1990) states that the functions of RE should not only help pupils to think about religion and life, but it also guides student in the realisation of their own commitments of religious faith or their choices of values. According to Lee (1990), RE is intended to “help students search and establish their own axiology” (p. 19). He highlights the intrinsic values of RE and notes that its aim was to achieve self-actualisation. With regard to promoting students’ growing needs and personal development, Cardinal Wu (1995)³ of Hong Kong suggests that:

to help our students form responsible and positive attitudes towards life and society, Catholic schools should teach Christian morality in all its richness, love and life education, civic and national education. Special care and attention must be given to students who have personal and family problems.

We should treat them like little brothers and sisters of Christ. (p. 15)

Toward the end of the last century, the Catholic Church started to review its religious

³ CARDINAL JOHN B. WU (1995). *Proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Spread the Kingdom of God. March into the Bright Decade. Pastoral Exhortation Interim Report and Proposals.*

education, targets, and pedagogy. Many important documents were issued to redefine RE. In “*Catholic Secondary Schools, Primary Schools & Kindergartens, Religious & Moral Education Curriculum Document*” (RMECTG-CEO, 2006) issued by the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong (hereafter, CDHK), Points 87–90 outline the important values of Catholic life for Christian education. Beyond love, the basic elements of a Christian social ethic are:

1. The human person, the central focus of the social order;
2. Justice, the recognition of the rights of each individual;
3. Honesty, the basic condition for all human relationships;
4. Freedom, the basic right of each individual and of society.
5. World peace founded on good order and the justice to which all men and women have a right as children of God;
6. National and international well-being depend on the fact that the goods of the earth are gifts of God, and are not the privilege of some individuals or groups while others are deprived of them.

The Congregation for Catholic Education⁴ (1988, Section 3.5) frankly points out a lot of drawbacks of the RE, especially the loose structure, outdated pedagogy, weak linkage between daily life, little room for personal reflection, inadequate sharing and listening, inadequate teaching training, and lack of research study about development of RE in Hong Kong. Moreover, some teachers also point out the crisis of marginalisation of RE in school (Verbatim 2.3.3.) In the document “*The Catholic School*”⁵ (point 50) further explains that RE should be implemented in a systematic manner and not simply expect intellectual assent to knowledge but invite the

⁴ THE CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (1988) *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* 天主教學校教育的宗教幅度: *Guidelines for reflection and renewal*

⁵ THE SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (1977) *The Catholic School* 天主教學校

commitment of a person with Christ as the model. “Teaching is not merely confined to “religious classes” within the school curriculum, it must be imparted explicitly and in a systematic manner to prevent a distortion in the child's mind between general and religious culture...being to the Person of Christ” (citation).

“*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*”, Part Two, point 26, notes:

Prime responsibility for creating this unique Christian school climate rests with the teachers, as individuals and as a community. The religious dimension of the school climate is expressed through the celebration of Christian values in Word and Sacrament, in individual behaviour, in friendly and harmonious interpersonal relationships, and in a ready availability. . . .If it is not present, then there is little left which can make the school Catholic. (CCE, 1988)

Communication and frank collaboration is encouraged among teachers in Catholic Schools, to “develop a real willingness to collaborate among themselves. . . .Channels of communication should be open among all those concerned with the school” (Point 39). Hence, it shows there was a trend to develop RE in a more comprehensive way to link up with the curriculum reform. “Religious instruction, therefore, should be integrated into the objectives and criteria which characterise a modern school. . . .It should seek appropriate interdisciplinary links with other course material so that there is coordination between human learning and religious awareness” (Point 62).

The CDHK perceived that the RE curriculum was lagging behind the reform, it then try to impose rigorous curriculum reform since 2002. *The Happy Road*, a set of current

⁶ THE CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (1988) *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* 天主教學校教育的宗教幅度: *Guidelines for reflection and renewal*

RE textbooks, was criticised for being uninteresting and lacking a strong link to daily life. Therefore, the content of *The Happy Road* must be re-examined (RMECTG-CEO, 2006). Besides, teachers must handle carefully the topics related to miracles, violence and war (conflicts in Jewish history, God’s punishment for Adam and Eve, flooding, death, famine or diseases), the faith stories with sacrifice and also sensitive topics like the pregnancy of Mary, Heaven and Hell. Children nowadays may not be satisfied and query God’s will and power. (Verbatim 2.3.3. shows some points of view of the RE teachers and the reform they tried.)

Religion teachers (adapted from Points 96–97) must have a thorough cultural, professional, and pedagogical training, and they must be capable of genuine dialogue with authentic human qualities (like Christ), including culture with affection, tact, understanding, serenity of spirit, a balanced judgment, patience in listening to others and prudence in the way they respond, and, finally, availability for personal meetings and conversations with the students. An unprepared teacher can do a great deal of harm. Hence, RMECTG-CEO (2006) tries to redefine religious education. Using the whole school approach, it emphasises that the curriculum is the responsibility of teachers of all subjects. It aims to satisfy the majority of the non-Catholic students and to cater for the real practices in Hong Kong (RMECTG-CEO, 2006, Chapter 3, p. 24). The pedagogy (Section 3.2) introduces the “Shared Christian Praxis” approach which tries to link daily events and reflections with the Bible to enlighten students through discussion and sharing. There are four steps:

1. “Affection” in “describing and reflecting upon life experience”
2. “Affection” in “accessing the Christian Story – Scripture, Church traditions and teachings”
3. “Affection” in “integrating the Christian Story and life experience”

4. “Affection” and “determination” in “response”

This new approach encourages the strong linkage of Christian Story and life experience. Teachers have to guide students to express, reflect and share their daily lives by means of the stories in the Bible. This is similar to the PGE approach. It shows that CDHK had taken action to reform the obsolete curriculum used for 30 years by introducing new concepts, priority and pedagogy. They were going to adopt a more strategic approach to restructure and to reposition the subject with a comprehensive approach, and consideration of the linkage with moral education, the Chinese culture and the characteristics of oriental parental practices. CDHK also suggests putting “religious and moral education curriculum” in the domain of MCE (RMECTG-CEO, 2006, p. 2).

Later chapters will show the complexity of the issue and explore the position of PGE in view of curriculum development and guidance development.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a brief overview of student guidance development in Hong Kong from the mid-1990s to 2002. The WSA to guidance was widely adopted in primary schools in mid-1990s. Its effectiveness was hampered due to numerous factors, such as school leadership, workload, misunderstandings, lack of consensus and training among teachers, and the conventional bias toward academic excellence in schools. The policy of Comprehensive Guidance Services was issued in 2002. PGE was introduced as part of the new policy to suffuse the guidance concepts into schools in the form of a curriculum with the WSA. The known constraints of school-based curriculum development include time, resources, school support, reliance on the

central curriculum, and teachers' inadequate skills and indifferent attitudes toward collaboration. Although PGE has similarities to MCE, PSHE (GS), and even RE, it is only implicitly mentioned in MCE curriculum reform documents. The mode of delivery, such as the integration of PGE with other related subjects, is worth investigating.

The following chapters will examine the practical situations and explore whether the constraints are present in the process of PGE development with the flexible guidelines provided by EMB.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the research design, rationale and the justification of the research methods used in this study. Moreover, there is detailed introduction of the methods of data collection from multiple sources in order to conduct a comprehensive study about PGE development. The following table shows the structure of this study.

Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 8 Conclusion To conclude the possible implementation strategies and the Implications found in Chapter 5 to 7, and to ask the research questions.
Themes emerged	Management of the political issues	
	Chapter 6 Management of the resources	
	Chapter 7 Management of the curriculum	

Table 3.1 The structure of this study

Qualitative methodology is the chief approach in this study. The qualitative methods are applied to explore the research questions with in-depth investigation, to triangulate different points of view in complex settings such as schools. On the other hand, quantitative methods are used as part of the data analysis (for questionnaires) to supplement qualitative information with the statistical results.

Qualitative research aims to produce rounded and contextual understandings on the basis of rich, nuanced and detailed data, with more emphasis on “holistic” forms of analysis and explanation than on charting surface patterns, trends and correlations (Mason, 2002, p. 3). A qualitative methodology uses a variety of methods of research

such as observation, interview, personal experience, and various texts to help describe points of study and to interpret or better understand them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Mason has stated that qualitative research has an unrivalled capacity to constitute compelling arguments about how things work in particular contexts (2002). Stake (1995) points out three major differences in qualitative and quantitative emphases: the distinction between explanation and understanding as the purpose of inquiry, the distinction between a personal and impersonal role for the researcher, and the distinction between knowledge discovered and knowledge constructed.

3.2. Research Design and Justification

3.2.1. Initiation of this study

Grounded theory research and naturalistic observation

As the SGT, I had served School A for 5 years (1999–2004) and School B for 3 years (2004–2007) as an insider. Since the curriculum reform that began in 2002, it was a critical time for the whole school. I kept at least three log books to note down my observations of the PGE implementation process. They include the feedback of principals, teachers, students, notes from Student Guidance seminars, dialogue with colleagues, lesson observations, the year plan and evaluations, the minutes of meetings and other special remarks. In other words, the grounded theory approach was applied, which means that the researcher begins with a minimum number of assumptions concerning the nature of the thing being investigated and lets insights emerge in the course of his or her observations (Martinez-Pons, 2001, p. 60) Grounded theory research combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to control the extent to which the initial subjective biases of the researcher distort the development of understanding.

At that time, I predicted that the introduction of the PGE would be a great chance for student guidance development in primary schools, because it might change the mindset of the stakeholders, impact the ongoing curriculum reform, and uplift the profile of guidance and counselling in schools. Hence, I observed and collected data simultaneously during the implementation process. The following are the steps recommended by Pressley and McCormick (1995) about grounded theory research and the description of my work accordingly:

1. Collection of qualitative data through observation or unstructured survey or interview methods.

In 2002, two years before I began the research for this thesis, I started to implement the PGE in School A. I followed the plan I designed and then collected the data for the purpose of personal reflection and review of the project. At that time, my data collection was not systematic.

2. Identification of the regularities or categories among the qualitative data.

I decided to make a systematic study of the PGE and keep my notes about what happened during the implementation process in School A including the difficulties and success of the process. Then I tried to sum up some chief problems of the case.

3. Checking for category credibility and elaboration of categories through more focused surveys or interviews.

In 2004, I started my in-depth study of PGE development in my work place and gathered the stakeholders' perspectives via quantitative and qualitative means.

4. Organisation of categories into a cohesive theoretical structure.

In 2004, I started a long period of data analysis across all sources of data. Meanwhile, about 100 issues emerged from the data from the action

research and the subsequent questionnaires and interviews. They were then categorised under the conclusive themes after analysis. Chapter Four attempts to illustrate the themes found from different stages and how they integrate and merge into this study report.

5. Construct validation of the theoretical structure through the use of statistical methodology.

Quantitative analytical skills like the t-test and Z-test were used to explore the validity of the data collected via questionnaires. Another set of emerged themes was then included for further analysis.

Participant observation

I also worked as a practitioner researcher to record the changes. According to Anderson et al. (1994):

Practitioner research is “insider” research carried out by educational practitioners (in this book, those working in educational settings) using their own site (classroom, institution, school district, community) as the focus of their study. It is a reflective process, but it is deliberately and systematically undertaken, and generally requires that some form of evidence be presented to support assertions. (p. 2)

On the one hand, the practitioner researcher takes full advantage of acquiring the tacit knowledge of a setting that those who must act within it daily possess. On the other hand, the practitioner researcher finds it difficult to step back and take a dispassionate look at the setting (Anderson et al., 1994). That points out the difficulties of my struggle for objectivity during the whole process.

Traditionally, participant observation has been defined in terms of its non-judgmental

stance in acquiring data to depict social groups and cultural scenes authentically (LeCompte & Preissle, 1984). It is a process of immersing ourselves in the study of people or organisations. In my case, this process was with the consent of the heads of the target schools. Observation is a common means to collect data in qualitative analysis. The researchers use their primary tools – their senses – to “feel” the social situation (Fetterman, 1984). “Observation is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry. It is used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 107). The objectivity of observation might be affected by the researcher’s own value, attitudes and experiences (Best & Kahn, 1989). The researcher was aware that her personal perceptions would affect the quality of data collection and analysis. Therefore, the researcher should be cautious about her personal values that could have made an impact on the interpretations of reality (Owens, 1982) Therefore, I employed a multi-method approach involving interviews, observations and documentary analysis to collect data. The combination of strategies provided a more holistic picture of the practice and enhanced the reliability and validity of the research results (Denzin, 1978).

3.2.2. Research design and the three stages of data collection

The research design of this study comprises three parts (as shown in Figure 3.1); they are the action research with case studies in School A and B as well as the analysis of data collected via questionnaires distributed to teachers in School A and B, questionnaires returned from 77 schools, and interviews with teachers, SGTs, Social Workers and Education Bureau (hereafter, EDB) people.

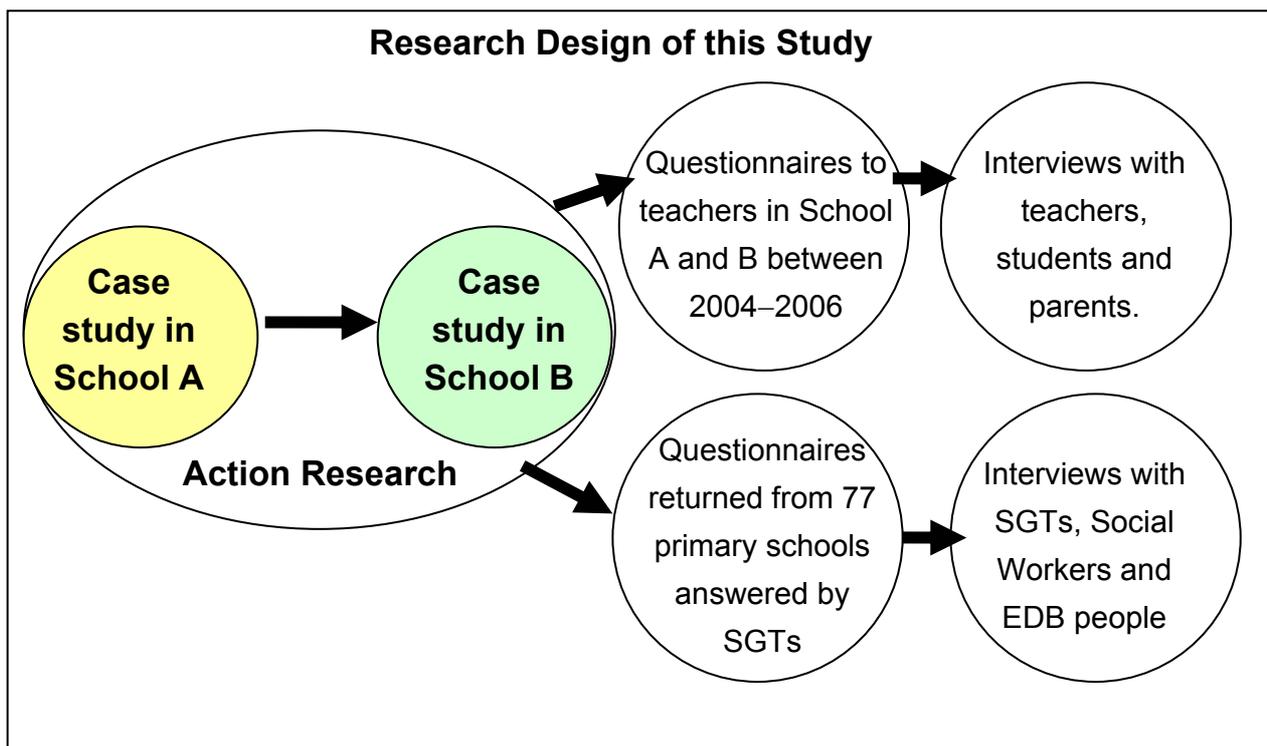


Figure 3.1 Research design of this study

There are three main stages of data collection:

- Stage One: Action research with case study in School A (2002–2004) and case study in School B (2004–2006)
- Stage Two: Questionnaires to teachers in School A and B in 2004 and 2006 and SGTs returned from 77 primary Schools in 2005
- Stage Three: Interviews with different stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, SGTs, social workers and EMB people (2004–2007)

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were used. The latter played a supplementary role for data collection and analysis (Appendix C2). The following table summarises the research method used in this study at different data collection stages and their relevance to the two research questions.

Stage of Data Collection	Research Methods Applied	R Q 1	R Q 2
Stage One: Action Research with Case Studies in Schools A and B	Action research with cases studies in School A and B: 1. Natural observations (both Schools A and B) 2. Planned observations (e.g., lesson observation) (both Schools A and B) 3. Videos and photos for PGE lessons (both Schools A and B) 4. Evaluation with focus group for students (both Schools A and B) 5. Evaluation with questionnaires for teachers (both Schools A and B) 6. Annual Discipline and Guidance (D&G) team meetings about PGE (both Schools A and B) 7. Document analysis (both Schools A and B) 8. Lesson study in P.3 (School B) 9. Preliminary lesson plan evaluation (School B) 10. Level meetings for teachers (School B) 11. Evaluation with questionnaires for parents (School B)	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Stage Two: Questionnaires to Stakeholders	Questionnaires to investigate the perception of change, success, and failure of PGE development 1. Questionnaires to teachers in School A in 2004 and 2006 2. Questionnaires to teachers in School B in 2004 and 2006 3. Questionnaires to SGTs in 2005	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Stage Three: Interviews with Stakeholders	Interviews with different stakeholders from 2004 to 2007 1. Focus groups with students and parents 2. Interviews with teachers 3. Interviews with SGTs 4. Interviews with social workers 5. Interviews with EMB people	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
Data Analysis	Qualitative analysis: data coding, issue categorisation, and themes definition Qualitative analysis for data from Stage 2: Z-test, t-test, and correlation test Data triangulation for all themes that emerged	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓

Table 3.2 Research methods applied at different data collection stages

3.2.2.1. Stage One – Action research with case study in School A (2002–2004) and case study in School B (2004–2006)

I served School A during 1999 and 2004. It was a 24-class primary school and was founded in the late 80s. It was a bi-section school with AM and PM sections and it was transformed into a whole-day school in 2001. Student guidance service started in School A in the 1990s, and there were different guidance programmes (for whole-school and special groups of students) every year. Discipline development was dominant and independent with student guidance before 2002. After analysing PGE implementation in School A, the experience was carried over to School B.

School B was a whole-day, 30-class primary school. It changed to a whole-day school in 2000. It was a quite popular school in the district and known for its good academic results and versatile extra-curricular activities. I served School B from 2004–2007, which was quite a stable period to implement the new guidance policy. Because of the religious background of both Schools A and B, religious education and whole person development are emphasised in their missions.

Appendices A1, A2, B1, and B2 introduce the background, history, structure, organisation, timetable, and development of school guidance in both schools during the research period. Consent forms to conduct the case studies were obtained from the principals of Schools A and B prior to beginning data collection.

PGE started in School A in 2002. I collected data and took notes during observations that coincided with grounded theorizing at the beginning of the study. Based on the PGE development planning in School A and the detailed information collected, I

began my research study in 2004 with the principals' consents at both schools. Data were collected in the form of case notes from naturalistic observation, minutes from meetings, internal questionnaires, interviews with focus groups, and lesson studies with videotaped lessons and lesson evaluation forms. There were approximately four different development stages of PGE corresponding to the extent of my involvement and my work places:

1. 2002–2003: Initiation of PGE with pilot lessons in School A
2. 2003–2004: Revised development plan for PGE in School A
3. 2004–2005: Revised development plan for PGE in School B
4. 2005–2006: Revised development plan for PGE in School B

Appendices A and B show the details of the two case studies. Figure 3.2 shows the action research done and the key development in both School A and B. It shows that the experiences, reflections and feedback gained from each cycle were carried to the next one to revise the development plan continuously. The development plan was revised continuously by considering all feedbacks of the stakeholders through different means like meetings, questionnaires and focus groups. During the process, every step proceeded experimentally and the plan was adjusted as research progressed. The changes mainly included time allocation for PGE, job allocation for the D&G team, curriculum design (time, content and approach), evaluation methods and mode of delivery. The key changes in strategy from 2002–2006 are briefly listed in Table 3.2.

The case study approach was chosen because I was working in both Schools A and B as SGT from 1999 to 2007. As the organiser of the PGE, I could conveniently collect the detailed data with multiple approaches consisting of my first-hand perceptions, naturalistic observations, reflections, questionnaires, videotaping, photos,

documentary analysis, evaluations (including focus groups) and minutes. Data was collected from 2002 to 2006. Hence, it took me four years to carry out the participant-observation and data collection.

In School B, a lesson study in P3 and a preliminary lesson plan evaluation were conducted. The lesson study was done with video taping, interviews, and a focus group to analyse the three different PGE topics in three classes (3R, 3S, and 3T) to explore the similarities and differences in the teaching skills of three teachers (Teacher R, S, and T) and their students' feedback about the lessons. The preliminary lesson plan evaluation was done with a document analysis to determine the preferences and comments of teachers and students about the curriculum design and the lesson plans.

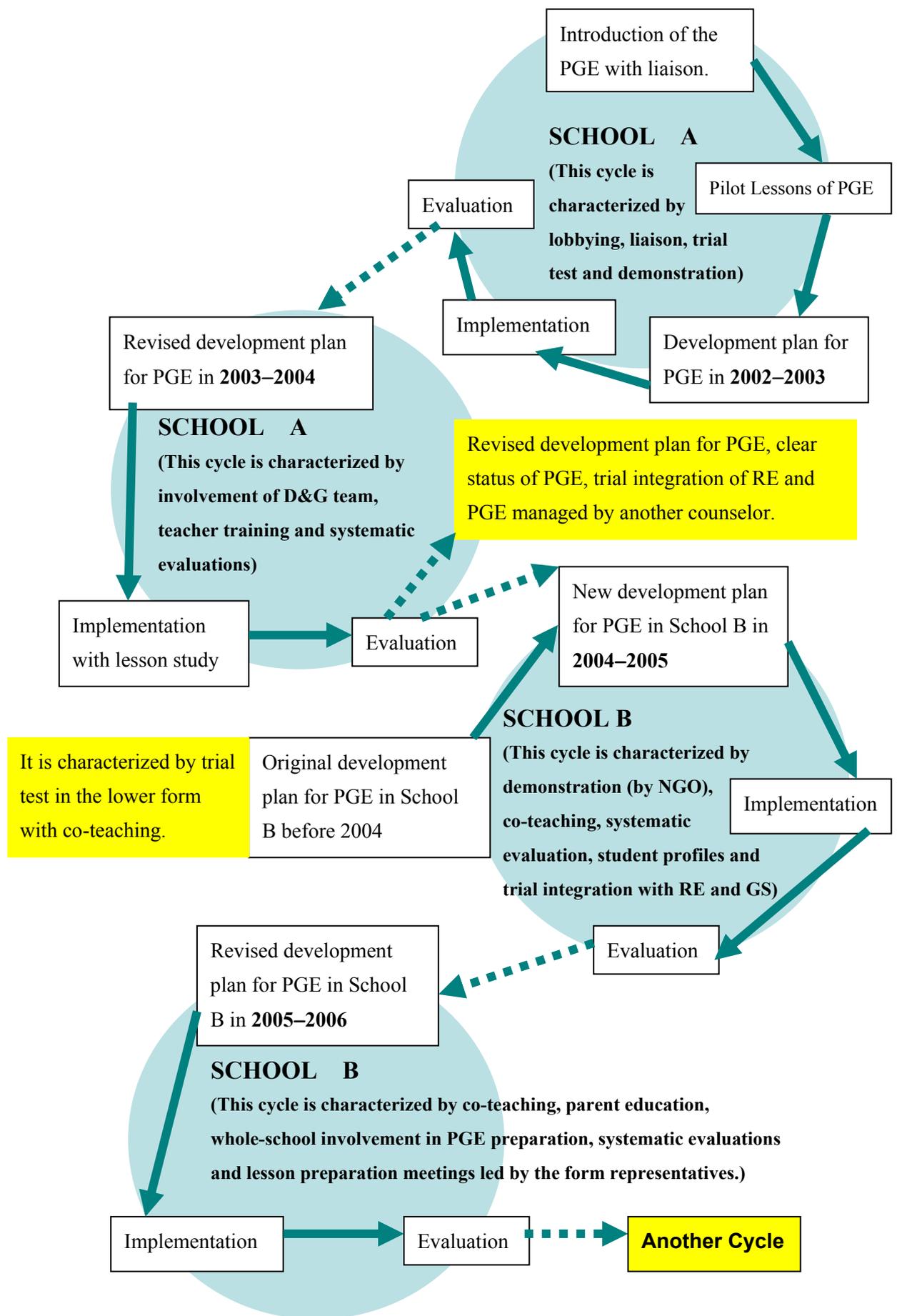


Figure 3.2 Action Research in School A and B from 2002–2006.

Table 3.3 Key developments of the PGE in School A and School B

Year	School A	School B
1999-2002	There were whole-school approach guidance programmes similar to the PGE. PGE was introduced to the whole in 2002 spring.	Introduction of the PGE
2002-2003	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I tried to get the support from the principal, deputy principals, discipline master (hereafter, DM), curriculum coordinator (CC) and panel heads of GS and MCE. I got the verbal support from CC and some panel heads. The principal did not perceive that PGE was a polity to be done. 2. I made the announcement in an administration meeting. Then I tried to allocate time for the PGE at the trial stage. 3. I made the announcement in a staff meeting. 4. The first part (academic development) of the PGE curriculum was finished by the research alone at the trial stage. 5. Preparation of the PGE began with Teacher training (Part I) and lesson demonstrations done by the researcher (as SGT) to all the class teachers; video tapes for reference were prepared simultaneously. The first part of PGE was completed with evaluation. 	The ex-SGT tried to initiate the PGE in P4 as a pilot test, but it failed and then vanished.
2003-2004	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was successful allocation of a teaching period for the PGE and teacher training (Part II). 2. I tried to motivate D&G Team to help with the lesson plans selection and modification, but failed. 3. The second part (personal development) of the PGE curriculum 	The ex-SGT got help from the education psychologist to design 8 lessons for P1 and P2. Co-teaching was practised. Teacher training was offered by an NGO.

Year	School A	School B
	<p>was finished.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. I motivated the D&G team to help with lesson plan selection and debriefing question writing; it succeeded. Then I did the evaluation with all teachers and students and sent questionnaires to parents. 5. The third part (social development) of the PGE curriculum was finished. 6. There were interviews with 15 students from 5 different classes with their PGE lesson videotaped for the focus group. 	
2004-2005	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I was assigned to work in School B and left School A. A SGP (social worker) took up my job; she faced the similar problems like ignorance of principal and middle managers. She tried to simplify the communication process with teaching staff and reduced the number of lessons; teachers were happy with the lighter workload. 2. CC changed and involved PGE as part of the curriculum; integration with Religious Education and GS was tried. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I took up the post of SGT in School B. 2. I had meetings with the discipline master, CC and panel head of GS and some D&G team-members. 3. Principal B specially rendered financial support to get help from an NGO for PGE development. Part of the lessons were designed and demonstrated by the NGO. 4. I tried to strengthen and restructure the PGE in School B. PGE was delivered in a mixed mode: with class lessons, mass lessons in the school hall, and trial integration with RS and GS lessons. 5. I failed to fight for a definite teaching time for the PGE, which was then located in the tutoring time. 6. Evaluations of the PGE were done with Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO), interviews and questionnaires with students, teachers and parents.

Year	School A	School B
2005-2006	Principal A changed. The PGE became part of the curriculum with integration with Religious Education.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A PGE and MCE meeting was held during the summer holidays to define the teaching aims, targets and values of the whole curriculum with all teachers together. 2. A lesson time of the PGE was allocated successfully. Integration of PGE in RE and GS lessons was cancelled. 3. The PGE was restructured as lessons in class with co-teaching and demonstrations by social workers in parallel with Parent Education via a series of workshops, family worksheets, parent groups and parent-kid carnivals. 4. Teacher training was done by NGO and SGT about teaching skills of PGE and personal growth. 5. D&G members (level representatives) were invited for PGE management including pre- and post-lesson meetings, evaluation meetings and material distributions. Particularly, a focus group with about 70 students for evaluation purposes and a lesson study in Level 3 (3 different lessons at 3 different class (Class 3R, 3S and 3T) were done. 6. Final Evaluation

Table 3.3 Key developments of the PGE in School A and School B

The action research between School A and B made use of the transfer of experiences from one to another to pursue success. Through case studies, details of each procedure were studied carefully. In particular, the opinions, perceptions and feedbacks of the stakeholders towards the changes made by the researchers were investigated, noted

and observed. In this study, action research happens naturally for the guidance curriculum development. It is also motivated by the schools' internal and external review policies, which emphasise the steps of Plan, Act, Observe and Reflect.

According to Dewey, for changes and learning to occur through self-reflective inquiry, learning must begin with an ambiguous situation that presents a dilemma, problem or felt difficulty for the individual (Smylie, 1995). Schein (1969, 1988) also argues that if change or learning is to occur, it must be preceded by altering an existing cognitive-psychological equilibrium that supports present behaviour and attitudes (Smylie, 1995). The action of reflection, the rethinking of experience, provides personal meaning and learning (Hoban, 2002). That is action research.

As an insider, I was totally immersed in the whole process. Van den Berg and Vandenberghe (1981, 1995) point out that study of the implementation processes should be based on the experiences and perceptions of the individual teachers, their involvement, changes in their teaching strategies, changes in their subjective educational theories and professional selves (Kelchtermans, 1993), and changes in their perception of professional development (Clement, 1995). Stenhouse (1983, p. 163) wants the teachers to critically assess their situation, so that they can engage in meaningful professional development and become more autonomous in their judgments of their own practise. In other words, action research is actually a learning process (in a constructivist sense) that enhances the wisdom of teachers.

Concerning the pursuit of reflective self-development of teachers, Elliott (1991, p. 69) defines action research as “the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it”. It aims to feed practical judgment in concrete situations, and the validity of the “theories” or hypotheses it generates depends not so much on

“scientific” tests of truth, as on their usefulness in helping people to act more intelligently and skillfully. In action research, “theories” are not validated independently and then applied to practise. They are validated through practice. Therefore, as an insider and the practitioner researcher, I was indeed eager to study the whole process as a self-learning process. Elliott considered action research itself to be a self-reflective process.

Noffke (1991, 1997) believes that such a process of developing self-awareness, while it can help to bring about “collective agency” (McNiff, 1988), built on the ideas of society “as a collection of autonomous individuals”, is not capable of addressing social issues in terms of the interconnections between personal identity and power and privilege in society. Hence, the process of developing self-awareness through action research should not be confined to the activity of individual teachers. In order to effect educational change at the level of the classroom, action research needs to engage those who maintain the wider structures that shape teaching and learning – at departmental, school and system levels – in the reflective process. The idea of the school as a “Learning Organisation”, discussed in the final chapter, is an acknowledgement that the growth of self-awareness is a holistic process.

Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 162) define action research as follows:

Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out. It is most rationally empowering when undertaken by participants collaboratively, though it is often undertaken by individuals, and sometimes in cooperation with “outsiders”. In education, action research has

been employed in school-based curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programmes, and systems planning and policy development.

Action research not only creates conditions under which practitioners can identify aspects of institutional life which frustrate rational change, but it also offers a theoretical account of why these constraints on rational change should be overcome, by offering and enacting an emancipatory theory of how the constraints of ideology can be overcome. Hence, action research can find out the difficulties and the possible solutions on the ground of theory, and further, the practicality of theory can be examined.

Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out. The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realise that action research of a group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, pp. 5–6).

Action research is an interesting method to use in this study seeking the best practice for PGE development with continuous modification. The exploring process could be endless until the key study target disappears. Attitudes like sensitivity, open-mindedness, objectivity, persistence and risk-taking of the practitioner researcher are important to sustain the study and the action research cycles to solve the problematic situations with innovations. Limited to the difficult situations of guidance teachers in school (discussed in later chapters), the extent of involvement of

stakeholders in the process may not be easy and desirable as in other action research studies. Indeed, the success of an action research somehow depends on the power figure of the researcher in the institute, resources available for in-depth investigation and the controllability and scale of the study. Moreover, feasible innovations depend on numerous factors such as insights, observations, reflections and critical thinking of the researchers. Indeed, there could be plenty of unknown and inconceivable factors; action research may just partially understand the complex reality but never the whole. Every action cycle begins with new hypothesis with revised strategies that may never meet the needs for the ever-changing settings. It is also the most attractive point of action research in the practical world. Hence, case study may be a fit methodology to understand the situation in-depth.

About case study, Yin (1994) points out that it is a comprehensive research strategy and its importance lies in its potential “to explain the casual links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies” (Yin, 1994, p. 25). Yin states case study should be defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. Case study research can consist of both single and multiple case studies, and can include both qualitative and quantitative evidence from multiple sources and benefit from the prior development of theoretical propositions. Yin notes that case studies should not be confused with the exclusive use of qualitative methods (Yin, 2002). Therefore, in this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods are used.

According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), a case study’s characteristics include a focus upon particular events, integral involvement of the researcher and a way of presenting the case to capture the richness of the situation. The researcher also needs to identify the boundaries of the case and collect a variety of data from various

sources.

As proposed by Cohen and Manion (1985, p. 120), “a case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit. The purpose is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs”.

According to Stake (1995), a case study may be defined as the intensive investigation of a single object of social inquiry such as a teacher or a school and it is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case to understand the activity within important circumstances. He also states, “Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” (p. 41). Sammons et al. (1997) have said that case study research can illuminate the complex interactions of context, organisation, policy and practice which help to generate more or less effective schools and departments.

As Merriam (1988) has put it: “A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a programme, an institution, a person, a process or a social unit” (p. xiv), and “case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources” (p. 16). Merriam (1998) also points out that the case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon.

The primary characteristics of a case study are its focus on the particular detail, its in-depth nature, its focus on relationships and processes (a holistic approach), natural settings and use of multiple sources and methods (Denscombe, 2003, pp. 30–31).

Stake (2000, p. 448) summarised a case study in this way:

1. Bounding the case, conceptualising the object of study;
2. Selecting phenomena, themes or issues – that is, the research questions – to emphasise particular points;
3. Seeking patterns of data to develop the issues;
4. Triangulating key observations and bases for interpretation;
5. Selecting alternative interpretations to pursue;
6. Developing assertions or generalisations about the case.

Moreover, the suggestions of Dobbert (1982) have been adopted as a reference in deciding the sample schools for this study: “To justify a sample, one must know the universe and all of its relevant variables – which is an impossible task. The best compromise is to include a sample with reasonable variation in the phenomenon, settings, or people under study” (Dobbert, 1982).

Limitation and Validity of Case Study in Schools A and B

A case study is a longitudinal study to fully investigate things that happen in an area in a certain period. However, the validity of the data depends on the honesty of the interviewees. I found that some intangible and implicit history or complex relationships were not easily articulated, such as unsolved conflicts, failed policy and inter-personal struggles. Human beings perform and present differently in different situations, at different times and for different people; they are multi-faced. This study may not be able to reflect all truth if the researcher were insensitive or uninformed to the data. To secure the validity and the integrity of the picture, time spent with the stakeholders is essential.

Moreover, document analysis was used in the case study. It was based on the work

schedules, curriculum content outlines, minutes of meetings, evaluation reports (internal and external), and worksheets. These provided concrete information about the project. Bernard (1988) claimed that the study of documents helped to fill in the logical gap in the data collected from other sources and to detect discrepancies between the data gathered from interviews and observations. Merriam (1990) argued that documents were objective, unobtrusive, and non-reactive and useful sources of information for qualitative case studies. Further, videos and photographs taken in this study provided supplementary data for further analysis. Videotaping and photographing were easily done, but they merely reflected an angle or a snapshot of the moment. For lesson discussion, I sent the videotapes back to the teachers. During the interviews, some interviewees concentrated on the visual information and commented on what they watched, whereas others forgot what they actually felt in the lessons taped. In addition, some were too impatient to review the whole tape and requested that I “fast forward” through it. Therefore, I had to prepare fully to guide the interviewees to obtain in-depth data.

Although a case study is often viewed as a poor basis for generalisation, Henry (1996) argues that a close and detailed look at a particular school can tell us more than data collected and aggregated into a general outlook on schools. In fact, a case study can provide the readers with a clearer grasp of what the actual dynamics and processes are, and can recognise situations and strategies that apply elsewhere.

Stake (2000) also identifies that generalisation for a case study is “about a particular case or generalisation to a similar case rather than generalisation to a population of cases” (p. 23). “Essential similarities to cases of interest to them, they establish the basis for naturalistic generalisation” (p. 23). One way to generalise from a sample of one is to argue that group data overlooks or blurs the significance of individual successes or failures. Schofield (2000) points out that the goal of qualitative research

“is not to produce a standardised set of results that any other careful researcher in the same situation or studying the same issue would have produced. Rather it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of that situation” (p.71).

3.2.2.2. Stage Two –Questionnaires to teachers in School A and B 2004 and 2006 and SGTs returned from 77 primary schools in 2005

In both School A and B, questionnaires were delivered to all teaching staff (pre-test in 2004 and post-test in 2006). They collected data about teachers’ perception changes, their scoring and comments for the PGE development, their expectations and opinions about training, support for PGE and their willingness to join PGE development. Statistical methods were used to work out the percentages, the preferences, the correlations and the significance of the findings. It is important to note that the questionnaire for school A was too late to be administered, data from the pre-test reflects the influence of the researcher, and the post-test provides references only but is out of the scope of action research in School A.

On the other hand, a questionnaire was issued to about 120 primary schools in Hong Kong by random sampling in 2005. Taking account of evenness, the number of schools for each area was adjusted proportionally. Finally, 77 questionnaires were returned. The questionnaire to the SGTs was designed to gather the data including the gender and experience of SGTs, the number of classes in the schools, religious background, knowledge background of curriculum development, percentage of PGE implementation, the organisation of PGE teams, the supporters of the programme, teachers for the PGE, mode of lessons, integration with other subjects, teaching kits used, implementation strategies and the perceptions of SGTs about implementation.

Besides exploring SGTs' perception about PGE, the questionnaire also asks the SGTs to comment on the necessity of the PGE, their pressure, effort input and their satisfaction about the development of PGE in scores; it also let them put down the strength, weakness, opportunities and treats (SWOT analysis) of the process.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect the general data about the research topic in a quick way. The questionnaire approach to gathering data is probably the most commonly used method of inquiry (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). A questionnaire is easy to administer, provides direct responses of both factual and attitudinal information, and makes tabulation of responses quite effortless (Mckernan, 1996). The questionnaires administered in this study included both the closed-ended and open-ended questions, interval questions and scaled questions to assess the extent of perceptions and the reflections of the respondents. By using simple statistical methods, percentages, preferences, correlations and significance of data were found. Answers from open-ended questions were analysed to prepare in-depth interviews of the next stage.

Beyond the questionnaires for teachers and SGTs, there were also questionnaires for students, class teachers and parents for regular internal evaluation purposes during Stage One. They were used to evaluate the general feedback of parents towards the PGE, the feedback of teachers about the content, their performance and students' feedback after PGE lessons, and the feedback of students towards the arrangement of the PGE and MCE in schools (30 samples per level were collected for further investigation). These internal evaluation reports about PGE provides information to triangulate both teachers' and students' views about curriculum design, students' feedback, and teachers' performance, especially in School B as part of the case study.

A good questionnaire is not easy to design and the responses can be unanticipated because the perceptions and understandings of the respondents vary. For instance, some questions asked teachers to comment on the overall situation of an issue. They can elicit answers based on diverse interpretations of the questions stemming from their personal experience and circumstances. Then, the outcome of a survey may not totally reflect the overall picture. The results could be affected by the psychological status, pressure or emotions of the respondents, and also the background knowledge, understanding and perceptions of the issue (PGE) of the respondents. Besides, the relationship between the researcher (as an insider) and the respondents was important too. The situation could be different if they were unwilling to respond, or they muddled through with their negative perception about student guidance or the suspicion, hate or anger accumulated towards the researchers' work in the past. There was a group of middle-way people who always answer everything in a generous way (neither critical nor aggressive) to keep the harmonious relationship with the researcher (or even the school). In addition, while teachers in Hong Kong are very busy, the right time to administer the questionnaires must be duly considered so as not to affect their routine work and their emotions.

3.2.2.3. Stage Three - Interviews with different stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, SGTs, social workers and EMB people (2004–2007)

Interviews were finished in 2005–2007 with 12 teachers (A-T1 to A-T12) in School A and 11 teachers (B-T1 to B-T11) in School B to collect their further comments about the issues that emerged from the action research and the questionnaires. Furthermore, about 14 student guidance teachers showed their willingness for in-depth interviews in their returned questionnaires. Lastly, 11 of them (they are SG-C to SG-O from School C to School O) had face-to-face or telephone interviews. In addition, some EMB

people (EDX) and some social workers (SW) were interviewed to explore more details about policy making and curriculum design. Occasionally, some parents were interviewed through the focus group for evaluation purposes in School B.

All interviews and the questionnaires were done confidentially and ethically to keep all participants and the interviewees anonymous. Fake names or labels are used for presentation. The transcriptions were sent back to all interviewees for further editing. However, just a few were returned.

With regard to student guidance professional in Hong Kong primary schools, there are three practitioner groups involved in student guidance since 2002. They are the Student Guidance Officers (SGO), Student Guidance Teachers (SGT) and the Student Guidance Personnel (SGP). Student Guidance Officers (SGO) serves government, private or village schools. Student Guidance Teachers (SGT is a permanent post in the rank of Assistant Master (middle manager)) who are trained counsellors and experienced teachers, serve the aided schools with over 18 classes. They are the largest group, with over 300 before 2002. Student Guidance Personnel (SGP, a contract post with lower salary) are all social workers who have been introduced since 2002, serving schools with less than 18 classes. Mostly, it is decided by the sponsoring bodies to allocate SGT (a permanent post in the school system) or an SGP (contract staff) with the funding provided by EMB. Most of the questionnaires that were returned were mostly SGTs. The term “SGT” is used in this dissertation to represent the controversial post of “school counsellor” or “student guidance people/professional” in Hong Kong primary schools.

Interviews and content analysis

In-depth interviews in this research play an important role in providing detailed

information that supplements the ideas and data from the questionnaires, observations and other methods. Semi-structured interviews were mainly conducted with guided questions to encourage the interviewees to share freely.

The in-depth interview mainly included three portions: it asks about the perceptions of the respondents (SGTs), curriculum leadership and curriculum development of PGE. The questions are based on the guidelines given by EMB and the themes are from case studies and the questionnaires for further exploration. The key questions are as follows:

1. Teachers' perceptions about PGE policy from the EDB
2. Teachers' perceptions about the necessity of the PGE in primary schools.
3. Feelings about this policy compared with other education policies.
4. Comparison between the PGE and the curriculum reform starting in the same year.
5. Comments on the strategy, schedule and speed of implementation, and also the teaching materials and training provided.
6. Sharing their observations, participation, acceptance and confidence in teaching the PGE.
7. Comments on the administrative support, resources, and manpower and school culture for the germination of the PGE.
8. Exploration of the possible resources and novel strategies with teachers to optimise the effectiveness of the PGE.
9. Comment on their successes and failures of the PGE in schools.

Interviewees were invited through emails, verbal or written invitation letters. Those willing to be interviewed included the middle managers, class teachers, GS or RE coordinators, the D&G team as well as the SGTs, some EDB people and some social

workers. I always made use of my counselling skills to make the interviews smooth and in-depth. I tried to follow the interviewees' emotions, feelings and the flow of ideas, and questioned them naturally in the process.

The interview is a tool to know more about people by understanding what they think through their speech (see Cheng, 1995). An interview guide in semi-structured interviews is adopted to avoid the informants moving too far beyond the scope defined by the guide (Bernard, 1988). It allows the researcher to obtain data within a pre-designed scope (Cheng, 1995).

However, there are both advantages and disadvantages in using interviews as a form of data collection over indirect methods (Denscombe, 2003). The advantages are that the interview produces a particularly good depth of information and detail, provides valuable insights based on the depth of information generated, needs simple equipment, respects interviewees' priorities to what they wish to emphasise, allows flexibility in questioning, and allows for easy checking of accuracy and relevance (validity) with direct contact during the interview. The disadvantages of interviews are that data analysis can be difficult and time-consuming, data analysis is non-standard and often requires coding, and consistency and objectivity are difficult to achieve. The interviewer may also affect the responses of interviewees depending on their relationships; some interviewees may be intimidated by audio/visual equipment. (Denscombe, 2003)

Besides, in conducting an interview, the researcher is cautious about the researcher's bias that might distort the interpretations of data and aware that the informants might be vulnerable (Cohen & Manion, 1985). Marshall and Rossman (1995) state that interviewees might be unwilling or uncomfortable to share their viewpoints in front of

others. My position as an insider and my power relationship with colleagues may have affected the quality and authenticity of the interviews. The interviewees may have tried to “save face”, especially when they were at the higher rank and might have felt scared and worried to tell the truth. Or some may not have wanted to hurt me and lied to a certain extent as they felt that I had tried my best in the PGE process. They might have said something cosmetic to comfort me. During the interviews, clearly, some were brave enough to speak from their heart.

Concerning the feedback from the interviewees, although they had given verbal consent to be interviewed, I found that some just muddled through and did not want to answer the questions in detail or frankly. I perceived that some might think that the interview was part of their appraisal, especially the frontline teachers; some might show cooperation as a kind of reward to the researcher. I had to discriminate between the cosmetic and genuine answers for myself by comparing and contrasting presentations of the same individuals at different situations. The point to note is that their perceptions probably changed over time within my research period. Nevertheless, those willing to share their experience, feelings and wisdom deserved credit. The quality of interviews depends partially on time available. For those done on the phone, I was not able to observe the non-verbal expressions of the interviewees. Some even answered in a boring tone. It may affect the validity.

Focus groups

In this study, focus group interviews were carried out mainly with students and parents. Students with lower, median and best ability were selected from the classes videoed in schools. Parents’ opinions were gathered through the parents’ workshops on a voluntary basis or the final evaluation of the PGE (see Appendix B16). The attitude of the researcher or the moderator is very important to let the participants feel

comfortable enough to share experiences and to reduce their embarrassment and fear, and also guide them to express themselves on track.

In spite of my experience in group counseling as a school counsellor, it was not easy to handle the focus groups to even out the opportunities for the participants to express their ideas, and to direct the members on the right track for the target of the group. The focus group for parents often went off the track to discuss their children's problems or was dominated by some aggressive group members.

Students' views in the focus groups were somewhat unstable and easily affected by others' points of view. Sometimes, probing questions were important to explore the responses and their meaning. The lower form students were most likely affected by others' views, but the higher form students could answer the questions in detail and seriously. The "special" students had to be treated independently if they were playful and tried to mask their true feelings with jokes and yells in the interviewing process.

Teachers behaved differently; they either gave their genuine views or the standard answers; some saw the interview as an opportunity to complain, some tried to please the researcher as the programme designer. Objectivity must be noted to collect different points of views with different motivations, and to balance the views from different perspectives. For a successful focus group, the researcher must keep out of the way, and should not comment on the ideas except appropriate prompting. Time for focus group work was another problem that may have affected the quality and richness of data.

Beck, Trombetta and Share (1986, cited in Vaughn et al., 1996) describe the focus group as an informal discussion among selected individuals about specific topics

relevant to the situation. It should be “carefully planned” to obtain perceptions on a defined area in a permissive, non-threatening environment. Besides, the focus group also gives the opportunity for multiple interactions, both between the interviewer and respondents and among all participants in the group (Krueger, 1994, cited in Patton 2002).

Content analysis of the whole

Having finished the data collection stage, I proceeded to the content analysis especially for the verbatim from the case study and other interviews and focus groups. “Analysis” in qualitative research means making sense of data, which involves discovering and devising patterns in the data, looking for general orientations and trying to sort out what the data is about (see Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. Comprehensive, systematic and in-depth information is gathered and analysed to result in a product: a case study (see Patton, 2002). According to Yin (1994), the four principles for high quality content analysis include relying on relevant evidence, including all major rival interpretations, addressing the most significant aspect of the case study, and bringing one’s own prior, expert knowledge to one’s case study.

A process of conceptual clustering and open coding was then employed (see Miles & Huberman, 1994) to generate a series of potential themes related specifically to each research question. I used a content analysis technique to gather and analyse the content of verbatim interview data. My approach is supported by Fetterman (1988), who regards thinking as the first and foremost approach to process the information in a meaningful and useful manner. The entry to the field, the identification of informants and key events, the design and re-design of the research, all rely heavily on on-the-spot thinking and decisions. Fetterman uses the metaphor “finding your way

through the forest” to describe data analysis in qualitative research.

By referring to the Patton (2002) approach, in my study, data mainly come from three sources: action research with case studies, questionnaires and interviews (Stage One to Three). Firstly, data from action research case studies provided the basic information, the framework, the general situation with a special area for further exploration and the directions of the study. Then, the returned questionnaires provide more figures and perspectives on certain issues those had emerged from the action research. Issues are streamlined, integrated and reframed with the new input from questionnaires. Thirdly, more in-depth and detailed data came from the interviews. The verbatim data was analysed to find out the possible issues; each sentence and each point of view was analysed and categorised as issues around the emerging themes for detailed analysis. Content analysis was then undertaken. I firstly produced detailed transcriptions (the verbatim) for all interviews; then I carefully extracted over 100 possible issues. To help the categorisation of the verbatim data, I developed a coding system for a list of possible issues and themes obtained from the case studies and the results of the questionnaires; every sentence and point was coded in respect to the list of issues (sub-categories) and themes (categories) in the verbatim. I then used Excel tables to organise the sentences with the same coding for analysis. At that time, the coding system expanded continuously if there were new issues emerging from the transcripts. After that, I congregated and analysed the points with the same coding (same issues) with my conclusion and reflection notes. In the process, new themes might emerge. The most complex part was to develop the criteria for the coding because not all coded verbatim data could be categorised. Meanwhile, some distinctive ideas were highlighted for further analysis. After the first layer of analysis and reflection about the issues that emerged from the verbatim data, I proceeded to the second layer analysis to explore and contrast the themes emerged from all sources, to find out their

similarities and the differences with more literature reviews. Finally, the themes were modified and integrated for final discussion and presentation (see the details in Chapter Four).

Data integration and triangulations

Data gathered were then compared and contrasted to construct a comprehensive picture of the situation. About validity of the findings, Denscombe (2003) suggests the following:

1. Checking to ensure that the findings have not been oversimplified and the conclusions are justified.
2. Recognising that the researcher can heavily influence findings and checking to see the extent to which their prejudices “spill over” into the research process.
3. Exploring alternative explanations for the findings.
4. Triangulating the findings with alternative sources.
5. Providing the opportunity for the findings to be given to participants to obtain sufficient feedback.
6. Considering how the findings and the conclusion fit in reference to the literature

Triangulation enables the researcher to cross-check the validity of the data from different sources, followed by objective analysis and discussion. This is useful for discerning commonalities across perspectives. The basic principle underlying the idea of triangulation is that of collecting accounts of a situation from a variety of angles or perspectives, and various independent sources (see Elliott, 1991). The process of triangulation has a similar purpose to the statistical methods used in quantitative researches, inasmuch as it enhances the reliability and validity of inferences from the

data. Elliott and Adelman (1976) describe the procedure of “triangulation” in the context of classroom action research as follows:

Triangulation involves gathering accounts of a teaching situation from three different points of view; namely, those of the teachers, his pupils, and a participant observer ... By comparing his own account with accounts from the other two standpoints, a person at one point of the triangle has an opportunity to test and perhaps revise the account on the basis of more sufficient data.

Gliner (1994) describes triangulation as a method of high priority in determining internal validity in qualitative research. The concept of triangulation is used metaphorically in social science research; it has various meanings and involves many corresponding procedures. Miles and Huberman (1994) distinguish five kinds of triangulation in qualitative research:

- Triangulation by data source (data collected from different persons, at different times or from different places);
- Triangulation by method (Questionnaire, interview, documents, etc);
- Triangulation by researcher (comparable to inter-rater reliability in quantitative methods);
- Triangulation by theory (using different theories to explain results);
- Triangulation by data type (combining quantitative and qualitative data).

I find that triangulations of the data from different stakeholders may not give a full picture yet. If the research is an insider, his/her judgment may not be wholly objective and affected what he/she perceived daily unconsciously, like the perceived culture, the personality, the working style or the social performance of some colleagues. A researcher must be alert to different perspectives on the same issues and use critical analysis objectively, neither over-debating on the negative comments nor exaggerating

the merits of the project subjectively or composing the discussion towards the bias. Therefore, comprehensiveness of data collection, literature review, and comparison with similar studies may help to extend the understanding and eliminate the implicit bias for objective analysis. Besides, this study may limit to generalisation but it could be a reference for other similar researchers.

3.2.2.4. Limitation of the study as a whole

The action research stopped at School A after 2004 and ended up as a cross-school study. From 2000 to 2007, there was lot of reforms; teachers shifted their foci to new policies continuously, changes happen continuously over the study period especially in the school setting, policy, people's mindset and the environment. As all data was collected in a certain period of time at certain places, this single study will gradually become part of the history and past experience. Gladly, at the time of writing up, a lot of positive reforms are being initiated by the EDB to phase out the past deficiencies.

3.3. Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the rationale of the multiple approaches adopted in this study, where qualitative methods play the important role with the assistance from quantitative statistical methods. A process for the completion of an operational mechanism implies engagement with great complexity, numerous variables and countless interactions, which is an appropriate context for case studies that give us a microscope to go into detail, to reflect the truth inside a particular situation rather than settling for general deductions and judgments. The in-depth study of a micro-world can help us to discern innovations that are capable of reforming the macro-world.

4.1. Introduction

This chapter illustrates the themes that emerged via the case studies in School A and B, the questionnaires, and the in-depth interviews. All themes are fall into three categories: political issues, resources management issues and curriculum management issues.

As shown in Figure 3.1, I attempted to introduce PGE in Schools A and B with action research by changing the strategies to pursue the optimum way for PGE development from 2002 to 2006. After several themes emerged from the action research process, questionnaires and in-depth interviews were employed to investigate the issues more deeply. Consequently, themes arose mainly from the following stages:

Stage One: Action research with case study in School A (2002–2004) and School B (2004–2006) (see Figure 3.2);

Stage Two: Questionnaires to teachers in Schools A and B in 2004 and 2006 and SGTs returned from 77 primary schools in 2005; and

Stage Three: In-depth interviews with teachers, SGTs, social workers, and EMB people (2004 – 2007)

4.2. Themes from Action Research

The themes were mainly collected from the case studies in School A and B or emerged from the observation notes, reflection notes, formal minutes, and assessments in schools A and B.

Writing about the evaluation for guidance programmes, Gysbers and Henderson (2006) point out such programmes should include evaluation of the programme, personnel,

and results. In other words, programme evaluation should be conducted through lesson evaluation forms, questionnaires, interviews, and panel meetings; personnel evaluation through interviews and panel meetings; and results evaluation through worksheets, student profiles observation, questionnaires, and the Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO). As the programme organiser, I expected programme evaluation to find actual feedback from teachers and students, to refine the framework of the curriculum, to estimate the possibility of further integration, and to check the acceptance and familiarity of the teachers about teaching PGE. Appendixes A9 and B9 show the sample evaluation forms used in Schools A and B. In both cases, the evaluation successfully collected the data I needed. The post-lesson evaluation in particular is very important to assessing the design of the lesson plans. It also serves a monitoring purpose to ensure that all teachers have taught the lessons and voice their feedback about the lessons continuously. If time allowed, focus groups were used to collect more in-depth data from different stakeholders. Table 4.1 shows different types of evaluation done in the case studies. Data were collected for further analysis of the strategies used. Table 4.2 summarises some key factors in School A and B supporting or inhibiting PGE development.

School A	School B
Evaluation form after every lesson (teacher)	Evaluation after every lesson (teachers)
Evaluation form for the whole curriculum (teacher questionnaire)	Evaluation for the whole curriculum (teacher questionnaire)
Evaluation form for the whole curriculum (student interview)	Evaluation for the whole curriculum (student focus group)
Evaluation form for the whole curriculum (parents questionnaire)	Evaluation for the whole curriculum (parents questionnaire)
D&G team panel meetings	Level meetings (2-3 times per year)
Worksheets	D&G team panel meetings
Refer to Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO)	Worksheets and student profiles
	Refer to Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO)

Table 4.1 Evaluations done in School A and B along the action research

Items of note	School A	School B
Principal's attitude	Gave support and helped monitoring since 2003	Financial support for more professional input
Curriculum Coordinator's attitude	Verbal support only	Verbal support and tried to moderate cooperation with GS panel heads
Discipline Master (DM)'s attitude	Key supporter	Key supporter
Discipline and Guidance development	Development in student guidance was in progress, but was discipline-based as a whole.	Both discipline and guidance development were underdeveloped and new starting began in 2005-2006, with progressively systematic development.
Integration of PGE with General studies	It was busy with curriculum reform since 2002 and had no room for PGE.	Trial integration with PGE failed.
Integration of PGE with Religious Education	Pilot reform in RE curriculum was initiated at P1 since 2005, but suffered the lack of integration with other subjects.	Stagnant development in RE, trial integration with PGE failed.
Integration of PGE with Moral and Civic Education	Organised by another senior teacher separately in ignorance of the PGE curriculum.	Organised by SGT by integrating MCE and PGE as a holistic programme for the whole school.
Students' background and characteristics by observation.	Obedient, positive; they respect teachers and seldom complain about them. Most of them come from grass-roots families.	Clever, sometimes not disciplined, they knew the games played and noticed the "falsehood" of teachers; queried critically and aggressively. Half of them come from the middle-class families.
Teachers and the Team Spirit	Some were willing to change, but they worked in an isolated way.	They were cooperative under pressure, but unmotivated to change.
Greatest Problems observed	Lack of communication, empowerment, collaboration, and rearrangement of resources for new development	There was ambiguity in development direction; it might need frankness, tight monitoring, and appreciation among the team members.

Table 4.2 Factors those supported the implementation of PGE in School A and B noted from the action research

The themes that emerged are roughly categorised as political issues, resources management issues and curriculum management issues. By integrating all kinds of observation and documental evidence, the following tries to conclude the themes emerged from the action research in School A and B from 2002-2006:

4.2.1. Political issues

In School A, the political issues included the unmatched mission and the curriculum (see Appendix A1), ignorance about PGE (see Appendix A2), the power struggle among administrators, misunderstanding and passiveness of the top leadership and the middle managers during the PGE development process (see Appendix A5), the power of internal and external school review, and the ignorance of top and middle managers (see Appendix A4). In School B, some political issues reoccurred, including the fact that the mission and the school development did not match (see Appendix B1), the impact of financial and external support for PGE development (see Appendix B2), limited involvement of middle managers (see Appendix B4/B5), the power struggle, misunderstanding and passiveness of the top leadership and middle managers during the PGE development process. Furthermore, the power of internal and external school review, and the change of acceptance for PGE of the frontlines teachers were noted (see Appendix B5).

4.2.2. Resource management issues

In School A, the resources management issues consist of the lonely work of SGT for PGE (see Appendix A4 and A5) and the importance of teacher training to raise sensitivity about personal growth and pedagogy about PGE (see Appendix A7). In School B, the resources management issues consist of unfair time allocation for PGE

(see Appendix B4 and B5), the adjusted manpower management strategy and the input of external resources like non-governmental organisations and educational psychologists.

4.2.3. Curriculum management issues

In School A, the curriculum management issues include the feedback from different stakeholders like the students, teachers and parents (see Appendix A8 and A10), the key points in the curriculum design of PGE curriculum, the attitude of the teachers (see Appendix A10), and the adaptability of teachers to the new curriculum for the new pedagogy and new mindset (see Appendix A11). In School B, the curriculum management issues include the influence of co-planning and co-teaching (see B4-B7 and B12), different feedback about PGE (see Appendix B8 and B14), the possibility of integration PGE with subjects like MCE, GS, and RE, the key points of curriculum design of PGE curriculum, teachers' attitudes, and differences in interpretations of PGE content between the lesson plan writers and the practitioners (see Appendix B10). Moreover, issues, such as mixed feelings about teaching PGE (see Appendix B11) were noted. Further, a small-scale evaluation of the lesson plan design (see Appendix B15) and a lesson study in P.3 (see Appendix B12) were conducted in School B (2005-2006) to triangulate different views about teaching PGE. Results indicated that there were differences between teachers and students with regard to their expectations for PGE design based on their own perspectives and needs. Results also exposed a lot issues about PGE lessons: such as the preparation, perceptions, and interpretations of different teachers about PGE teaching, classroom management, teaching skills, and student feedback about different teachers' presentation. Themes from the lesson study provided more details about the usefulness of PGE in the classroom that can be further triangulated with other data sources.

During 2002-2006, the development plan for PGE in School A and B was modified continuously in response to feedback and the progressive evaluation and reflections of the programme, so as to shape the strategy for the optimum state of school-based curriculum development. Besides, the issues like the impact of SGTs' special status and position in school for PGE development and the subtle tactics for successful curriculum development and management will be further triangulated with the issues emerged from questionnaires and interviews.

4.3. Themes from Questionnaires

Two set of questionnaires were delivered to two groups of stakeholders, the teachers and the student guidance teachers, to collect more information about their perceptions and comments about PGE development and management to explore and triangulate the data with the issues identified through the action research done in School A and B. (see Appendix A13 and B13)

4.3.1. Themes from the questionnaires to teachers in Schools A and B

Data from the questionnaires collected in 2004 and 2006 show that School A had proceed to the post-development stage of the PGE, but there were different constraints, and a new form of integration occurred. Alternatively, development of PGE in School B was maturing between 2004 and 2006, with better administrative arrangements and richer provision of resources. Overall, the score for PGE implementation given by teachers increased from 2004 to 2006 from 6.51 to 6.97 (a statistically significant difference) at School A and from 6.4 1 to 6.50 at School B. Many issues emerged, including training, the autonomy of teachers, lesson times, materials provided,

organisation, structure and management of the curriculum, and co-teaching. Furthermore, the issues also remind us of other embedded factors that need further exploration, such as school culture, working practice, and leadership of the schools.

Political issues that emerged in the questionnaires included teachers' suspicion and bewilderment about EMB policy and their queries and misunderstanding about PGE (comments like "It is SGT's curriculum!" were not uncommon). Resource management issues included teacher training, workload and experience, willingness to help the development of PGE, time issues in preparation and teaching, queries about the lesson design, reliance on the internet and information technology support, and requests for more autonomy for teachers, especially in the preparation process.

About curriculum management issues, the data reveal perception changes among the teachers. About 80% agree with the necessity of PGE. Teachers in School A are more elated and happy about teaching PGE (both 33%) than those in School B (11-16%). Comparing the pre-test and post-test, the decrease in negative feeling in School A is greater than in School B. As an integrated mixed mode of PGE was initiated, teachers enjoyed a lighter workload.

Some teachers have mixed feelings towards PGE. At School A, the issues that emerged are the importance of in-house support (training, lesson planning, re-organisation of the curriculum, and co-teaching), integration, autonomy, workloads, curriculum materials, time limits, preparation, and teaching attitude. Conservative responses from the observer teachers are noted compared to who those have taught PGE. For School B, the issues are the time constraints, workload, preparation, and the mode of delivery in the pre-test. The linkage, effectiveness, preparation time, and lesson plan quality were prominent issues in the post-test.

Simply speaking, the issues that most concerned teachers are their acceptance about PGE programme, workload, integration, teaching skills, changes in teacher-student relationship, effectiveness and internalisation of PGE concepts, class size, involvement of parents, and mode of delivery. In-depth interviews were then conducted to investigate the issues further and to weave together the final picture.

4.3.2. Themes from the questionnaires to Student Guidance Teachers (SGTs)

Questionnaires to SGTs are used to collect more information about PGE development in the views of the “curriculum managers” by investigating their failures, successes, worries, difficulties, opportunities, and the strategies they tried. In the spring of 2005 (the deadline for full development of PGE), about 120 questionnaires were delivered with random sampling (by considering the location and religious background of schools) to the guidance teachers. Seventy-seven questionnaires were returned. Appendixes C1, C2, and C3 show a sample of the questionnaire and the preliminary results of the analysis. Guidance teachers were also asked to conduct a SWOT analysis (the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) by virtue of their perceptions and experiences with PGE implementation.

The results show that among the returned questionnaires, 60% of the respondents have experience of between 6-10 years, over 80% of them serve middle-size and large schools with an average class size of more than 18 students, and 60% of schools have a religious background. Over half the counsellors had studied curriculum design and management. Just about 60% of schools had achieved the targets set by the EMB in three years by allocating 72 lessons of PGE into their curriculum. The following sections show in detail the themes that emerged for further investigation: views of

curriculum development, perceptions of the stakeholders, and the experience of guidance teachers (see details in Appendix C2 and C3).

4.3.2.1. Political issues

Nearly 70% of guidance teachers think that there was inadequate support from the EMB. They are frustrated with lack of support for such “school-based” development, including provision for adequate teacher training, teaching kits, instructions and clear curriculum framework, clear empowerment for the person in charge, time allocation for PGE, and also the evaluations for PGE and time for schools to prepare the programme. The rest (30%) are satisfied with the support from the school administration, resources, and teachers at their own schools. Finally, PGE has been in a state of “could be” or “could not be”, and will remain so if the SGTs lose the power struggle.

4.3.2.2. Resource management issues

About 92% of respondents (SGTs) are organisers of PGE, 67% of them work alone on PGE, and 48% of them (half) teach the PGE. Some collaborate with other heads of panels such as life education, moral and civic education (MCE), and the discipline masters (DM). This shows that when involvement of the curriculum development officer and deputy principal are scarce, involvement of discipline masters (29%), principals (16%), and teacher assistants becomes comparatively crucial. Twenty-one percent of schools have set up PGE teams for PGE development. The number of team members varies, but teams mainly are composed of a combination of guidance teachers (75%) and some key members like DMs, principals, deputy principals, panel heads of MCE, RE and life education, and sometimes level representatives, CCs, or

NGO representatives are included. Strangely enough, some teachers still think that PGE is SGTs' curriculum.

The result shows that class teachers (79%) and SGT/SGO/SGPs (48%) are the key persons who teach PGE. This suggests that teaching training and curriculum modification must be done continuously to sustain PGE and enhance teachers' awareness of it.

About 83% of schools provide lesson time for PGE. Schools without definite lesson time use the library lessons, assembly in the school hall, post-examination time, or long week time on Saturdays for PGE. This shows that PGE is not normally accepted by some schools.

4.3.2.3. Curriculum management issues

Most of the guidance teachers (89%) say that PGE is necessary. Some guidance teachers think that PGE can balance the bias toward academic performance, help build a harmonious campus, and reinforce guidance and counselling development effectively and comprehensively. PGE is a guidance curriculum in the form of counselling lessons with preventive aims. It takes time for PGE to be accepted and earn its position in schools.

From the questionnaires reported by the guidance teachers, there are evidently a lot of negative behaviours by teachers who do not accept PGE and who retain stereotypical thinking about and strong resistance to student guidance. Hence, they respond to the curriculum routinely and try to muddle through the new request, which in the end hurts the students. The data reveal that some teachers teach PGE directly, share emotionally, or expect that the PGE can change the students' behaviours instantly.

Notwithstanding this, SGTs are gratified to observe teachers' growth, acceptance, involvement, and growing positive feedback about PGE. On the other hand, students are found very involved in PGE lessons because they can express themselves in a relaxed atmosphere. The feedback is satisfactory, especially at the lower and intermediate levels. The interactive approach of PGE lets students have quality reflection time, and teacher-student relationships are enhanced. Both students and teachers gain novel experience through PGE, which enhances the relationship and mutual understanding between the two parties. PGE also helps to identify students in need and their embedded problems. Some SGTs want to arouse parents' concern and support about PGE, to upgrade the presentation and critical thinking skills of students and teachers, and to lessen the present teacher-student ratio of PGE.

Over 70% of the schools refer to two to five teaching kits. The most popular three are "*Happy Classroom*" (HKPA, 2002), "*Growth Express*" (WLPL, 2004), and the EMB teaching kits, which make up to 30% of the total kits used. SGTs are concerned about the appropriateness, interactive elements, the user-friendliness of the teaching materials, the internalization of PGE concepts, and the inadequacy of the framework given by the EMB. Hence, some SGTs successfully employed co-planning to eliminate misunderstandings.

There were different forms of PGE lessons. PGE could be taught in the classroom (100%), big lectures and assemblies (48%), or via integration with other subjects (14%). Two figures about integration were reported, 14% and 36% accordingly (Appendix C2). This implies that SGTs have different interpretations about integration. The subjects that are most likely to be integrated with PGE are general studies (GS), MCE (up to 50%), and RE and library lessons (about 10 to 15%). Some guidance teachers support the idea of integration because it may reduce the pressure

on teachers. PGE development can be achieved if there is a curriculum at hand like life education or MCE in the school. Some SGTs concern the issues of curriculum monitoring, the modes of delivery and the development of the curriculum framework of PGE; some worry about the problem of “subjectisation”, meaning that PGE could become a lesson period or a formal subject, which might alter its initial motives.

4.3.2.4. Growth and workload of student guidance teachers (SGTs) in the process of PGE implementation

The mandatory policy for PGE implementation has given SGTs the apparent power to gain salient status in schools. Through frequent communications and interactions beyond the case work, SGTs refresh their impressions and perceptions about actual school life. Guidance teachers gain their self-satisfaction and sense of achievement via the process, which shows their capacity for curriculum management. Some succeed—cases have rebuilt, and SGTs have strengthened their working relationships with colleagues and students. On the other hand, PGE has added a heavy workload for guidance teachers. To a certain extent, it exceeds one’s capacity, especially for those who work and teach alone. The analysis shows that the average pressure, diligence, and satisfaction perceived or exerted by SGT/SGO/SGP during the PGE development period are 6.25 (73 responded), 8.01. (73 responded) and 6.24 (77 responded) respectively. (1 implies the least, 10 implies the greatest.) The t-test shows that if the organiser is the SGT/SGP/SGO only, the pressure on that person is greater. If the school has a PGE team, the pressure of SGTs is lower, and they have greater satisfaction (statistically significant) than those without a team. The t-test shows that schools with religious backgrounds can statistically significantly lessen the pressure on SGTs. Regardless of the statistical significance, SGTs experience higher pressure in schools if they work in school with more than 24 classes and they received no

curriculum training. Greater satisfaction happens if there is a dedicated lesson time for PGE and if the attitude towards EMB's support is positive.

In short, the questionnaires to SGTs depicted a wider view of the study. Factors worth noting include team setup for PGE, the necessity of PGE, integration, virtual feedback of teachers, pressure on course developers, appropriateness of teaching materials, subjectisation of PGE, and internalization of PGE concepts. Different paces and forms are found, from all-in-one curriculum development to whole school approach with mature integration, co-planning, co-teaching, and peer evaluation about PGE. To gain more detail, in-depth interviews were done subsequently to get at the truth.

The common issues that emerged from the questionnaires from teachers and SGTs are the change of students, involvement of parents, teacher training, support, internalization of PGE, and the responsibilities of teachers. The perception for the need for PGE is high (80% and 89%) among both parties. Other key issues are involvement of teachers, support from top management and team work, teachers' willingness and workload, and further exploration about curriculum development, integration, and whole-school approach.

4.4. Themes from Interviews

Regarding the issues that emerged from questionnaires, further in-depth interviewed were conducted with teachers, SGTs, and other stakeholders like social workers, parents, and some people from EDB to develop the overview of the picture. The following are the important issues that emerged from those from the interviews, action research, and questionnaires, or those that motivated me to study further.

First, concerning the management of political issues, the interviewees brought up the conflicts between EMB policy and school-based development, the ambiguous attitude of the EMB, the impact of internal and external reviews of PGE, the difficulties of middle managers, relationships and communication, the repeated cycles of policy implementation and the longitudinal and cross-sectional management.

Second, concerning management of resources, special issues are the reliance working culture of teachers, battle of time allocation, fairness and job division, capability of teachers in curriculum design, the explosion of subjects and introduction of external helpers like social workers and educational psychologists.

Third, themes about management of curriculum are integration and teacher-student relationship in the view of the students, actual feedback about family worksheets, parents' expectations about teachers, and inter-evaluation of teaching skills among teachers. Fear of teachers, the "sharing" nature of PGE, the reality of integration, and the wisdom learned from the PGE lessons are also mentioned.

More themes elicited from the interviews of SGTs include the difficulties of being an "inserted" SGT, the importance of professional sharing, the role-transition problem, and the new image of SGTs among middle managers.

4.5. Themes that Emerged for the Whole Study

Of the themes that emerged from the three stages, those from stages two and three were based on the further investigation of the themes found from the previous stages. The themes from stage one showed how Schools A and B responded to PGE. They were all collected through first-hand experience, observation, perceptions, lesson

study, evaluation, and review of supporting documents (reports and minutes). Specifically, conflicts and struggles found at each “plan-act-observe-reflect” cycle left hints to be explored with future questionnaires and interviews. Themes highlighted political issues, such as the indifference of school leadership and management, pressure of SGTs, difficulties in school-based curriculum development, and power of internal and external review. Themes from stage one provided a preliminary outline for this study. Proceeding to stage two, the most important themes that emerged from the questionnaire included the changing perceptions of teachers and SGTs, their expectations for integration and scoring for PGE development, and the actual situation and extent of support for PGE at different schools. In particular, the issues related to the impact of religious background, importance of the presence of a PGE team, and the lonely work of SGTs were reported in the quantitative measures. Further, themes, such as the necessity of PGE, workload, experience, class size, and subjectisation of PGE, were explicitly reported, although they are not dominant in the action research. Next, the in-depth interviews filled in the gaps from the first two stages. For instance, themes like collaboration, integration, pseudo conformity, fairness, teachers’ culture, priority of the schools, and many insightful strategies were found. All the issues that emerged from different parts of the study are categorized into three main themes, with corresponding sub-themes.

4.5.1. Management of political issues

Themes for policy are the “unarticulated” policy context of PGE, history of student guidance teachers in primary schools, the changing world and the prevalent education development in Hong Kong, support from EMB, elements to prioritize policy from EMB, the relationship between EMB policies, school-based development and the hidden agenda, the impact of external school review on PGE development, and the

readiness for paradigm shift.

Themes for curriculum leadership and communication are the involvement of top leadership and management, support from principals and deputy principals, the influence of developmental stages and culture of schools, the involvement of middle management, collaboration between discipline and guidance (especially the struggles of middle management to deal with the new policy), communication about the new policy, and general attitudes and strategy for dealing with the new policy. Meanwhile, the collaboration and competition are deeply investigated.

4.5.2. Management of resources

The themes separately cover manpower management, time management, and external support. In terms of manpower management, the themes are involvement of teachers, the lonely work of SGTs, quality of PGE team members, capability of teachers and team management, the bounded collaboration and isolated working practice of teachers, impact of motivations and job satisfaction of teachers, the paradigm shift of teachers, and so on. On the other hand, themes about time management are another focus. Furthermore, themes about external support include the involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social workers and involvement of educational psychologists.

4.5.3. Management of the curriculum

The themes cover three areas: the teaching, learning, and effectiveness of PGE, selection of school-based design or textbooks, and the possibility of integration. The teaching, learning, and effectiveness of PGE covers the necessity, expectation, and general feedback about PGE, and some technical matters like teaching and debriefing,

collaborative lesson planning, co-teaching, self-disclosure, debriefing, and assessment of changes in the programme in terms of parent-child relationships and teacher-student relationships. School-based design or textbook issues involve themes like school-based curriculum development of PGE with School B and the “subjectisation” matter of PGE. Integration involves the feasibility of integration in general, and the possibility of integrating PGE with different subjects (MCE, GS, and RE).

The following chapters discuss PGE development in the three aspects: the management of political issues, resources, and the curriculum from different perspectives such as leadership, management, teaching, learning, or integration. The final chapter addresses the research questions as to whether PGE development is possible, to show the optimum approach to implement it, and to examine the implications of PGE development for the education system.

CHAPTER FIVE MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL ISSUES

Power relationships, conflict, and the policy process are identified as “the concepts [that] exist within schools for the study of political dynamics” (Marshall & Scribner, 1991, p. 349). Hence, political issues are inevitably present in any organisation, and the problems may arise when macro directions meet micro realities (Mawhinney, 1999, p. 159). This chapter explores these by means by PGE development to reflect the conflicts among policy-makers, leadership, management, and the programme organisers (SGTs) as they apply to the research questions.

5.1. The “Unarticulated” Policy Context of the Personal Growth Education (PGE)

This section discusses the policy context of PGE, the conflicts of EMB policies, and school development to delineate the reality of policy implementation in schools, especially the involvement of the school heads and the deputies, and the difficulties confronted by student guidance teachers, to investigate the truth of policy implementation.

5.1.1. EMB’s support for new policies and the underlying truth

Hong Kong, like many countries, has been engaged in “continual education reform”, which covers most areas of education, since the early to mid-1990s. Current reforms in Hong Kong “target increased decentralization, raising standards, increased accountability, equity and the building of professionalism”, influencing educators at all levels (Dowson et al., 2003, p. 2). Educational decentralization is a current theme of the governments of many countries; such initiatives have been carried out with varying goals, strategies, and outcomes (Hanson, 1998, p. 111).

As Pang (2002, p. 188) has stated, the Hong Kong school system “has long been well characterised as a strong centralized one, but has seen management reform only since 1991”. The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) is responsible for providing resources, formulating programmes, and identifying key values in the education system in Hong Kong. Teachers and administrators who run schools are expected to follow government instructions to implement policies (Morris & Scott, 2003, p. 73). What about guidance policy? Is it a new decentralization target? How did schools deal with this new policy?

After the handover in July 1997 and since the new millennium, numerous new educational policies have been proposed in Hong Kong to prepare the system for the 21st century and to encourage schools to go through the paradigm shift. Is it painful to deal with new policies? Based on the experience of developing information technology and religious education (RE), A-T5 pointed out that there was always confusion at the beginning, that the unstable targets of the EMB were frustrating teachers, and that because the EMB was inexperienced, it let teachers explore the policies themselves without adequate support. Moreover, because there was no compromise among the middle managers in schools, implementing new policies further tortures the teachers. The impact is salient.

Information technology has been financed by government since 1997. There is the same problem as the PGE: there is only money, but no one knows how to use it. At the very beginning, they were inexperienced in financial control and the support for schools. Recently, everything has been going very smoothly. (A-T5)

Of RS, the policy of the PGE and all the coming official documents, I feel ambivalent about the policy focus of the EMB, whole-person education or

academic performance targeted (A-T5).

Ho's (2002) study shows that unstable policy, unclear education targets, and other factors make teachers feel helpless in implementing education reforms. They also feel insecure: teachers feel unsafe and unsure, so psychosomatic non-adaptation to the culture shock is to be expected. However, the traditional focus on the gap between educational policy and its implementation often results in what Goodson (2000) terms a form of "implementationist myopia". Many "policies" remain impossible dreams that cannot be implemented because of an absence of financial resources or qualified personnel, because they are insufficiently specific, or because they are ambiguous. The middle manager⁷ is sometimes faced with the task of reconciling the irreconcilable, a situation that often produces outcomes characterised by "grand pretensions, faulty execution, puny results" (Elmore, 1997, p. 241).

As Warwick (quoted in Dyer, 2000, p. 56) put it, "effective implementation requires transactions between policy proponents, implementers and others whose support is necessary for action to happen". Other theorists have made similar points, advocating, for example, the need for explicit organisation models for social programmes.

In terms of the guidance policy—PGE development, it seemed that communication between the D&G section and other sections, such as CDI, GS, and RE, was weak, except for MCE in EMB. Therefore, the D&G section should strive for collaboration among the different sections in EMB for PGE development. Although the D&G section reported being satisfied with the current situation of PGE in schools and the

⁷Middle managers are those administrators below the rank of principal. They form the greatest part of the administration team that implements or leads different policy and development of schools. Mainly, in the primary schools in Hong Kong, they are the coordinators of curriculum, extra-curricular activities, discipline, guidance, student affair, resource management, student assessment, and so forth.

teaching kits produced by the NGOs in and before 2006, the quality of the teaching kits is not under D&G section's control. Of the communication between EMB and SGTs about PGE development, EMB tended to believe the figures (number of PGE lessons that had been taught) that were submitted to them in the monthly e-reports. Communication between EMB and D&G section with SGTs since the enactment of PGE development was limited to figures submitted, not the real difficulties in the process. The inspectors of EMB D&G section might help to push the principals because PGE is a "must to do" policy, but then they would go away. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.1.)

I will believe in the figures—I have no reasons to not trust them. I will not expect the involvement of principals every time. (EDX)

SGTs and social workers find that the resources and planning suggestions provided by the EMB are quite limited (from the interview and the questionnaire). Some SGTs felt strongly that the arrangement of the EMB was problematic, and that the support was insufficient. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.1.) Some EMB people honestly worried about the time given to PGE, its acceptance by teachers, and the adequacy of training. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.1.) In spite of the fact that PGE guideline was revised to deal with some logistical issues (EMBSDD, 2004), EMB should review the success and difficulties of the policy, and then encourage schools to perform in the most effective way.

5.1.2. Elements to prioritize the policies and the paradox of conformity

Different schools develop different strategies to cope with the new policies. In the case of School A, some teachers perceived that they must change continuously with the EMB's new policies because they had no choice in the matter. They got used to the rapid change of policy, knowing that they had no time to object to the upcoming ones

or to weigh the necessity and the priority. A senior staff A-T10 said, “...it all depends on the preference of school.” What does “school” mean? Does it mean the principal’s preferences? This statement reflects the helplessness managers and teachers feel. External School Review forces them to be followers. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.2.)

I think for our school, we are so serious about managing and handling the policies from the EMB: we work so hard and seriously to accomplish it. We are not lazy for them....Schools should choose the suitable thing to do. However, sometimes, there is no choice when the EMB asks us to provide documentary support. If the EMB says that there are no documents to deal with, it is lying. When External School Review comes, you must provide the document. (A-T10)

Some teachers think that “good” teachers should be obedient and simply follow the instructions from the EMB; some are not willing to do each piece of work seriously; and some emphasise the priority and capacity of teachers. This kind of passive obedience results from having no control of the priority of the work and from lack of autonomy—teachers’ fates are in the hands of top management. Therefore, some teachers hate superficial conformity to new policies and long for a robust way to deal with the new policies. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.2.)

We almost execute all new policies of the EMB. We are all good teachers. Yes, we have our own resolutions towards the policy. We must set the priority and do the important one first at the expense of the less important one. Everyone will do that. We need rest! We need rest! We should learn how to live; it is our surviving skill. For the whole school, the same priority setting is employed. It depends on the person in charge and our leader. (A-T9)

In both Schools A and B, teachers accept the new policies. On the other hand, schools also work hard to reform themselves to maintain the number of Primary One (P1) comers in the face of the shrinking population. A lot of new plans are produced and then the big crash occurs. How about PGE? Is it the last priority of all? How can PGE find its place in school? EMB people understand the difficult situation of schools and SGTs, and even accept the situation when no PGE is being done.

I think at the present moment, every group in schools is fighting for the resources; we must strike a balance and be practical because we cannot always be the first priority. Especially for some schools with a lot of immigrants or problem students, it is normal that they would render a lot of resources to D&G issues. For those well-developed schools, with less student problems, of course, more resources will be put into other prioritized events. I think it is normal! (EDX)

Some SGTs felt that it would be better if their schools had or intended to refine MCE or introduced similar educational concepts in schools, such as value and life skills education. Finally, both matched and unmatched conditions (consistent with the MCE curriculum that was developed in schools) appeared in different schools (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.2.).

The unmatched examples:

I think what I have done is not compatible to what is being done in my school: the importance for me does not match the priority of my school. I think the problem is that our school is the only school of the organisation, with no comparison or progress. (SG-N)

The matched examples:

Up to the present moment, I do not find MCE the first priority to develop, but it has already been developed over the years, like other subjects. The

process is so smooth, with the addition of the increasing resources. Recently, they have added in the concept of value education. Overall, everything matches with the development targets and the vision of our school. (SG-C)

In the view of teachers, if the policies are compatible with the school targets, they have no doubts about carrying them out. However, teachers sometimes accept the new policy because they have no choice, and consequently, they wait for further internal adjustment in their school. Indeed, they feel uncomfortable, stressed, and exhausted, and they keep complaining about EMB creating new policies without contemplating the needs of the present system. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.2.)

I think if the policy can meet the target, then it is good. However, it cannot.

It is pressure for the teachers. (A-T12)

Indeed, every subject has moral and personal growth elements like Chinese, RS, GS...I think it is OK to let the PGE penetrate into other subjects. But if the EMB requests to make it a single and new subject, we have no choice. (B-T2)

The statements of the EMB were quite vague as to whether they were truly insisting on the development of PGE. EDX expressed the flexibility verbally, but also were suspicious of the feasibility. Morris and Scott pointed out that “Some policies are made to echo the social need, indeed, in mind of government mind, they are pro-elitism. The use of symbolic policy making was a relatively easy strategy in the more “loosely coupled” areas is used by government avoid conflict”. Thus, it could be said that many policies are called “school-based”, but in practice, no long-term monitoring and serious evaluations of the policies are carried out. Schools are permitted to carry out the policies on their own and are ironically judged by the

“performance indicators” when the time comes for external review.

Teachers are fed up with the ever-changing policy and results in the response of inertia, cynicism and stress for any reforms those may be replaced or dropped with the suspicion, surface compliance and a “wait and see” attitude. Finally, it is at once both a central concern and a neglected area; the more things change, the more they stay the same. (Morris and Scott, 2003, p. 83)

Therefore, there is great conflict between the top-down policy mandated by the EMB and the request for bottom-up practice from frontline teachers. One result is that the middle managers become confused. Morris and Scott (2003) cited the observation of Mak (1996, p. 406):

Reform measures tend to get translated into bureaucratic activities that keep everybody busy but amount to little real change. We are quick to espouse trendy ideas – autonomy, excellence, school effectiveness, child-centered learning, reflective teaching etc. as if they were proxies for deeds, yet our mind set remains technically oriented. Thus, reform measures that intend to liberate end up engulfed in the old machine.

5.1.3. EMB policy, school-based development, and the hidden agenda

In the case of Schools A and B, their missions and visions beautifully express their aims for whole-person development education, love, and respect for each other. Indeed, student guidance plays a vital part in achieving the ultimate goal. Can school really work out their missions? The answer is “no”, especially for the ignored domain—”Student Support and School Ethos”—in which student guidance plays the key role. The failure is attributable to two reasons: the tension between the top and the

frontline and the bias toward academic performance of students. These factors obviously have obstructed guidance and PGE development in the past. Table 5.1 shows the real tensions among teachers, managers, and the principal as observed in Schools A and B. It shows the difference in the priority of different parties, which can weave ample combinations of collaborations and conflicts in a school.

Mission and vision	Missions and visions are always beautiful and focus on the education of the all-around, multi-intelligent, good-quality students with the traditional five domains, which are moral, intellectual, physical, social, and aesthetics development. (德、智、體、群、美)
Principal	Their intentions usually take into account of parents' feedback, social demands, school image, traditions, and the consideration of the P1 newcomers.
Middle management	They have different talents, personalities, and working styles, depending on whom they work for. They adopt different management and leadership styles and influence the schools' operation significantly. Their combination and subtle relationships could have profound impacts on a school.
Frontline teachers	They perform obediently, but complain silently after formal meetings. Indeed, they enjoy the roles as "Kings and Queens" in their classrooms.

Table 5.1 The conflicting situations observed in Schools A and B

In addition, there is the "principal-do-right" phenomenon in Schools A and B. For instance, in School A, the senior managers were not empowered, and their mindset was: "I follow what my boss tells me to do!" Some teachers intended to maintain their obedient image as a capable and competent teacher. They did not intend to analyse the feasibility of the policy, just to follow it. Mostly, their referring priority were EMB' s instructions, sponsoring bodies' decision (even when it represents a great conflict of interest), principals' decisions (under normal situations), needs of the school, the annual development targets, and others factors (opinions from middle managers or

frontline teachers). However, Fok (2001) agree that if there is no consensus with the related stakeholders, all changes are cosmetic. Many past examples of this behavior can be cited.

Second, the bias toward academic performance of students is another truth. The influence of school management on the academic or non-academic activities is different as the former one is the true concern of schools, whereas “student support and school ethos” is normally not the first priority, though it is stated in the school motto or mission. Hence, as shown in Table 5.2, the focus and quality of school management are mostly reflected at the non-academic as it requires more skills other than following the central syllabus and guidelines.

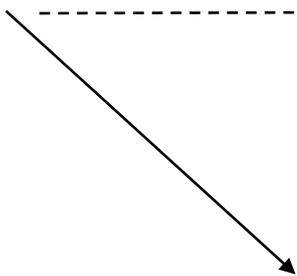
Management of School	Response of Management and Teachers
<p>In view of management, the current themes being advocated are uniqueness, collaboration, consensus, direction, team spirit, atmosphere, image, and the participation of the stakeholders.</p> 	<p>On the academic side, schools follow the central curriculum guidelines, such as the Territory-Wide System Assessment. The outcome depends on the individual teacher’s effort and talents. Cooperation of parents is welcomed. The influence of school management is limited because teachers must follow the policy implementation.</p> <p>On the non-academic side, there are mainly the teams for D&G, MCE, and extra-curricular activities that are controlled by school management and maintained by the passion and commitment of team leaders. However, they are seen as supplementary and optional. The outcome reflects the quality and focus of school management.</p>

Table 5.2 The responses of school towards academic and non-academic issues

In view of the situations at Schools A and B, there is a major gap between the actual priority (hidden agenda) of schools and the annual target sets on the one hand and the requests of EMB on the other. The hidden agenda is manipulated by principals because of their leadership and power, which I, as a participant observer, noticed. It costs teachers a significant amount of time to satisfy their demands. Teachers were frustrated about where they were and the actual development direction of the school. Complaints and admonishment appeared. I observed the situations, which show the differences between the target set and the hidden agenda:

Mission and Targets	Hidden Agenda
<p>Mission: Whole person development</p> <p>Targets (2002-2005)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote the reading and self-learning habits of students. <li>2. Improve the self-images of students through praise and chances to show their ability. <li>3. Explore students' potential and abilities; give them chances to try and to create. 	<p>School A (2002-2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the P1 newcomer by launching more grand projects and activities like Campus TV and improving the outlook of school. Zero mistakes in any large functions. <li>• Minimise the impact of merging of the two sessions (a.m. and a.m.) and create a balanced and harmonious working climate. <li>• Improve the academic performance of students as quickly as possible. <li>• Emphasise discipline to train up all students to be disciplined, polite and obedient because it was important to build up a good image for the community. <li>• Authoritative control was employed by the principal and all managers and teachers must follow. Principal was especially keen to promote curriculum reform in Chinese and education and to visit different countries.

Mission and Targets	Hidden Agenda
<p>Mission: Whole person development</p> <p>Targets (2004-2007):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the pedagogy, the behavior, conduct, courtesy, self-learning, and self-management skills of students. 2. Develop the high-order thinking skills of students and build up the caring culture via MCE. 	<p>School B (2000-2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use plenty of activities as the package to maintain the apparent “vivid” image of the school. • Maintain the fame of the school by winning more awards within their traditional strengths, and keep academic performance at the highest standard by using difficult text books. • Strongly emphasise the merits of “Millennium Campus” to attract P1 newcomers and their parents. • Wise financial management to ensure a healthy budget and continued expenditure. • Keep exposing the school to the media and its activities in the territory. • Middle managers were empowered by the principal to work independently with accountability because principal was busy with the outside network.

Table 5.3 Difference between the mission/targets and the hidden agendas of Schools A and B

The actual priority or the hidden agenda could be reflected in the distribution of manpower and resources, since those are usually invisible to outsiders and sealed within the fine-looking year plans. Hence, with these as the prioritized issues, student guidance issues like PGE (though stated as the annual targets) become discipline biased, or are simply ignored or marginalized unless they are insisted upon by the D&G team, DM, and SGT, unless the principals are willing to lead the entire school in implementing them. The following formula shows what the teachers are actually working for.

EMB requests + Annual Targets + Actual Priority
 (Additional pressure) (Apparent consensus) (Hidden agenda)

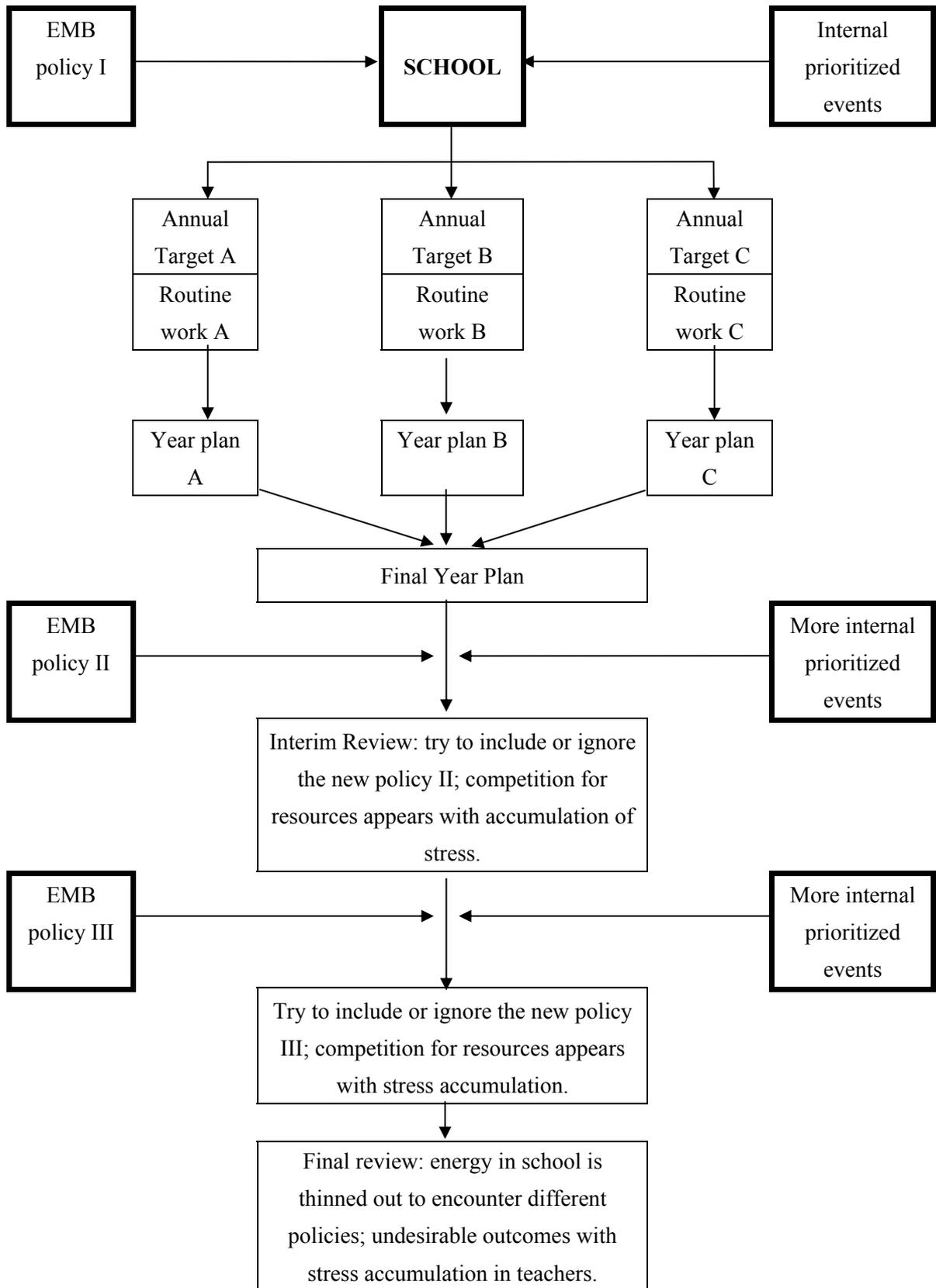


Figure 5.1 The additional pressure, apparent consensus, and hidden agenda in schools

5.1.4. Impact of external school review (ESR) on Personal Growth Education development (PGE)

Considering the neglectful conditions found in schools, what can aid the implementation of PGE and the related guidance policy? To enforce and ensure the implementation of all kinds of education policies in schools, the External School Review has been the most powerful tool used by EMB for quality checking. Can the External School Review help the development of PGE and guidance and counselling in primary schools?

In the case of School B, before and during the External School Review period, there were intense debates among the managers. All uncovered work, unreasonable arrangements, unfairness, planning mistakes, “muddling through” policies, and power bias were exposed fully. This revealed the need for collaboration, redistribution of workload and manpower, and the blind spots that needed further improvement, especially in the links between different domains. The External School Review and pre-External School Review periods provide school a great chance to reflect its operation and system; it also provides SGTs a chance to show their efforts in Domain Three, school ethos and student support. Under the umbrella of the External School Review, the PGE has won a chance to survive because it is one of the foci to be audited. External School Review helps PGE indirectly when the auditors ask schools to show their PGE materials or related guidance activities.

We found that the external review team had asked us about the PGE and it had already put the PGE in the 2nd and 3rd domain, so the PGE is growing to be more important. (EDX)

Mainly the activities above are conducted and organised by me. We had the external review in 2000 and our work was highly appreciated by the

EMB. (SG-M)

Simultaneously, SGTs gain credits and acceptance from colleagues through External School Review. Power is gained and enhanced from the outside in.

Luckily, the EMB sent a team of inspectors to evaluate our performance in the four key areas. Before that, our school was not systematic in MCE, with no team for it. At that time, actually I was doing plenty of jobs related to MCE, like the “Big Brother Big Sister” [a peer-tutoring programme], voluntary work, whole school approach to guidance programme in addition to the PGE. I presented everything to the inspectors. Then I gained credit from the EMB people, so my effort was not completely in vain and I also received credits and acceptance from colleagues. (SG-D)

In spite of the power given to student guidance development by External School Review, sometimes the auditors or inspectors may recommend the “successful” experiences of other schools (experienced in School B), compare their checklists, and criticise without considering school-based problems like leadership style, culture, and limitation of resources. Therefore, Elliott (1998, p.180-181) argues that it is naïve to use the general “performance indicators” to measure the effectiveness of a school according to pre-set conditions without addressing the school’s situational differences, variations, and needs. He asks whether the normative functionalist perspective on evaluation can really boost school improvement. Ouston and Davies (1998) point out that external review focused on a school conforming to a framework might not be in schools’ best interest. This again shows the tension between the EMB and schools. Chan (2001, p.96) also finds that subsequent change induced by external review was very limited because some teachers resist change and they lack the ownership to

change because of the incompatible nature of externally identified recommendations with school planning.

Overall, the External School Review is a political tool that helps SGTs “ask” their serving schools to be “obedient”, and gives them a hand and a shortcut to a smoother implementation of guidance policies, including PGE. However, its rigidity frustrates SGTs. Indeed, the role of “mentor” or “consultant” is preferred over the checklist of the performance indicators.

5.1.5. Are schools and teachers prepared for the new paradigm shift?

Why do bias and hidden agenda even exist? The case studies show that teachers were asked to work on the class level and their subject areas only, but now they have to plan, implement, evaluate and review at every point of the following cubic model. The three dimensions teachers care about nowadays are:

1. different groupings of students (from individual to the whole school);
2. students at different development stages with various potentials; and
3. different subject areas and generic skills.

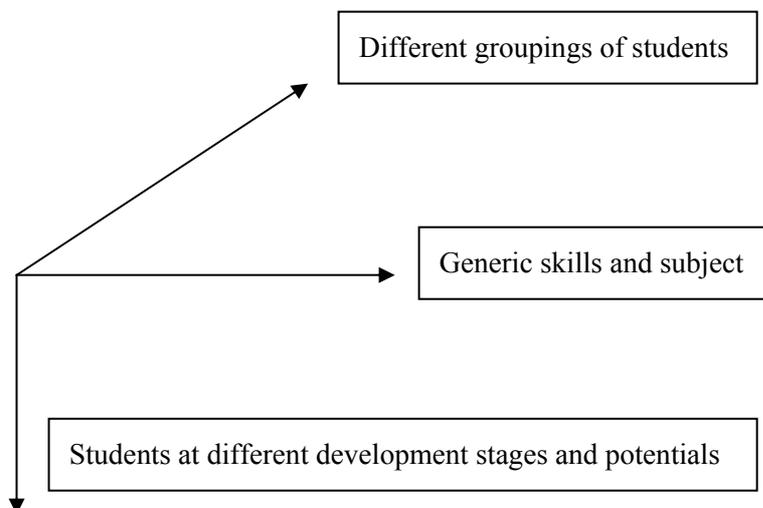


Figure 5.2 Requirements for teachers nowadays

To pursue whole-person development education, student guidance plays the role with PGE as a supplementary curriculum for the affective education. How can a school perfectly manage all meetings, consensus, and time and manpower allocation at every point? To initiate reform in schools, teacher-centred management should take into consideration of (1) teachers' enthusiasm and commitment; (2) teachers' interest, ability, and generic skills; and (3) teachers' experience and professional knowledge. Good management does provide the unique standards, resources, and training, and creates the culture for a paradigm shift. However, as shown by the cases, the quality of management does not guarantee a successful paradigm shift. Nothing can stop the committed teachers from performing well; good management comforts them because they feel they are working for the best. Management intensity may be inversely proportional to the professionalism of teachers. That is the dynamic between control and autonomy.

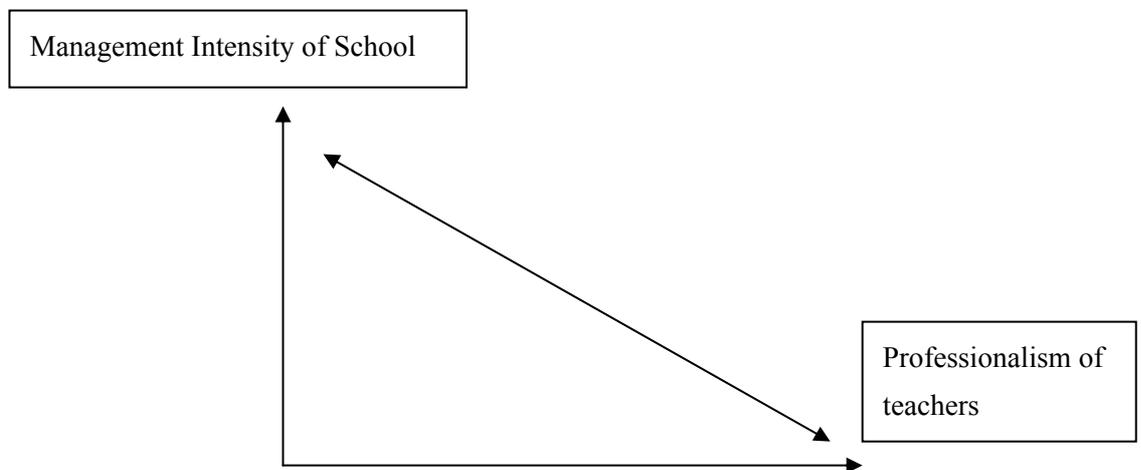


Figure 5.3 The proposed relationship between management intensity of School and professionalism of teachers

5.1.6. Is PGE a symbolic policy?

Schools deal with the EMB policy according to their understanding, priority, and the seriousness and stringency of EMB.

The decision-maker should give teachers more time and room to let them truly teach their children. Setting a PGE lesson is not a must, but if it is too rigid, it may become the routine work without surprise and passion!

(A-T1)

The PGE was issued by the D&G section of EMB at a low profile with limited support and monitoring, and schools have responded accordingly. Morris and Scott (2001) point out that the sluggishness of the EMB policy-makers results in no monitoring and false consultations before the policy is issued. Some policy is made only to echo a social need. “Their adoption was not mandatory and it was up to schools to decide whether to try to implement these changes. On the whole, there was little incentive to do.” Later, they argue, “Their critical function was to demonstrate the government’s concern to address educational issues. Where implementation could not be avoided, strategies were employed which involved compromise or capitulation in an attempt to maintain a consensus and minimise tension and conflict”. There are two features of symbolic policy: first, the policy is introduced rapidly, but is not substantially resourced; second, a policy solution for an educational problem increases bureaucratic activity and creates a new organisation to address the “problem” by government (Morris and Scott, 2003, p. 4).

Is the PGE a symbolic policy? In response to symbolic policy (probably PGE), some schools are just “going through the motions” due to inadequate support and target-oriented pressure. The whole school does not have time to digest and produce alternatives to solve the problem. The slogan of “school-based” implies “no further support and assistance from the EMB”, and the pressure of “performance indicators” means “you could do it yourself but there are targets you must follow”. Finally, schools use their own way to achieve the policy or to package the “outcome” that

would be accepted by the top, with their ambiguous “autonomy” and expanding “helplessness”. Morris and Scott (2003, p.78) point out that teachers in Hong Kong are fed up with and just comply with the latest short-lived government initiative. “A major barrier to the implementation of the current educational reforms is a long-standing culture, a mixture of inertia and cynicism, that was established during the colonial period and which continues. The continuing reform process also seems to result in considerable stress for teachers.”

A study of more than 1,000 teachers reported in October 2002 found that over 77% felt that “frequently changing education policies caused the most pressure” (Chan, 2002, cited in Morris and Scott, 2003). Hence, potential quickly faded for reform policy, since teachers respond with a combination of suspicion, surface compliance, and a “wait and see” attitude. This is a curious phenomenon in Hong Kong education: the more things change, the more they stay the same (Morris and Scott, 2003, p.83).

Hargreaves (1991) argues that the challenge of restructuring in education and elsewhere is a “challenge of abandoning bureaucratic controls, inflexible mandates, paternalistic forms of trust and quick system fixed in order to bring together the disparate voices of teachers and other educational partners” (cited in Elliott, 1998, p. 189).

In the case of PGE, “school-based” development was advocated on one side, but conformity for definite performance indicators was enforced on the other side via External School Review. Schools then take the shortcut to present a look-alike model. Regarding to the EMB’s Review Report (ED, 1998), EMB could consider (1) assessing the carrying capacity of schools as the baseline data for any policies; (2) duly addressing the complexity of the implementation process including management,

leadership, willingness and workload; (3) transforming Quality Assurance Inspection or External School Review as a two-way process to evaluate the appropriateness of the policies; and (4) providing teachers with training about collaboration, management, and leadership. (When this dissertation was written, training for middle managers has been increased).

Besides, the exact priority and hidden agenda manipulated by principals are always another factor. For instance, the principal in School B had advised some managers to be cautious about whether the approach was implicitly in line with the school's policy. Thus, managers became ambivalent about catering to requests from the EMB, External School Review, and the tastes of the principal.

About these paradoxes, Senge et al. (2000, translated by Yeung, 2002) point out that schools (1) waste energy on superficial problems and forget the rooted problems (Arie, 1997, p. 3) cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 26); he concludes that “companies die because their managers focus on the economic activity of producing goods and services, and they forget their organisations’ true nature is that of a community of humans”; (2) transfer responsibility to “experts” like educational psychologist, SGTs, and social workers or rely on the outsiders and give no training to teachers, which disables them ; (3) isolate the problem targets (in School B, in-depth problems like structure, history or ambiguous aim are not discussed); and (4) forget that time is the best means to solve the such difficulties, and instead use quick-fix solutions to solve time-consuming problems. Indeed, it is that negative inter-cheating cycle of the stakeholders, starting from the EMB and moving to schools, teachers and students. The following figures shows that many remedial measures are proposed to solve problems that only create other problems if the rooted problems are not solved.

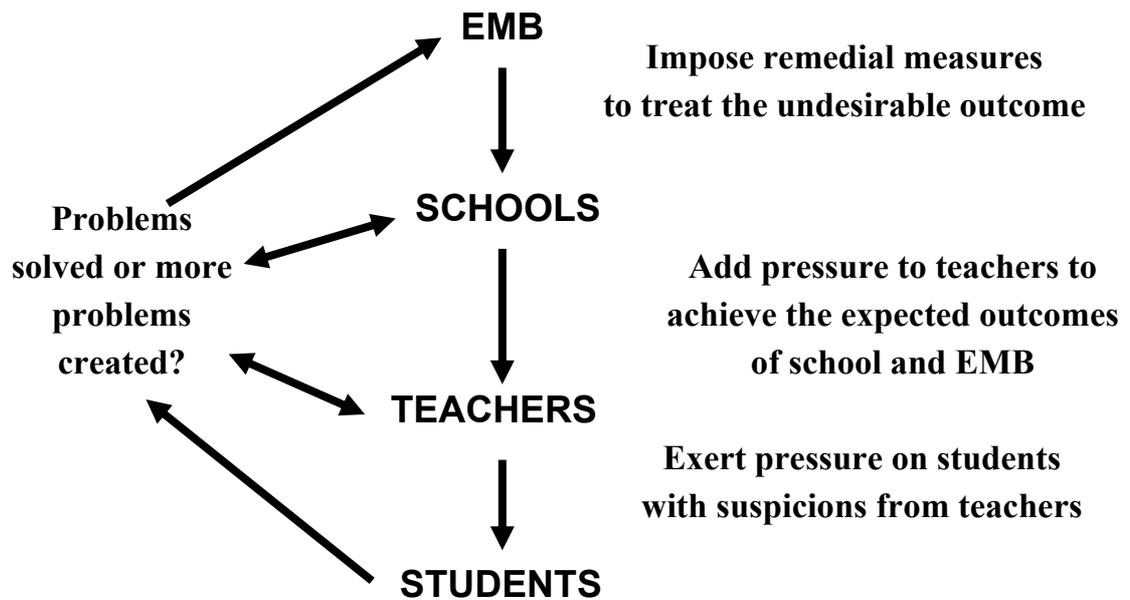


Figure 5.4 Problems solved or problems created?

5.1.7. Section summary

This section illustrates that as more policies emanate from EMB, schools tend to wait and see, but dare not to say “No!” In the case of more plans for holistic development in education with stringent monitoring like External School Review, schools conform superficially with their bias toward academics as the main hidden agenda; as more claims are made that policies are school-based, more ambiguity and chaos in power distribution in schools is created. The teachers lose because they get no support.

Indeed, sensitivity, congruence, honesty, trust, understanding, communication, respect, and empathy are important in policy implementation. For instance, the EMB needs to be sensitive to the capacity of the schools and teachers before issuing any policies. Good preparation and research prior to creating new policy can help anticipate the impacts and support needs, regardless of the obedience of teachers and the urgency of the situation. Adequate input of resources and manpower should be rendered to gain real success and support. More internal communication inside EMB about policies

would reduce the impact, overlapping, or fragmentation of policies.

Moreover, there should be congruence of school management toward External School Review and the school year plan to give teachers a clear picture of the school's development. Trust, understanding, and communication between EMB and schools are crucial for congruence. Furthermore, schools should be honest about their own situation by not adding pressure on teaching staff to please EMB. They should say "no" and request for help when they need it. Finally, teacher-centred management is strongly recommended.

For the sake of good school development and policy-making, there should be respect and empathy within the External School Review process to facilitate two-way communication between schools and EMB, which would let both parties reflect and grow simultaneously. Disingenuousness will persist if both sides are cheated via paperwork that masks the lack of true improvement.

5.2. Involvement of Top Leadership and Middle Management

The two parts of this section discuss the involvement of top leadership (the principals and deputy principals) and middle management in the PGE development process. Particularly in the second section, the involvement of curriculum coordinators (CCs) and discipline masters (DM) and the issues of collaboration, competition, communication, and conflicts among managers are duly discussed.

5.2.1. Involvement of top leadership and management

This part considers the involvement of the principals and the deputy principals and explores the impact of top leadership on PGE development. Ideally, support and

involvement of top leadership provide the clear signal to teachers on the front lines. Given the propensity of Hong Kong teachers to obediently follow direction, such support is a must. Can PGE earn the blessings of top management?

PGE is a “whole school approach” guidance activity aimed at penetrating guidance concepts in the form of a curriculum. Hui (1991) points out that a “whole school approach” to guidance would not be realised if each committee was working in isolation. She mentioned that key personnel in charge of these committees should work as a team and function as a whole rather than representing their own particular committees. According to Galloway (1990), schools need a clearly defined policy about personal and social education and a senior member of staff to take responsibility for implementing it. He suggested that a deputy head co-ordinate the pastoral team. Who, then, should coordinate PGE development? The following sections explore the possible answers.

5.2.1.1. Can Principals help?

The questionnaires returned (Appendix C2) show that 16% of SGTs responded that principals are the key persons to support the development of PGE. Although the EMB had tried its best to explain clearly to all principals the change in the new guidance policy via several workshops, it seemed this method did not really work. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.1.1.)

Between Feb to May 2002, a two-day workshop was arranged for principals, at which we told them how they should match our policy and everything about the new policy. We explained it to them clearly and we clearly defined the roles of the members in schools. (EDX)

So far, we have emphasised the whole-school approach starting before

2000 according to the CEO reports and the *Education Report No.4*. In 2002, we renewed the policy and issued it again with emphasis on the whole-school approach again; we told the principals about the ideologies, and we stressed management (administration), curriculum and other old stuff together. (EDX)

Extracts from the case studies of the two schools illustrate different attitudes of the principals.

School A—total ignorance and central control

In the case of School A, Principal A did not care about the new policy initially and ignored the message I brought to her from the EMB's seminar (2002). Then I tried lobbying and preparation on my own to meet the EMB's guidelines. Then she changed until she was informed at the principals' meetings in the second year (2003). She announced to all staff that this project must be done and asked them to follow my plan (Appendix A5). The verbal support given by Principal A was not sustained till the third year, when a social worker was appointed to School A. She asked the social worker not to disturb the teachers. The indifferent attitude of the principal halted the budding curriculum again, which upset and disappointed the social worker. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.1.1.)

First of all, there was no support from the principal. She just thought everything was ready and OK, so asked me just to do it. I had no time for mutual preparation; I had the documents, but, the teachers did not know the content clearly, what should I do? At the beginning of the semester, our principal said, "There is no problem about the PGE: it is ready! Teachers can pick it up and teach without any problem." (A-T8)

I think the first one to change is the principal; this school is strongly centre-controlled. Although some teachers want to help, she or he may

help you on one side secretly. All are so obedient; everyone follows the main route and no one dares to do something else. Otherwise, it is issued by the top. No one suggests novel ideas, as if they suggest things, the idea may be banned later, so it is safer to follow the top central orders, with no need to think more or to fight for it; finally, all is in vain probably: effort gains nothing! (A-T8)

School B—provided verbal and financial support

In School B, Principal B was more sensitive and announced the policy openly in the staff meeting, and then had the kick-off meeting with the relevant middle managers to discuss the new policy. In the third year, there was also financial support because of the request of DM and the ex-SGT. After that, the principal rarely followed the progress of PGE.

I found that the principal had reminded us about the PGE. However, without support, follow up and good arrangement, no one cared. ...For the teaching staff, they felt uncomfortable with it. (B-T8)

Some SGTs begged for the reform and relied on the change of perception, priority, attention, and belief of principals. The following are examples of different cases. Some SGTs observed that some principals had weak mindsets about curriculum development and action research, and the school changed when the principal changed. Table 5.3 summarises principal support for all cases.

School O—SGT tried to survive with minimum concern and support

Some principals who are more concerned about student guidance, might request to read the curriculum material, but for those do not care about the development of student guidance, they are happy to see me enter the

classroom for demonstration and let the teachers have a relaxing time....I think whether the lessons could run depends on the decision of the principals. If they think it is important to students, they allow the class lessons. If they feel it is not so important, they may allow a brief assembly in the hall with all students together. I can just do my best to do the right thing. (SG-O-worked in two schools, the a.m. and p.m. sections of School O)

School N—principal asked teachers to comment on but rendered no support to SGT

Although I worked hard to prepare all materials, without support from the principal, I got no power to monitor the teachers.... After two years, this year, the condition became more ridiculous: my principal asked all teachers to give me the topics they wanted, then I was responsible to write it all up. I just worked out the framework, because I would leave this school, and the next SGP in this school will follow their idea. My principal had never asked me to have a look at my previous design. (SG-N)

School H—So far, no support!

Did the principal help? He should have done, but it is the matter of curriculum planning as a whole. (SG-H)

School	Principal's Support
A	Total ignorance and central control, no allocation of special manpower, resources, or financial support. No time allowed for collaborative planning and principal teased SGT for proposing teamwork on PGE.
B	Verbal and financial support for external support to help with PGE design and demonstrations, no inhibition for collaborative planning.

School	Principal's Support
C1 and C2	In School C2, principals helped assign teachers to be the form representatives to launch the curriculum.
D	Fully trust and gives SGT freedom for any project
E, I	Not mentioned
F	Support and similar programme have been developed over the years with adequate manpower input.
G	Principal gave SGT appropriate guidance at the beginning, but quickly shifted to other new policies later.
H, J, N, L	No support
K, M, O	Trust for SGT, verbal or little support.

Table 5.3 Principal support in different schools

Despite the ideology of the involvement of the whole school for student guidance, Ross and Herrington (2005) find that the relationship between the principal and the counsellor was complex. That is, neither party was able to manage the complexity of the relationship. Further, both the counsellor and principal should be aware of the dangers of role-drift by getting rid of non-counselling work, such as curriculum development in this case. Ronnestad and Skovholt (1993) state that the effective supervisors for counsellors should provide the structure and a mediating role, and should create, maintain and monitor the relationship between supervisor and the supervisees (school counsellors) while they are in turmoil. Gysbers (1998) also points out the important role of the principals in helping with the guidance policy and programme, Fitch, et al. (2001) suggests that the school administrators should receive training about school counselling.

Different scholars have varying opinions about the roles of principals in curriculum development from initiation to evaluation and teacher training. Principals are encouraged to give special support for administration and resources for curriculum development, such as time for collaboration planning. The staff should be fully

supported and should echo the request for curriculum implementation because a culture of mutual support and cooperation for curriculum reform is essential (Huang, 1991).

Krug (1992) suggests that principal curriculum leadership can be divided into five components: defining mission; managing curriculum and instruction; supervising teaching; monitoring student progress; and promoting the instructional climate. Cai (2005, p.17) concludes that the affecting factors for curriculum development from international and Taiwan studies come to play in two stages. At the initial stage, the affecting factors are the leadership of the school heads, the capability for action research of teachers, a complete curriculum development structure, and external support. At the later stage of implementation, there should be a common vision of the schools, emphasis on the democratic involvement of schools and the community, and the professional growth of teachers.

Huang (1991) points out the responsibilities of a principal. When faced a new curriculum, the principal should:

1. understand the aim, targets, and content of the curriculum, and analyse and select the appropriate means to implement it with respect to the school needs;
2. help with the transition of the new curriculum and design a strategic implementation plan, identify the possible difficulties such as manpower, equipment, finance, time, communication, and organisation of schools and students;
3. help teachers with curriculum design at their levels;
4. ensure the new curriculum to keep its initial aim and targets during implementation;
5. encourage teacher training;

6. provide environmental, psychological, and material support for teachers;
7. understand the difficulties posed by evaluations;
8. elicit the improvement plan and pass teachers' comments to the education authority; and
9. arrange lesson observations to enhance growth and sharing among teachers.

Judged by Huang's suggestion, it was difficult to find enthusiastic principals in the interviewed cases about PGE development. The considerate principals (Schools B and F) could help by allocating manpower, time, and money to help the SGT. Mainly, however, support was limited to trust and verbal support only. Some principals even totally or partially ignored the new policies. The duties suggested by Cai and Huang were almost done by the SGTs (Appendix A3, B3 & D2).

The cases show that the principal could be resource providers of time, outsourcing, and finance, and can provide vocal support for the new directions. Glickman (1989) argues that a principal should be the leader of teachers as curriculum leaders rather than as the sole curriculum leader. However, what is observed in this study is in line with the findings of Poon (2001), Ye (2001), and Gong (2001), who explored the failure of principals in curriculum development. They find that:

1. principals do not understand the nature of curriculum leadership; they do not have professional knowledge in curriculum leadership and development;
2. lack of time and resources;
3. principals do not get full support from the experts;
4. the failure and worry created from role transition;
5. difficult to coordinate the changing roles in the team;

6. support and match from parents and community;
7. some principals keep distant from curriculum and teaching;
8. principals are busy in other miscellaneous things;
9. lack of a structured mechanism for curriculum decision-making;
10. inadequate involvement of the curriculum team members;
11. involvement of parents without adequate educational backgrounds;
12. target-oriented and academic stress of schools;
13. incapability of teachers in curriculum design; and
14. lack of professional training and opportunities.

Coinciding with these findings, Yu (2002) conducted a large-scale survey about teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational leadership. He finds that Hong Kong primary school principals' tendencies toward transformational leadership were not strong. Specifically, they did not demonstrate appropriate practices for teachers to follow. Their efforts to share vision and build goals were insufficient. The principals did not take adequate initiative to change teachers' values, beliefs, and attitudes toward change. Many of them did not know how to provide intellectual stimulation, and their support for teachers seemed inconsistent. In addition, in implementing school-based curriculum reform, principals were weak in their direct involvement in curriculum leadership (Cheng, 2000). Lin (2000) and Shan (2001) state that what the principal is and what the school will be; then what the principal is and what the curriculum will be. In practice, principals are busy and encounter new policies and deal with all kinds of funding, conflicts, and networks in the community. Their time, energy, perception about guidance, background knowledge of curriculum development, and financial support given by the EMB are the controlling factors. Finally, SGTs have to learn to act as programme organisers without additional support.

5.2.1.2. Can deputy principals help?

In the questionnaires returned by SGTs, 9% said that deputy principals are the key persons to support the development of PGE. In total, just one-fourth of the schools' top management really cares about development of PGE. Here are some responses from the deputy principals regarding PGE.

Some deputy principals were affected by the principal. They doubted the insistence of the SGT about PGE and were reluctant to support or to waive their responsibility due to their "respect" for the "autonomy" of the D&G team. Some even equated discipline with guidance. In fact, they did not care about or want to be responsible for PGE development. They noticed the superficial changes (like the increased number of team members on the D&G team) and did not care about how the team functioned and developed. In their view, the SGT should be fully responsible for the extra "workload" like PGE. They did not think they were obligated to respond in any way, or to offer help like mediation or coordination to facilitate the changes. (Appendix A5 and B5)

Have we achieved the target of the EMB and worked out the policy of student guidance? I think we have. You see, the D&G group is expanding. Almost half of the teaching staff are group members, who must share the D&G work. Non-members, through daily conversations, feel they should shoulder part of the work too. Additionally, our principal takes strict discipline control. Everyone has become alert to this. When more teachers are involved in the D&G work, students are more obedient, so you can find that courtesy improves daily; besides, relationships between teachers and students have improved which is shown by the figures of stakeholders' questionnaires: it increases a lot. (said by a deputy principal to a SGT)

Deputy Principals are the most important assistants of the principals. They are supposed to have a thorough understanding of the whole school and help coordinate or initiate all kinds of development in schools, but in the case of guidance development, their attitude was “wait and see”.

Our SGT was more insistent than I. She did a lot. Hence, I talked to myself. If I could help a little, it would be a perfect step. It is my role. Basically, it is good. I must tell others this is good and get their consensus to do it...frankly, some colleagues were not keen and saw no point in implementing the PGE; I felt helpless to change the situation. I was so frustrated and asked, “Could I use my status and method to help? However, must it be done.” Indeed, I don’t prioritize PGE in the first place...as I felt there was no instruction for PGE (from the top). Then teachers perceived it as an ordinary job to carry out. Should we do it seriously? I don’t feel we should. (a deputy principal to a SGT)

Some deputy principals were verbally concerned about the development of the PGE: she just wanted to know something was going on and showed no interest in the details and offered no help.

Based on the interviews, the greatest contribution from the top is the timetable showing a time slot for PGE lessons. To some SGTs, no negative interference was good news, while support from others was a bonus. In some of the worst cases, some deputies did keep away from PGE, and even set up obstacles for SGTs, thus spoiled the chances for modification and collaboration. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.1.2.):

There is no time for pre-lesson meetings, so I just requested not a long period. I failed to get it finally. We failed because I tried to discuss it with the deputy principal: if she said no, that was the end. For instance, I tried

to call a meeting about discipline and guidance and then she said, “You know, it is impossible to get all staff together, not in a meeting, please: Do you understand?” The main failure in the PGE is that the PGE is not important in their eyes. We had the MCE lessons, deputy principal arranged all MCE lessons including PGE lessons on every Monday in the school calendar for us to follow. She gave me 12 lessons of the PGE, but cut this to ten recently. (SG-L)

Though vice-principals in primary schools are supposed to help curriculum leadership because they are responsible for communication and liaison between the principal and staff (Morrison (1995), many cases have shown the under-functioning of deputy principals in schools and the crisis in school management if they are incapable of helping the principals coordinate and monitor of new policies.

In the UK, the duty of deputy principals in primary schools includes the coordination of special educational needs, subjects, child protection, pastoral care, and discipline. They also with work with parents, liaise with other schools and services, and monitor all developments in school McGeachie (1999, p. 81). In 1998, James and Whiting’s work categorise deputies from both primary and secondary sectors into five types: active aspirants, potential aspirants, unpredictable settlers, and unveiled aspirants. Garrett and McGeachie (1999, p. 73) illustrate the role of deputy heads in schools; they function importantly in different aspects, as seen in Figure 5.4.

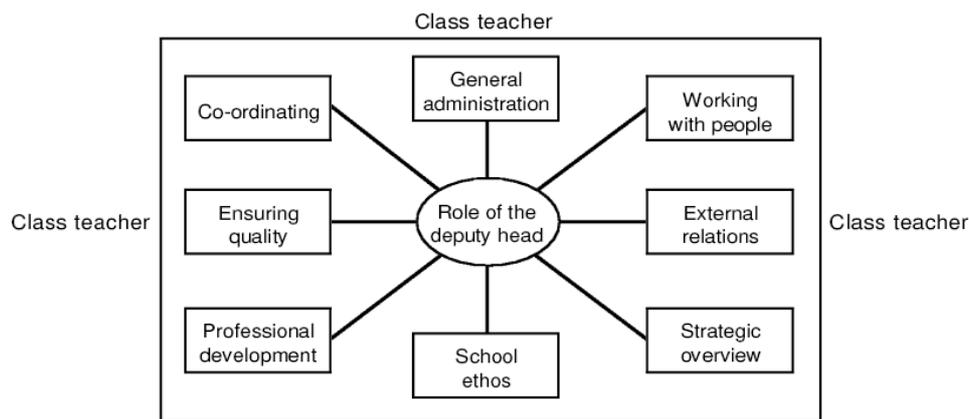


Figure 5.5 The role of deputy heads in schools (adapted from Garrett and McGeachie, 1999, p.73)

Garrett and McGeachie (1999, p.77) conclude that there is a lack of robust definition of the role of the primary deputy:

There is considerable lack of clarity about the role, the deputy's role is heavily influenced, and ultimately controlled, by the individual head teacher. The role is dependent on the amount of time available for the deputy to undertake responsibilities. Factors contributing to this are the spending decisions made by governing bodies, and the small size of some primary schools. Most deputies thought of their role in mainly operational terms; very few were able to develop a more strategic perspective.

Why did deputy principals behave this way? First, in Hong Kong primary schools, there was no exact post in the name of "deputy principal" with a corresponding special salary rank. Thus, the so-called "deputy principal" was just a senior teacher who was willing to accept the post as well as the responsibility and pressure without extra financial reward. His or her duties for school guidance were unclear. Hence, the irresolute conditions create disillusion, misunderstanding, and over-expectation for the deputy principals, who are underpaid and unaccredited. It is no wonder they kept

silent about PGE. (At the time of writing, EMB had normalized the post of deputy principal with a higher salary and special duties that were school-based). In regard to the findings above, it is important to define leadership and to determine why PGE development is important. These issues are discussed in later sections.

5.2.1.3. The influence of developmental stages and culture of schools

Beyond leadership, how do the developmental stages of schools and culture affect PGE development subsequently? The development of PGE varied at different development stages of the schools, which react to new policies differently. For instance, the mature schools can digest more new policies. In shrinking or dying schools that are fighting for more P1 newcomers, academic performance will come first unless PGE has strong “selling points” for them.

In some successful cases like Schools C, G, and H, resistance to PGE was mild. The schools at least allocated time for PGE. Besides, Schools C, G, H and J had developed their affective education some time ago, so introduction and integration of PGE became acceptable. In School F, all teachers had the same religion and vision, so everything went smoothly. Particularly in School C, which had a well-developed tradition of curriculum development, SGTs can work as consultants.

Compare the two schools I work with, the teaching cultures of the two schools are basically similar; they are different in the middle management. I think the main difference is the difference in the development pace. School C1 is lagging behind: it is doing remedial work to keep up with no room for new policy. School C2 is well-developed; it is capable to digest more new policies. The situation and the focus are different. (SG-C)

For shrinking schools like M, N and O, the teachers have lost their impetus to develop any new curriculum for students, and the effectiveness is surely affected.

I will foresee no change in the PGE. The school I serve is facing shrinking in the coming days, so there will be more promotion activities and emphasis on academic results in order to attract more students. They all have bad headaches with no room for the PGE; they just want to enhance the academic results of the students. (SG-O)

The focus of our school is leaving school early. It is not surprising because it is now shrinking and the school will close very soon. We have no meetings after school and no meetings are allowed after school. No one is left behind. This is the reality; you can imagine it is impossible to make any reform. Now there is just one class in P1. (SG-N)

These cases show that the development stages affect the team spirit and culture of school. “The culture of an organisation is the key factor that influences the success or simply the effectiveness of an organisation” (Schein, 2004, p. 7). There is a term in social psychology that is closely related to “culture” and the overall behaviours of a group of people: “normative influence”. “Normative influence occurs when we alter our behavior to conform to group norms and standards in order to gain social acceptance and maintain our standing in a group” (Taylor et al., 2004). Thus, in every school, there is a set of intangible norms that constitute the core of the culture. It is formed based on the past history, leadership, environment, and influence of all stakeholders. Stages of development and leadership are the crucial factors affecting the norm.

Hargreaves (1992) describes four types of cultures found in school: individualistic

culture (work alone), Balkanized culture (informal groups in competition), contrived collegiality (follow the top), and collaborative culture (open and support each other). The culture of a school governs its attitudes toward PGE and, implicitly, the effectiveness of the programme, as the examples shown below.

School A was proceeding to a mature stage, but the individualistic culture was strong. There were a lot of good managers, and teachers work silently and independently with central authoritative control. They were obedient, but collaborative practice was rarely seen in School A. PGE was done in an isolated way. In School B, contrived collegiality was strong in the middle managers, while Balkanized culture was found in the frontlines. Apparent communication was found. School B was at its post-mature stage, which had its brightest period in the past. However, as of this writing, it was lagging behind. PGE was implemented because it had to keep in pace with other schools, maintain its status, and prepare for the External School Review.

How leadership and culture related to each other? “Leadership and culture are conceptually intertwined (Schein, 2004, p. 11).” Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin, in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organisations. Once cultures exist they determine the criteria for leadership and thus determine who will or will not be a leader” (Schein, 2004, p. 22).

The inter-related nature between leadership and cultures gives hints about guidance and PGE development. No matter what development stages a school is in, leadership plays the vital role of creating the culture that let the school proceed to a new stage and adopt a different attitude toward new policy.

5.2.1.4. Section summary

Principals' support of PGE development was limited. Some principals offered verbal or financial support, but most of them did not. Deputy principals stayed away from the PGE issue and reacted passively to it. Neither principals nor their deputies performed as fully as literature suggests they should in the role of leaders or coordinators. Because of the different development stages of schools, every school has its own focus and priorities and a different culture that resulted from different leadership. Consequently, each school reacted differently to the introduction of PGE. Overall, SGTs carried the dual roles of leader and coordinator for PGE development. The situation was worse in shrinking schools. Indeed, SGTs needed acceptance, respect, and support from either the principals or the deputy principals beyond verbal, financial, and manpower support to construct a new curriculum.

5.2.2. Involvement of middle management

This section explores the role and influence of middle managers in PGE development. In particular, some tactical relationships and situations will be discussed. The involvement and support of middle managers are important for launching such whole-school guidance curriculum, since most have the power to make decisions and to direct the panel heads of different subjects and function teams. In reality, what happened in schools under study?

5.2.2.1. Can middle managers help?

Table 5.5 describes the support from middle managers. Senior teachers who were willing to help with PGE were few. The following discussion explores the underlying

causes.

School	Support from Middle Managers	Who developed PGE?
A	There was verbal support from the panel heads of GS and RE, with greatest support from DM, verbal support from the CC before 2004, and then formal inclusion of the PGE in the school curriculum with integration with RE after that.	SGT alone
B	DM, CC, and GS panel heads showed their support and explored the possibility of integration. The CC suggested the integration with other subjects verbally.	SGT alone
C1 and C2	In School C1, PGE was helped by a team. In School C2, the middle managers used SGT's ideas, while the CC suggested integration. Both schools had PGE teams to work with MCE and PGE. SGT was the consultant.	The MCE team
D	SGT developed PGE alone and then teamed up with several good teachers. No support from middle managers, but there was jealousy from deputy principals.	SGT and some committed teachers
E	A few middle managers joined PGE team. D&G team was strong in school, CC offered help. SGT started it and teamed up with teachers via a pilot project with NGOs.	A PGE team with NGO's help
F	SGT worked independently with DM, but the CC advised SGT about the strategy, reminded her that the curriculum should be revised and modified by the frontline teachers.	SGT and DM
G	Managers used PGE as a selling point of school but offered no help.	SGT alone
H	No support from middle managers; the CC suggested integration of PGE with other subjects at a later time.	SGT alone
I, J, M, N	No support from middle managers.	SGTs alone
K	No support from middle managers; the CC helped with time allocation of PGE.	SGT and DM
L	Deputy principal handled everything without discussion with SGT. No other special support.	SGT
O	DM and the extra-curricular activity coordinators supported PGE.	SGT alone

Table 5.5 Support from middle management in different schools for the PGE

In these cases, feedback from the middle managers about PGE varied. Some offered help while others were indifferent to and underestimated the situation, or ignored PGE with the mindset of “It is SGT’s business! Not mine!” Some felt guilty about skipping away, but were curious to know the content of PGE.

In School A, the performance of the middle managers depended on the school culture and the leadership at the top. When the atmosphere did not allow open discussion, they would keep silent even there were problems. As I observed in School A, all middle managers worked independently. Except for the DM, they seldom asked about the progress of PGE. Although I had invited some middle managers to attend the relevant seminars about PGE, discussed it with them, sought their opinions, and asked for their involvement, the feedback varied and was generally disappointing. For instance, the CC agreed verbally without lending substantial help. Others middle managers performed indifferently or retreated suddenly, as did the panel head of GS. Even worse, I noticed jealousy and gossip although I had adopted different lobbying strategies to earn the managers’ understanding and cooperation. At that moment, I felt helpless, powerless, and disrespected. Finally, I stopped lobbying and did the work alone (Appendix A4 and A5). The following shows the attitudes of some senior managers about collaborations. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.1.)

Researcher: What did you think about the support of the administrative team?

This should be answered by you! You know, the administrative team has got plenty of jobs to complete; if necessary, I think we helped as much as we could. However, none of us can lead the project of the PGE because it is planned by you, so I feel it is the job of the SGT. If you want our support, what support do you want? I think I cannot imagine it. Money, manpower,

time or planning strategy: I cannot be sure of our role and what I should do for you. (A-T11 laughed and said)

Researcher: Is the communication between guidance teachers and managers good?

I think the middle management is very important....I felt indifferent when I knew it is the job of class teachers; I was relaxed and kept away from this issue. I have no more concern. (A-T10)

I feel guilty about no support for the PGE with none from the Student Affairs Team. (A-T2)

The administrative team is kind and good, very willing to answer you and help where necessary. However, they are busy too. To help me? No way! (A-T8)

In School B, they had a practice of open discussion among the middle managers (Appendix B 5 and B11). The panel heads were keen to give their opinions, but were passive about participating (the CC) and following (panel heads of GS and RE). In the process, only the DM helped a little bit. Indeed, they showed an inclination to discuss it, but not to become involved in any curriculum design or integration issue.

I am confident to do that, so don't be hurried as it will not be realised in a few days.... At the beginning, I thought that they do not know what it is about because it is not strongly addressed. (B-T8)

The questionnaires (Appendix C2) indicate that only 11% of the SGTs stated that middle managers have helped organise PGE. They include the CCs, life education coordinators, moral and civic education coordinators, and discipline masters. The greatest support mainly came from discipline masters (29%), CCs (8%), and other

staff (52%) such as life education coordinators, MCE coordinators, RE panel heads, D&G team members, or NGOs.

How do they support PGE? From the in-depth interviews, I learned that support from middle managers was rare except for the DMs or the MCE coordinators. Moreover, the integration of discipline and guidance showed no obvious benefit to PGE implementation, unless the team members could share the routine guidance work. In the case of Schools D, G and L, middle managers like CCs or deputy principals even put up roadblocks to hinder PGE development by manipulating the resource allocation (time and personnel). This toxic practice is not rare, and it is a significant obstacle to any policy development and implementation in school. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.1.)

All middle managers did not help me, their point being, “Do not bother them; do not let them do any extra thing; just let them know or provide them all teaching materials please!” (SG-N)

This PGE team is selected by the administrative group, the senior teachers, who are assigned to be the level coordinators; they are then the team members. (SG-C)

Overall, the assistance and support from other middle managers were undesirable. It depended on whether there is positive harmony and a collaboration culture within the school. In addition, the lobbying skills and the relationship with SGT and other managers are key factors. The following section illustrates the involvement of the CCs and DMs in PGE development.

Involvement of Curriculum Coordinators (CCs)

The curriculum coordinators (CCs) are supposed to be the curriculum experts. Theoretically, they could help with PGE development to a certain extent. In practice,

help from them was limited. Answers to the questionnaires (Appendix C2) indicate that just 2% of the SGTs stated that CCs are the organisers of PGE, and 8% of the SGTs agree that CCs gave them the greatest support in the process. Their contributions mainly included giving advice on PGE development, supporting the linking of PGE with other subjects, and justifying the balance between PGE with the annual targets.

Busy CCs often had no time to help further.

She [CC] is so busy, so I have no expectation to get help from her. I just want her support: that would be enough. I will thank her for the progress in PGE development; I do not mind how much she care and involve.
(SG-M)

The strong status of D&G team affects CCs' actions and decision-making.

I think the focus on...and I think our team D&G is quite strong here; it [life education] is our development objective of the school. So, the CC is likely to help us. (SG-E)

The EMB expected support, understanding, and coordination from CCs, particularly their advice about the development and positioning of PGE in the school system.

It is all school-based. I will expect the CCs may help with the curriculum modifications, the concepts and ideas of integration but I think it is just at the starting points, so immature. (EDX)

According to the interviews, most CCs gave no support to SGTs, except the one in School F who was truly sensitive and helpful.

The CC supports me all the time. She recommended to me the strategies about curriculum development, like how to enhance the involvement of

the teachers. The CC reminded me that modification of a curriculum should be done by the frontline teachers; it should not be done by just one person; otherwise, the progress will be slow. (SG-F)

In School A, the CC agreed with the concepts and then helped with integration without follow-up.

In terms of curriculum development, the most helpful thing was the coordination; it was well done. Moreover, she tried to correlate a lot of work with the yearly targets. That is. I feel that it is very hard to implement PGE....CCs cannot help the in-depth and serious integration with the PGE and other subjects. (A-T8)

In School B, the CC suggested restructuring PGE and indicated clearly that it is not her duty. There was no follow-up aside from verbal comments. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.1)

The overall feedback of CCs toward PGE was out of SGTs' expectations. Their performance sometimes depended on the power status of the D&G team in the school, the annual school targets set with PGE, and their training by EMB about guidance. A CC pointed out that the inadequacy of the training given by the EMB meant that CCs were uninformed about the latest changes in student guidance and PGE development. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.2)

We are trained with the theory only, and then the 2nd group of CCs was given the practical data...we got the sharing circle to share the experiences from different schools. It helps and brings the experience back to schools....Student guidance is linked up with MCE, but with no detail at all. I got the information just from you (the researcher). They

emphasise MCE but not the PGE.

5.2.2.2. Involvement of discipline masters (DMs) and the collaboration between discipline and guidance

The returned questionnaires (Appendix C2) indicate that about 29% of SGTs indicated that discipline masters are the greatest supporters in schools for PGE, but less than 8% of SGTs said that DMs organised PGE. Mostly, they were the key members in the team of PGE development. How did they support PGE?

The DM in School A (Appendix A5 and more in other chapters) was positive and helpful to make sure everything went well. She understood it was a mandatory policy handed down by the EMB. She then tried her best to strike a balance. She always reminded me of the possible difficulties and dissatisfactions yelled from the teachers in the staff room. She behaved positively because she chose superficial conformity with obedience. The ex- and new DMs in School B (Appendix B5 and more in other chapters) were silently supportive, as they were also the MCE coordinator. The new DM showed support for collaborative teaching, collaborative planning and new assessment of PGE. All these actions contributed to the ultimate success of PGE in School B.

DM is a post with a salient, firm, stringent image in schools, and that strangely gains respect from most of the teachers because the DM always helps to solve students' problems. DMs in the two schools were promoted from the echelon of experienced senior teachers. They were usually responsible for the discipline, assemblies, moral talks, meetings with parents, and records of misbehaviour. DMs might not involve themselves wholly in the due course of PGE development. Since they are powerful

figures in schools, the D&G team members readily listened to their instructions and helped SGTs. In both Schools A and B, my relationships with DMs were mutually dependent: we had to work together on students' problems. We learned from each other, so the relationship was intimate. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.2)

I think the cooperation between us and DMs is the most important; otherwise, nothing can work. Usually, the DM deals with the MCE curriculum, so my main job is the PGE. (SG-O)

In both Schools A and B, I kept up fluent communication with DMs about the progress of the guidance plan. Nevertheless, misunderstandings still emerged owing to different perspectives. For instance, while I wanted to work in a comprehensive, systematic way, they might prefer focusing on the urgent daily work. They sometimes performed conservatively for the developmental plans like PGE or the Understanding Adolescence Project (UAP), and questioned their effectiveness because they were worried about resource allocation. Meanwhile, it is not easy to maintain smooth relationships with DMs. Frank, appreciative, and considerate attitudes are the prerequisites for collaboration. Ultimately, the working directions of these two posts are different. DMs mostly follow the school regulations to educate the students in the remedial way, while SGTs try all kinds of preventive, remedial, and developmental guidance programmes. Nevertheless, a good discipline system is the prerequisite to guidance development in schools (shared by SG-L)

Chiu (2001, p. 100) has identified eight factors that might affect the collaboration of the two functions discipline and guidance. They are: (1) communication, (2) perceptions of their discipline/guidance roles, (3) school policy, (4) shared vision, (5) teachers' beliefs and attitudes, (6) time constraints, (7) leadership, and (8) curriculum. Five recommendations for promoting collaboration were made: (1) building a shared

vision, (2) being an innovative leader, (3) fostering a positive teacher attitude, (4) making a clear distinction of roles, and (5) building a conceptual framework for organising disciplinary and guidance work in a special school setting.

In the 1990s, the integration of D&G teams was encouraged by some academics and the EMB. Hui (1991) suggests that guidance activities should be integrated with disciplinary actions to enable students to follow social rules, develop self-control, and acquire appropriate self-directed behaviour. With the changes in discipline and guidance, the boundaries between them became blurred. Hui (1994) states that the function of discipline and guidance is inter-changeable. To build a shared vision of school guidance, Hui and Lo (1997) suggest “establishing a formal channel for debate, discussion and dialogue, having a core group of teachers to synthesize and concretize various perspectives and proposals, and fostering openness and receptivity to different views and new ideas” (p. 27).

In spite of the ideas of the scholars, in School A and B, there is no successful integration of discipline and guidance. The principal should be the key person to lead integration. The effectiveness of integration depends on the willingness and involvement of both DMs and SGTs to lead and share the D&G work with their team members. Presently, some meetings and “collaboration” within the D&G team were done, though superficially. It is even worse if the team is not a group of committed teachers. Indeed, whatever the forms of “discipline” and “guidance” are, they serve the same goal of teaching students to love and respect themselves and others. I perceived that integration of discipline and guidance is as difficult as integrating the Chinese and English languages as a single subject, though they serve the same purpose of communication. Is it really possible and necessary? Further study should explore the “collaboration” and “integration” of discipline and guidance, and how they work

together physically or conceptually to produce desirable outcomes.

5.2.2.3. Struggles of middle management to deal with the new policy

Apart from the responses from D&G team to PGE, how do the middle managers manage and digest the continuous new policies emanating from the EMB? Middle managers and panel heads (Nung, 2005, p. 188-189) are normally expected to perform the functions of managing resources, coordination, staff appraisal and evaluation, curriculum management, evaluation of the work of students, and conducting meetings. Summarising the views of Blase and Anderson (1995), Nung described the impact of department heads:

Positively, department chairpersons may be perceived as equitable, supportive, friendly and personable, and facilitative (which encouraged diplomatic transactions), or vice versa. The negative results include negatively affected morale, support and communication within the faculty. (Nung, 2005, p. 67)

In School A, some senior management indicated that they all encounter a “do not know how to do” period. To deal with the new policies from the EMB, some middle managers had gotten used to or felt indifferent about the habitual changing features of the EMB. Therefore, some middle managers thought that there was no need to follow the policies aggressively, but dealt with them carefully and sidestepped them to avoid trouble because of too much uncertainty at the initial stage. (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.3.)

We have to come across a period of “do not know how to do”. I think the same for the EMB; they have a period of ambiguity also. I feel that there are a lot of arguments. Is everything firm before pushing it down to schools? ... Every time the EMB issues a policy, they give us the

direction only, and say “school-based” to let schools do it. It is worthwhile if the policy is helpful. Time management is very important. We work so hard even with no new policy ... And about the policy of the EMB, we are old enough to know not to hurry to follow the EMB’s policy—hence, the TOC (Target-oriented Curriculum). We failed before! I suggest that you should let the teachers start the PGE teaching with workshops. (A-T9)

The EMB, please halt and see! You must consider the workload of teachers. Although it is just a few pages, it actually means tons of work for a school. It makes middle management too tired to support and start it independently. However, both ends [people at the top and at the frontline] do not know the actual situation. More time given will be better. (AT-10)

In School B, some middle managers feel tired, fearful, unconfident, and frustrated with the new policies, caught between the states of “go” and “not go” for any new policy.

It is so contradictory. I was in the state of “go” and “not go”. Actually, I didn’t know what to do, unless it was within my experience and knowledge; however, it comes from the sky, and we did not learn it before, so I was unconfident to do it ... however, we cannot keep the old things forever, as the world changes all the time.

Some middle managers think that it is normal to work alone or work hard without any appreciation. It is a fact that nobody guides middle managers. The middle managers are supposed to be tough, independent, and mature enough to face all criticism and difficulties alone.

Schools are not able to give us any support because there are so many projects. Mainly, we must plan everything carefully. Are we working alone? No, everyone is lonely when they work out their plan and go

through a brainstorming process. There is critique and support. From the positive critique, we benefit and improve the process. Although most of the colleagues keep muffled, I think some of them support us silently.

(A-T9)

Appendix A5 and B5 showed how middle managers encountered the new policies in their own ways in Schools A and B.

Making time to understand the new policy is extremely important. It symbolizes the respects and preference of the authority toward a special crisis. Time for communication, meetings, and discussions are all controlled by the person in charge. Sometimes, to manage numerous ongoing plans, new policy is implemented with a rushed announcement. Everyone have to accept the new job passively and do without the time necessary to fully understand the new policy. In School A, only five minutes were allotted to introducing PGE. In contrast, more respect and time was given in School B for discussing the details of PGE development.

New policy must be known to all teachers. If they don't know, it is impossible to execute the new policy in school: it is just in name with no content. Training in-house and outside is very important. Keeping up with the trend is very important. (A-T2)

The PGE is OK and not bad compared to other policy and the yearly focus of the EMB. The only thing is the information about the PGE from the EMB to colleagues is not adequate. They queried about what the PGE is.... (A-T5)

With regard to the new policies, the managers in School A worked individually. However, those in School B were eager to give their opinions. I observed that the major hindrances to policy implementation were ambiguity in policy, self-protection,

jealousy, power struggles, and gossip among colleagues. These factors continually eroded the good intentions and enthusiasm of the committed managers.

The interviews and questionnaires reveal that middle managers feel ambivalent about catering to the working style of the EMB; hence, they have different attitudes toward the new policy. Some do it seriously, some delay, some decline or push their responsibility onto others, some set up a working team, and some take action directly after the kick-off meetings. A lot of middle managers use their positions of power to assign the duties to teachers. Most of the time, the task is given to a person independently, so guidance policy is not exceptional case. Therefore, this kind of independent working style and attitude persist in the case study schools and extend to the frontline teachers. Consequently, everyone has to get used to it.

Meanwhile, the research finds that a lot of middle managers are “yes-men”, pseudo-”yes-men”, or silent toward instructions from the top. Many middle managers keep silent about PGE because they perceived that it is the SGTs’ job and not a mandatory policy handed down from EMB. Then, the kick-off period for PGE became dramatic and political, with gossip abounding. Everyone was concerned about the extra workload. The worst case occurred when the principals sat back and did not care about the power struggle and resource allocation, and let gossip and jealousy flourish during the “do not know how to do” period. It is the most painful process for SGTs to operate without the blessing and understanding of principals. It also tests the patience, leadership skills, knowledge, braveness, insistence, and wisdom of a middle manager, who must have good skills for lobbying, coordination, communication, collaboration, planning, resources allocation, and evaluation. PGE is one of the challenges to SGTs.

During the PGE implementation process in both Schools A and B (Appendix A3 and

B3), the collaborations mainly came from the DMs in School A and B, while the time allocation came from the MCE coordinator in School A. Others just gave their verbal agreement and opinions. The experiences of other SGTs indicate that trust, maturity, and shared responsibilities are important for good team spirit and collaborative culture, but these are rare commodities for the student guidance issue. What effect and enhancement of collaboration does that have?

Researcher: How about the collaboration between different functional teams?

SG-E: We worked in a partnership form: our term is “Life Education”—curriculum development is one of the partners. D&G and CC teams work together for Life Education. The PGE is included in Life Education with 12 lessons. Besides, we have about 18 activities for the whole school, including sex education, big lectures, visits, etc. Mainly, the CC and I were in charge of the programme [SGT], because we attended the pilot scheme [provided by the NGO] and worked it out together. A lot of activities are loose and take place out of classroom.

SG-C: The MCE teams carry on our work on the MCE curriculum. I am now working as a consultant for them to review the content and recommend the improvement...However, there were quite a lot of changes inside School B. I can tell the D&G team was very strong, as we worked together smoothly. Trust is very important, with less calculation between. The middle management was so mature in collaboration, but the involvement of principals was the least. We shared the responsibilities together.

Teachers and middle managers had never imagined that SGTs would develop a “curriculum” or “curriculum-like entity”. The SGTs were in the power struggle with

the middle manager. It threatened the status of middle managers and provoked them to fight with SGTs for more resources (Appendixes A4, A5, B4, B5). As a result, the middle managers might choose to reject their responsibility for PGE. Some SGTs (in School D and L) even suffered from the jealousy from the top and middle managers (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.2.3.) Self-protectionism was salient indeed at reducing the chances of collaboration.

Early in 1978, Ballast and Shoemaker (1978, p. 9) write:

Building administrators may prefer to avoid direct and intensive involvement in programme development because a clear cut differentiation between what is guidance and what is administrative may occur during the programme development. As some administrators will give verbal support to guidance programme development; however, they may observe it from a distance with intent that they will ultimately determine what the guidance programme will be. This lack of commitment can seriously impede the delivery of programme developed by the guidance staff.

Why are collaborations between departments difficult? Is it a problem of time, skills, habits, or enthusiasm?

A middle manager in School A told me during an informal chat, “Miss Wong, I think you are so naïve sometimes to involve people for the whole-school project. Everyone should do his/her own work. We all work independently!”

Another middle manager in School B said, “Miss Wong, I know you worked so hard in our school; however, you know someone would feel uncomfortable about your diligence....you know, I think you understand. Some projects require more manpower and involvement, so some people do not feel easy about it.”

These statements reflect the realities in schools; collaborations between people and departments are very difficult. Working independently and working alone are teachers' and middle managers' usual practices. Collaboration, especially about cross-disciplinary projects, is something outside their domain: their refusal is actually great!

Nung (2005, p. 188) finds a similar phenomenon between departments and the different performance of teachers. In some departments, teachers conducted their work largely as individuals, with limited interactions with fellow teachers in the same department. In other departments, teachers behaved more collectively as a strongly subject-based teaching faculty, with their perspective more firmly rooted in subject disciplines. Thus, their subject boundaries are more clearly defined.

According to Wan's (2002) study of curriculum integration, the culture of collaboration in the case schools was not strong and was superficial. Wan points out that "real collaboration did not exist" and "genuine collaboration among subsystems was lacking", although the principal and key personnel claimed there was collaboration among various subsystems (2002, p. 38). Little (1990, cited in Wan, 2002) also confronts the specified forms of induced collaboration and questions their effectiveness if they are not congruent to the naturally occurring relationships among teachers. What are the problems? Is it a matter of leadership, culture, management, teachers themselves, or the ecology of a school?

Zhang (2006) argues that principals were politicians in the schools who must understand the subcultures and coordinate communication among the staff. Therefore, it is important for leaders to be open-minded to different opinions, sensitive to internal

conflicts, and serious enough to reflect and review the collaborations among colleagues. There is a question about whether the principals are alert and concerned about these issues.

5.2.2.4. Collaboration and competition

Why is collaboration such a difficult ideal to realize in schools? Is it a matter of power, leadership, culture, or something else? What are the effects of indifferent attitudes, isolated working practices, and delineation of workloads on PGE development? This section explores the matter of leadership, collaboration, the paradigm shift of middle managers, and cross-disciplinary managements.

A. Leadership and management

Different scholars have different interpretations of leadership. Heresy, Blanchard, and Johnson (1996) define leadership as “the process of influencing the activity of an individual or a group in efforts towards goal achievement in a given situation” (p. 91). Bolman and Deal (1997, pp. 297-298) list the most effective leadership skills:

- establishing a vision for the programme;
- setting standards for performance of tasks or excellence of endeavours;
- creating focus and direction for collective efforts;
- caring deeply about what the organisation or group does;
- believing that doing the group’s work well is important;
- inspiring trust;
- building relationship and empowering others; and
- communicating the visions with passion to others.

Noonan (2003) states that “leadership is service. Leadership is a visionary process to achieve results. Leadership develops potential and builds community” (p. 1-4). Kouzes and Posner concluded that “what separates effective from ineffective leaders is how much they really care about the people they lead” (Kouzes and Posner, 1994, p. 149 as cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 55). According to Sergiovanni (2001):

Leadership is about helping people to understand the problems they face, with helping people to get a handle on how to manage these problems, and even with learning how to live with problems. Leadership is, after all, a struggle—a quest to do the right thing. (p. ix)

Therefore, a leader is responsible for “the stability of the organisation ... to get people connected to each other, to their work, and to their responsibilities” (Sergiovanni, 2001, pp. 1-2).

Matthews and Crow (2003) state, “The profile of school leadership in the new millennium includes the roles of learner, leader, mentor, supervisor, manager, politician, and advocate” (p. 11). Studies of principals at work have found that despite their good intentions, “the real world of school administration is often quite different from the world described in the theoretical literature and in principals’ preferences” (Sergiovanni, 2001, p.14). That entails a lot of complex or political issues. With regard to school leadership in Hong Kong, Bennis and Nanus (1985) point out that the heart of the problem was a severe shortage of school leadership talent in Hong Kong, which is plagued by “too much management and too little leadership” (Conger, 1999, p. 148). The literature suggests that leaders are especially essential in coordinating, giving direction, and building relationships among and empowering colleagues. They should be different from the managers responsible for the administration. Bennis and Townsend (1995, pp. 6-7) draw the following conclusions about managers and

leaders:

The manager administers; the leader innovates.

The manager is a copy; the leader is an original.

The manager maintains; the leader develops.

The manager focuses on system and structure; the leader focuses on people.

The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.

The manager has a short-term view; the leader has a long-term view.

The manager asks why and how; the leader asks what and why.

The manager has his eye on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon.

In the schools in this study, good leadership was needed to facilitate change and to lead the entire organization toward new policy and a direction.

B. Positive expectation for collaboration

Baker (2001, p. 136) contend that “change is new learning; and new learning requires relationships”. That is what PGE demands. Collaboration is the preferred approach, but it requires strong leadership. For future development, the school should adopt the four dominant themes identified for successful collaborative relationships: reciprocity, system openness, trust and commitment, and adjustable structure (Beder 1984, cited in Wittmer, 2000). This implies a need to reflect on the integration, democracy, vision, and mission of schools. Moreover, schools must be ready to accommodate any new changes sensibly. According to Rosenholtz (1991), there are five organisational variables directly involved in teacher collaboration: decision-making, teacher certainty, shared goals, team teaching, and collaboration, all of which encourage professional dialogue and learning (Fullan, 1999).

Hargreaves et al. (2001) claims:

Strong collaboration cultures and collegial relations within and among schools provide essential supports for implementing effective and sustained changes...They support the emotional and intellectual work of educational change, and by ensuring that changes do not leave with the one or two individuals who have pioneered them, they enable those changes to be sustained over time. Collaborative school cultures provide a context for and sometimes themselves comprise especially effective forms of professional development for teachers... (p. 169).

Collaboration is a key component in lessening teacher isolation, which DuFour (1991) argues is a “formidable barrier to effective staff development”. Principals who seek to eliminate this isolation are making “a conscious effort to make collaboration the norm within their schools” (DuFour, 1991, p. 35). Teachers who engage in collaborative groups are more likely to attempt new skills and take risks without suffering inhibiting fear. Minnett (2003) finds that teachers found collaboration and self-reflection professionally rewarding through open communication, sharing and interactions with colleagues. Huffman and Kalnin (2003) investigate how a long-term collaborative projects impact teachers, administrators, school board members, and parents. They affirmed the notion that collaboration is the key in both reducing teachers’ isolation and enhancing their professional growth; it encourages them to take ownership of their work in the context of their classroom and school. There was also evidence that the collaboration that took place positively affected the school.

Pang (2006) concludes that these excellent schools developed a school culture marked by rationality, achievement orientation, participation and collaboration, and

collegiality. These schools also encouraged aspects of communication and consensus, flexibility, and tolerance that allowed teachers to execute daily duties with professional autonomy.

C. Paradigm shift of middle managers

Data from a recent survey conducted by Yu and Yeung (2003) show school administrators' inadequacy in protecting teachers' classroom instructional time; they are not good at leading teachers to share their values, beliefs, and attitudes about teaching and learning. The data also suggested that the schools were weak in providing organisational structures to foster a risk-taking and collaborative culture. That means teachers and managers are not ready for collaboration and change.

The following discussion explores the paradigm shift of middle managers in terms of recent reforms, subject leadership, and labour division. In terms of the nature of the job handled by middle managers in the case schools, I would like to consider four different features: creative, reforming, professional, and administrative.

1. *Creative*: The task starts from zero; it requires the person to be in charge of design, data collection, samples preparation, training, job allocation for implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and review. There are no similar models to follow like such as PGE or Special Educational Needs policy, etc. It is highly difficult and demanding.
2. *Reforming*: The task has been developed for a period of time, and the person in charge has to further develop and reform it based on the current foundation with comprehensive analysis like SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to adjust the strategy and input of resources. Some old practices and mechanisms may therefore be reformed gradually. There is no need to re-start

everything. New management skills and insights are probably required to modify the outdated situation. For instance, curriculum development officers always work on the developed situations of subjects. It is a task of moderate to high difficulty.

3. *General professional practices:* This is related to the demand for professional performance by all teachers. Owing to curriculum reform, every teacher must participate in the collaborative preparation, lesson observation, and multiple-assessment. The difficulty is fair and depends on teachers' training and experience.
4. *General administration:* This is the traditional task carried out by all middle managers. Usually, they are administrative and routine in nature, such as graduation ceremonies, sports days, and school picnics. The person in charge follows the previous practices and instructions step by step. It is eventful and includes clear labour divisions and timelines. Usually, no special skill except experience is needed, and it can be done by non-teaching staff with good administration training. Its difficulty is small.

In the case schools, most middle managers are ready for general professional and administration practices, but not for creation and reforming. Nung (2005, p. 259-260) reminds us that special training for different sets of skills for all middle managers is essential to equip them to understand and appreciate the workplace culture of subject departments, which are in urgent need for the ongoing reforms. Hence, principals and top management must be alert to the nature of the job and assign appropriate manpower and resources to the team leader. Otherwise, an unbalanced workload may result, especially when the middle manager has too many new policies to handle. In fact, some "privileged" middle managers usually keep silent with their "reasonable" workload so as to maintain their routine schedule comfortably.

As observed in School A and B, there are different policies that proceed in different stages. The following conclude my observations of the eight stages of policy development.

1. creation and design;
2. system/mechanism formation;
3. training or retraining;
4. manpower and resources allocation;
5. implementation and monitoring;
6. evaluation;
7. review and reform; and
8. formation of new model.

Before the educational reform, a lot of middle managers were mainly doing stages 4 to 5 and not even attempting 6. All kinds of work are routine and administrative. After the millennium, numerous policies from the EMB required stages 1 to 6 or 6 to 8. However, as observed in Schools A and B, managers and principals have gotten used to the old loop from 4 to 6, which absorbs most of the resources. This causes new policies that are mandated without external input (like PGE and MCE) to be underprivileged. Table 5.6 illustrates this situation.

Stages	Mainly happen in
1. Creation and Design	<i>Moral and Civil Education **</i> <i>Gifted Education</i> <i>Personal Growth Education (PGE)</i> <i>Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy *****</i>
2. System/ Mechanism Formation	Information Technology Education*** Mandarin Education Project Learning, Reading

Stages	Mainly happen in
	<i>Parent Education*</i> <i>Internal and External Review (including Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO))</i>
3. Training	New teaching skills and new assessment methods like Territory-wide System Assessment All new concepts including <i>Counselling and Special Education</i> Benchmark test (for teachers teaching Chinese and English)
4. Manpower and Resources Allocation	For routine, administrative, and teaching tasks. Care for the new policies was limited unless there is huge financial support from EMB as for Student Support Policy for Students with special educational needs, information technology education, or library system in the early days.
5. Implementation and Monitoring	All of the above Teaching <i>Discipline and Guidance</i> Extracurricular activities
6. Evaluation	All <i>Internal Review (including Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO))</i>
7. Review and Reform	All
8. Formation of new model	<i>Student Guidance System*</i> <i>Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy*****</i> <i>Internal Review (including Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO)) System</i> Curriculum and MCE are being re-structured.

The bold and italic type shows the jobs involving guidance teachers.

Number of (*) implies the intensity of financial support from the EMB; others are self-financed.

Table 5.6 The dominant reform items and the developmental stages in School B (observed from 2004-2006)

How could the paradigm shift of the middle management be facilitated? With ongoing reforms in schools, the training offered to middle managers is insufficient, particularly in the arenas of social, management, and leadership skills. Among the middle managers, intense competition exists and it is especially worse with those who are

overly aggressive, arrogant, or hierarchically minded. The immaturity, tension, and helplessness generated are subsequently torture for the development of the whole school.

In the case schools, many middle managers were teachers who were kings or queens in their classrooms and usually got promoted for their excellent performance. However, their arrogance and directive practices extended from the classroom to the conference room, so stress and frustrations accumulated.

Cheng (2006b) points out that EMB lacks contextualized multiple thinking, not even about the schools and the staff. He identifies the problem as tradition and stated that culture makes it difficult for us (the Asian world) to change our old habits (ibid., p. 199). In the last century, all teachers were getting used to listening to instructions and following them in a passive education ecology (ibid., p. 197). In fact, are schools running toward the two extremes? At one end is the emphasis on expertise in different subjects, and at the other is promotion of cross-disciplinary collaboration. Is such collaboration possible? What is the priority? Cheng advocates the concepts of multi-level self-management. Theoretically, it is possible but quite complex in practice, which requires wisdom and enthusiasm from top to bottom (ibid., p.121).

D. Cross-disciplinary management

To conclude my observations about the isolated working culture of managers in school, “it is easy to comment, hard to collaborate, happy to sit back and criticize the failure”. Such culture is attributed to the failure in leadership, and is mainly due to the ignorance of cross-disciplinary management Cheng mentions (2006b). Longitudinal management is always in focus, which includes the management of a subject or a function team, the

routine operation, task allocation, research, and development. Cross-disciplinary management means the collaboration of different groups on certain issues, aimed at consensus and shared responsibility.

Wan (2002, p. 141) points out that “the organisational framework of the school multidisciplinary system needs to be strengthened both vertically and horizontally”. On the other hand, Carter-Golden (1994) argues that teachers lack collaboration skills and create obstacles to interdisciplinary planning efforts. In fact, PGE is a kind of cross-curricular initiative; if the middle managers have been trained especially for the cross-curriculum issues or cross-sectional management skills, the outcome would be different. In fact, both the principal and the deputy principal play vital roles in cross-sectional management and leadership.

5.2.3. Section summary

This section discusses the involvement of middle managers in the new policy. They are the key people who deal with the new policies, but they are hindered by their isolated working culture and the “do not know how to do” period. They have developed different strategies to handle new policies, including PGE. Their feedback is normally indifferent, passive, departed, or vocal, without the full blessing of their principals. Schultz and Schultz (2004, p. 194) point out that many managers do find it difficult to adjust.

Considering my experience in both Schools A and B, I reflect upon the communication among the managers in schools. At the beginning, when people did not know each other, they chatted and worked happily. However, things changed when something emerged that ran contrary to someone’s beliefs, power, values, and

self-interests. People started to behave with hate, jealousy, suspicion, and aggression for their own reasons. The gaps between people expand, and the atmosphere changes from open and in-depth to shallow, intrusive, and even critical. Communication is such a powerful tool; it could be an invitation, a chance to form a group, a platform for gossiping, or a trap in the working environment. Everything could emerge out of our expectations; the apathy of the top and the middle managers is the psychological bottleneck in the policy implementation process.

Is collaboration possible among middle managers in this study? Based on the results of this study, the answer is “No!” The most helpful person is the discipline master who commands the respect in schools that is important to facilitate change, coordinate, and assist student guidance development. Integration of job of discipline and guidance jobs may not help the development of both disciplines. The curriculum leader is expected to help; but the outcome has been quite disappointing. This kind of situation is not unique to PGE. The so-called collaboration is superficial; there is loose coupling among colleagues, contrived collegiality, and bounded collaboration. Ultimately, a paradigm shift of middle managers is urgently needed if the ongoing reform is to deal with the new requirement of policy development. This is especially true for the stages of creation and design, system/mechanism formation, training or retraining, evaluation, review and reform, and formation of new model.

Moreover, middle managers lack experience in cross-disciplinary management, and the suppressed/obedient tradition and isolated working practices inhibit collaboration and creativity. Without thorough training, communication, and alertness at the top, it is unrealistic to expect school to realise the imagined outcome. As Clift et al. (1995, p. 150) conclude, “change is a result of collaboration among people...In such collaboration, interventions are not imposed by reformers, but evolve through

supportive, reflective, analyses on data-based information relating practices and perceptions to procedures and goals.”

In the new era, the principal is the key person who can secure the paradigm shift of the middle managers. Otherwise, the change will be superficial, and if the pace of the paradigm shift is highly differentiated, the results may torture others. Hence, the middle managers must abandon their old practices to cross the paradigm shift, to learn to be open-minded, reflective, creative, proactive, and collaborative to facilitate change. Again, the principal plays the important role in mediating conflicts by enhancing communication of the team. Quality communication renders such a delicate and interactive magic. It requires mutual respect, trust, quality time, and open-mindedness, all of which are luxuries in busy schools. PGE is one programme that has been deprived of the communication time and ignored in the arena of cross-sectional management.

5.3 The Leadership of Student Guidance Teachers

This section discusses the role of SGTs in schools. They play a dual role as the counsellor and middle manager to implement guidance and PGE in school. The section depicts the typical situation of the SGT as a project leader. The discussion focuses on the guidance policy, the pressure, the status, and the role transition of SGTs, with a comparison of different cases.

5.3.1. Implications of PGE development to student guidance development and student guidance teachers

In Hong Kong, student guidance services in primary schools have a history of almost

30 years, beginning in 1978 (Social Welfare Department, 1990). The services are mainly delivered by student guidance officers (SGOs) who are employed by the Education Department (ED) and are chosen from non-graduate government primary school teachers (Social Welfare Department, 1977). The SGOs are mainly deployed to provide services including personal, educational, and vocational guidance, organising preventive programmes, and checking student attendance (Social Welfare Department, 1990). Nonetheless, the wastage rate of SGOs is relatively high compared to that of primary school teachers (ECR4, 1990, p. 30, para. 3.2.9).

The EDR4 (1990) attributes the problem to poor cooperation between SGOs and schools. The commission further suggested sponsoring bodies of aided primary schools to appoint their own teachers as student guidance teachers (SGTs) to replace the post of SGO. The commission recommended that most SGO posts in the Education Department to be transferred gradually to individual sponsoring bodies of aided primary schools. From 1992 onward, sponsoring bodies of aided primary schools were granted the chance to employ their own SGTs to deliver guidance services to their students.

The EDR4 (1990) indicates that SGTs should be experienced teachers and that the post is ranked at assistant master/mistress (AM) with two years probation. In Chan (1996), SGTs are called non-original teachers because they are not originally employed, but are hired by the sponsoring bodies. The manning ratio of SGTs to students has changed drastically since the 1990s, from one SGT to 3,000 students, one SGT to 2,500 students, 1 SGT to 1,680 students (1999), and then one SGT to 24 classes (2002) and 18 classes (2006), subsequently.

The Student Guidance (SG) Section of the Education Department, which is

responsible for providing professional advice and training to the SGTs, has described the job duties for student guidance teachers in Appendix F4 (EMBSGS circular no. 19/2003). They include setting up the guidance system in school, development of PGE, and providing supportive and counselling services to teachers, parents, and students.

PGE policy was issued by EMB in 2002. Was there then enough support to schools to let them develop their own PGE curriculum? How did the schools respond to this brand-new policy at that time?

5.3.2. Student guidance teacher as a leader

Concerning the quality of a subject leader, The National Standards for Subject Leaders (TTA 1998⁸) has listed a sample of leadership skills.

- (1) leadership skills (ability to lead and manage people toward common goals);
- (2) decision-making skills (ability to solve problems and make decisions);
- (3) communication skills (ability to make points clearly and understand the views of others); and
- (4) self-management (ability to plan time effectively and to organise oneself well).

Blase and Anderson (1995) describe the impact of department heads:

Positively, department chairpersons may be perceived as equitable, supportive, friendly and personable, and facilitative. Or vice versa, the negative results include negatively affected morale, support and

⁸TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY (1988) *National Standards for Subject Leaders*
<http://www.newi.ac.uk/buckleyc/cd/subject.pdf>

communication within the faculty.

Brundrett and Terrell (2004) describe the role of subject leaders as one acting “as a fulcrum between those working in the classroom and the senior management team of the school”, and stated that middle managers are the glue that holds together schools since they are frequently the ones to turn policy into action.

Harris (1999) identifies a number of key features for effective departments:

- having a collegial management style and sharing a strong vision of their subject;
- being well organised in terms of assessment, record keeping, homework, etc. and employing good resource management;
- having efficient systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils’ progress which enables them to provide structured and regular feedback;
- operating very clear routines and practices within lessons; and
- having a strong pupil-centred ethos that systematically rewards pupils and providing every opportunity for autonomous pupil learning.

Leadership Context	Leadership Activities Applied to School Counseling
<i>Structural leadership:</i> Leadership in the building of viable organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build the foundation of an effective school counseling programme. 2. Attain technical mastery of counseling and education. 3. Design strategies for growth of the school counseling programme. 4. Implement an effective school counseling programme
<i>Human resource leadership:</i> Leadership via empowerment and inspiration of followers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believe in people. 2. Communicate that belief. 3. Be visible and accessible. 4. Empower others.
<i>Political leadership:</i> Leadership in the use of	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the distribution of power within the building and district.

Leadership Context	Leadership Activities Applied to School Counseling
interpersonal and organisational power	2. Build linkages with important stakeholders (e.g., parents, administrators, teachers, board members). 3. Use persuasion and negotiation.
<i>Symbolic leadership:</i> Leadership via the interpretation and re-interpretation of the meaning of change	1. Use symbols and metaphors to gain the attention of followers. 2. Frame experience in meaningful ways for followers. 3. Discover and communicate a vision. 4. Maintain a relationship with the community you represent (e.g., students, parents, school colleagues). 5. Model health on all levels to inspire others. 6. Lead by example.

Table 5.7 Leadership Contexts and Activities Applied to School Counseling (referred C. T. Dollarhide, 2003, p. 306)

The action research and the questionnaires show that SGTs can build general relationships with teachers that may not be helpful in building up political leadership and symbolic leadership because the true collaboration of the administrators and teachers are difficult to reach, even if the distribution of power is understood and persuasion and negotiation are used. Moreover, because of the differences in jobs and physical isolation, symbolic leadership among staff is weak compared to other middle managers.

Dollarhide (2003, p. 307) hopes that, “With an awareness of the leadership contexts, plus courage, commitment, creativity, and faith, school counsellors can transform their school counseling programs.” Do the key features of a qualified leader apply to guidance teachers in primary schools? The next section investigates this possibility in view of the policy and the nature of the SGTs’ job.

5.3.3. The unstable status of student guidance teachers with the changing policy

Ballast and Shoemaker (1978, p. 8 9) claim that the personal qualities of a counsellor should include creativity, imagination, flexibility, courage, belief, and passion. As summarised from the interviews with SGTs, the post of SGT is all-in-one. They must be proactive and impervious to all weathers. Their status in schools depends on their years of service in a particular school, and the extent of their relationship with the school makes a difference. There is a big difference between SGTs who are directly appointed from the school's teaching staff and "inserted" or "hired" SGTs sent by the sponsoring body. A spectrum of status from a neglected post to a consultancy status was found in different schools. The attitudes and actions of the EMB were not found supportive and effective to change the situation for many years. (Refer to Verbatim 5.1.2.2.)

Frequently, "inserted" SGTs felt like "extraordinary terrestrials" in school. They must work hard and be proactive to show their value and contribution. Great effort must be expended to build harmonious relationships with their colleagues. Even those working in the government schools suffered this, which showed that support from the EMB is limited. SGTs often worked alone in apathetic situations. The data show that directly promoted SGTs suffered fewer obstacles than "inserted" SGTs. Teachers misunderstand SGTs' workload and the nature of their job. The isolated workplaces (counselling) of SGTs also physically hinder SGTs from building productive relationships.

The strange situation of SGTs in primary schools is mainly due to the changing policy

of the EMB over the past 30 years. SGT is a long-term external helper, and because it is not recognised as a formal post inside a school, the position suffers from isolation and discrimination among middle management. Other new middle manager posts like information technology coordinators, librarians, or curriculum coordinators created in the past 10 years are supported with firm policies, clear job duties, good supervision, and massive financial support. Compared to them, SGT is still the unprivileged group. Before 2002, every guidance teacher had to serve five to six different schools. Under such conditions, it was almost impossible to generalise the ideas of guidance and counseling, and the effectiveness of the work was questionable, vague, and almost invisible. Because guidance teachers (or officers) worked in their counselling rooms, they gained a reputation for being “lazy and inefficient”. The latest policy, issued in 2002, was accompanied by clusters of uncertainty and clashed with other policies like special education and curriculum reform. Can the marginalization of guidance and counselling development attributable to insufficient resources be changed? In short, the accountability for the present situation has three causes: schools’ perception, acceptance, and misunderstanding; the humbleness of EMB’s D&G section; and SGTs’ capability, professional development and performance.

5.3.4. The complex job demands of student guidance teachers

In terms of workload and job nature, the ECR4 (1990) states that the SGT is “given heavy workload and range of responsibilities which student guidance work involves....In addition to handling individual cases, the SGT will co-ordinate school support services and advise and help teachers to assist their students” (para. 3.2.13). Lo (1994) points out that the SGT is an administrative post and the duties are more demanding than that of a primary school teacher. Leung’s study (1997) about job satisfaction among student guidance teachers in Hong Kong describes the long

working hours, heavy demand, and overtime working conditions of SGT, which is not compensated (Chan, 1996), with either money or compensation leave. Leung's study (1997) shows that SGTs were the most dissatisfied with their administrative and guidance tasks. He used the expectancy theory (Locke, 1976) to show that dissatisfaction resulted. He adds that there was inequality with reference to the facet satisfaction model (Lawler, 1973) in which the input-output comparison process is not in balance, i.e., the investment of time and energy did not achieve the desirable guidance outcome they expect. This scenario reflects fully the condition of SGTs.

The case studies and the questionnaires show that it is hard for a guidance teacher to survive in a school, and also difficult for them to earn status regardless of the efforts they make. Appendix C and Verbatim 5.3.3 and 5.3.6 illustrate some of their difficulties: they are saddled with weak job security, an ambiguous promotion ladder, lack of professional supervision, ambiguous identity, and they must act as the all-weather staff to deal with the new policies and even some non-guidance jobs by making an invisible contribution. To cope with the harsh situations in schools, SGT must be tough, committed, multi-faceted, and shrewd enough to play the political games in schools. SGT is treated as an "ET" (mentioned by an interviewee) or an outsider.

In fact, SGTs serve three bosses, the EMB, sponsoring body, and the principal, and they provide services and collaborate with the stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, NGOs, middle managers, and even the PTA. It is difficult to satisfy the expectations of so many different bosses and the needs of all the stakeholders. (see Appendix C and Verbatim 5.3.3 and 5.3.6)

5.3.5. Different situations and settings in secondary schools

In 1986, the *Guidance Work in Secondary Schools—A Suggested Guide for Principals and Teachers* (ED, 1986) was produced to provide comprehensive suggestions on implementing guidance work in school settings. It particularly dealt with handling casework. Since then, most secondary schools have been adopting the teamwork approach by recruiting teachers who are interested in or volunteer to join the guidance team and work on their own with their “expertise”. Limited by the effectiveness of the guidance work, the Whole-School Approach was then advocated by scholars. Hence, *Guidelines on Whole School Approach to Guidance (for Secondary School, Part I)* (ED, 1992, p. 2) was issued.

According to the *Guidance Work In Secondary Schools—A Suggested Guide for Principals and Teachers 1986* (p. 9), a guidance team leader “assists the principal in the overall implementation of the school’s guidance policy” in addition to his or her duties as a guidance teacher. The experience of secondary schools shows that even if a guidance team is set up, it must work with other school teams to achieve common goals through sharing, liaison, and coordination. Naturally, the coordinating role fell on the shoulders of guidance team leaders, who are considered experts in guidance and counselling (Wong, 1995). There are clear delineations in *Secondary School Student Guidance Guideline* of the roles of the key personnel including the principal, the deputy principal, guidance team leader, discipline team leader, coordinator of extra-curricular activities committee, careers team leader, class teachers, teachers, school social worker, and educational psychologist.

The differences between the guidance system in primary and secondary schools reflect

the perseverance, capability, and patience of SGTs and the unfair situation in primary schools. For primary schools, the team approach is suggested without delineations of the roles of the key personnel except the job descriptions for the SGT. Moreover, because nobody was assigned to be the coordinator, most of the teachers stay away from guidance work. Wong (1995) also points out that there was a transition period for the guidance team leaders in secondary schools when they were requested to shift from their frontline work with students to liaison and collaboration with other teams to seek consensus or reach agreements. Such changes in the job require them to have other compatible skills and personalities to fulfill their new role. Hence, it would be difficult for SGTs in primary schools to master both the management and counselling issues in the deprived situation.

5.3.6. From counsellor to manager: Is it possible?

Beyond the unstable job demands and the complex job nature of the SGTs, the biggest challenge for PGE development and new guidance policy is the transition of SGTs from counsellor to manager. Although the transition empowers them with a clear statement in the policy document, it does not ensure change in an organization. This situation also happens in other countries.

Upon the request of the new policy, SGTs have to deal with more correlations and cross-disciplinary tasks with their limited administrative power. The SGTs have to compete for resources with other middle managers. They feel stressed about the difficulties, which spoil their old relationships with colleagues and involve them in intense power struggles with other senior teachers. All this runs counter to the work that SGTs have done in the past. Finally, the so-called reform of guidance and counselling was all shouldered by SGTs. Other senior teachers sit, watch, and

comment on the “show”. (Refer to Verbatim 5.3.6.)

In this setting, we intended to strengthen the role of the student guidance teacher as an administrative person in schools. We could find most of our guidance teachers are the members or even the leaders of the D&G team. If they are the leaders, they have the power to plan and organise everything. I think the guidance teachers may have difficulties in changing their role as the organisers. They are requested to do it and we got the feedback that they had difficulties. SGTs must be more competent to collaborate with different groups in schools, which is our request for them. (EDX)

Miss W, you are so persevering with no positive encouragement. You still keep on working singly for the whole curriculum. It was time-consuming to input your time, effort, and ideas. Although this is issued by the EMB, actually the content is too wide to work on. You are wonderful and ambitious, but remember there is always a big gap between ambition and reality. I may try to offer my support later.... (AT-11)

In such situations, some SGTs chose to work selectively or alone to avoid the conflicts because they felt guilty about adding the workload of the busy teaching team. Over the past few years, some burned-out SGTs have left schools because of health and stress problems. The newly introduced SGTs follow the lonely working style by not spoiling relationships with teachers; a high outflow rate results. This is detrimental to long-term guidance development in schools. (Refer to Verbatim 5.3.6.)

In my previous School F1, I bargained with my principal to start the PGE. I designed the whole curriculum and then I taught myself: the feedback was excellent. At that time, my post was so salient: I got the glory. Now, in this School F2, I am just a facilitator: the whole school participant in

this programme, so I do not feel my position is salient in any sense.

(SG-F)

To realise all school-based policies including PGE development, decentralization is an inevitable process to empower all concerned parties. Decentralization can be defined as the “transfer of responsibility for planning, management, and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies” to either lower levels (territorial decentralization) or more specialized units of government (functional decentralization) (Rondinelli et al., 1983, p. 13). Prawda (1993) contends that governments have carried out educational decentralization policies that follow five different arguments or rationales:

- (1) decentralization allows central governments to shift the cost burden of education to (or to increase the level of resources by the involvement of) local governments and communities;
- (2) it can allocate resources in a more productive way and can be more easily held accountable for their decisions;
- (3) it lets particular schools and groups of students have more freedom at local levels to match those characteristics with the national or central learning agendas or curriculum;
- (4) it can produce a redistribution of political power—as part of a hidden agenda—”to empower those groups in society supporting central government policies or to weaken groups posing obstructions to those policies”; and
- (5) it can be used by governments to manage conflicts by diffusing the sources of conflict and insulating the central government from the rest of the system. (p. 253–254)

However, several authors (Lauglo, 1995; McGinn et al., 1992; Rondinelli et al., 1983) have suggested that the central debate should be about what functions or responsibilities should or could be decentralized and to what levels, whose interests are advanced by different types of decentralization, and about the trade-off among different values (e.g., efficiency, quality, equity, participation, choice). Hence, adequate training for sustainable development and the plan for long-term support should be rendered before decentralization proceeds. Otherwise, teachers will struggle between conformity and autonomy. In terms of PGE development, SGTs are trapped in the game of “decentralization”, the struggle to produce a new curriculum with the consensus and blessing of the teaching teams.

How can a counsellor transform into a manager successfully? Without the obvious power of the position, SGTs behave as servant leaders who become used to focusing on providing increased service to others by meeting the goals of the followers and the organization, rather than themselves. They also become accustomed to equipping them with the 10 characteristics (Schein, 1985, pp. 223-243):

1. focus on listening;
2. ability to empathize with others' feelings;
3. focus on healing suffering;
4. self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses;
5. use of persuasion rather than positional authority to influence others;
6. broad-based conceptual thinking;
7. ability to foresee future outcomes;
8. belief that they are stewards of their employees and resources;
9. commitment to the growth of people; and
10. drive to build community within and outside the organisation.

McGuiness (1998, p. 30) compares the differences between the task leader (managers) and the social leader (social leader). His work showed that the task leader is doing a lot of logistical and procedural things to get all jobs done in a dehumanized way. In contrast, social leaders like SGTs should process the positive characteristics (McGuiness, 1998, p. 29), including (1) giving time, (2) listening, (3) encouraging, (4) enthusiasm, (5) caring, (6) liking people, (7) being good at the subject, and (8) being friendly.

The personal quality of effective leaders (cited in Colette & Kelli, 2008, p. 202-203), whether a counsellor or a leader, include:

- vision, strength, commitment (Bolman and Deal, 1997);
- adaptability, social awareness, achievement-orientation, assertiveness, cooperation, decisiveness, dependability, energy, persistence, self-confidence, tolerance for stress, responsibility, intelligence, creativity, diplomacy and tact, persuasiveness, and ability to be organised (Yukl, cited in Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996, p. 102);
- charisma, originality (Kirkpatrick & Locke, cited in Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996, p. 104); and
- honesty, forward-looking (visionary), ability to be inspiring, competence, fairness, supportiveness, credibility and broadmindedness (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).

Colette and Kelli (2008, p. 203) argue that counsellors have already learned the skills of leaders; it is no problem for them to move between being a counsellor or a leader. In view of the practice in Hong Kong, the most important point is not the qualities of the individual, but lack of empowerment. SGTs are seen as the supporting posts; they can only try all means available to attract the intrinsic

motivators. Most SGTs are aware of the good working relationship qualities (like openness, resourceful, determined, good presentation of ideas, personal charisma, etc.) necessary for cross-sectional projects and the counselling relationships (resourceful, friendly, advisory, ready to help in all weather). However, this study has shown that top management looks at SGTs with inadequate trust, ignorance, and lack of empowerment for whole-school programmes like PGE.

Besides, Ballast and Shoemaker (1978, p. 9) have pointed out that

Counsellors are accustomed to being response oriented in fulfilling or carrying out what they have learned in their training. Program development may be perceived as incompatible with this posture and training. Program development will, however, enhance the response function of counsellors because of credibility gain from taking the initiative to help satisfy the identified needs of students.

PGE is shouldered by 75% of guidance teachers. Based on the examples of this study, a lot of SGTs chose to finish the PGE curriculum without bothering the teachers again because of their unilateral willingness to help. SGTs did this to maintain harmonious relationships with the teachers. Meanwhile, the study finds that their soft (friendly, generous and ready-for-all) image could not guarantee SGTs in deprived status with the power of administration and management, since teachers had to adapt to the changing role of SGTs from supporting, assisting, and consulting to directive, managerial, and controlling. In spite of SGTs' senior positions in school, it is hard to balance the dual roles and the dual-faceted image as a counsellor and a manager. The change becomes strange and conflicted in view of teachers. Table 5.8 shows the differences according to my own observation.

Roles	Manager	Guidance teacher
Demand and features	Firm, administrative, controlling, emphasise obedience, directive monitoring, and target-oriented	Nice, smiley, supportive, empathetic, emphasise feelings, free choice and reflections, client-centred
Working style	Mostly instructional, follow the plan or checklist.	No definite solutions but guide the clients to make their own decisions.
Expected performance	Depends on the principalship; mostly operational and instrumental to follow the regulations.	Be empathetic, genuine, respectful, and humanistic to care for clients' needs.
Training received	Limited training from EMB and depends on experience.	Mainly counselling skills

Table 5.8 Comparison of a guidance teacher with a manager

It is interesting to explore the relationships between SGTs and the other stakeholders. SGTs have adapted themselves to different situations with different attitudes like caring, being supportive, mentoring, and being managerial. It seems that the basic concepts of counselling like “congruence”, “respect”, and “empathy” are not enough to encourage leadership and management in the staffroom and conference room. In terms of symbolic leadership of the school counsellor, Colette and Kelli (2008, p. 201) point out that the counsellor symbolizes many things, including mental health, professionalism, being the ombudsman for students, etc. Guidance teachers who must take on managerial tasks feel pressured because they have to put up their “emotionally stable” mask on all the time to deal with management difficulties and unstable and ambiguous power figures.

Colette and Kelli (2008, p. 201) also remind us school counsellors should be aware of the formal and informal positions of power, should know their wants, and know how

to overcome opposition by trading on the basis of their interests. This implies that it is inevitable that all SGTs will have to participate in political games, which often are much more complex than their cases. Obviously, the expectations of schools and SGTs are different, particularly in the management and teaching domains. Conflicting expectations put the two sides in a tug of war, but where is the balancing point? Who defines the balancing point that is essential for a sustainable collaborative relationship?

Shifting a SGT from a counsellor to a manager without systematic management training, manpower resources, and empowerment from the top causes a negative cycle and creates tensions between the committed SGTs and teachers. To avoid such problems and to achieve the goals, SGTs often choose to work alone to move forward. The following cases illustrate some common situations for SGTs and the lessons they learned from the collaboration process. The first one is about the partnership scheme with schools initiated by universities. The second one is a study about curriculum coordinators.

In the partnership scheme, universities act as the outsiders to offer help to school, Wang & Wong (2001) find the partnership is one-way, superficial, and artificial. They found that it is not easy to change the culture, to reform the organisation, or to enhance the quality for sustainable development. This is similar to the difficulties SGTs encounter in schools. Moreover, the success of the partnership may depend on the appropriateness of collaboration mode and whether the offer can fit the immediate needs of schools.

In Chow's study (2003, p. 43-58), there is a summary of the difficulties of CCs in primary schools.

- (1) CCs always ask “How”, but not “Why”;
- (2) the desire of CCs to prove their capability by providing more input and devoting more effort;
- (3) CCs are requested to be competent to deal with all kinds of arrangements;
- and (4) lack of appreciation of the good performance of the enthusiastic teachers and enhancement of the sharing among teachers.

These points can also be applied to the situation of SGTs, who commit the same mistakes because they always ask “How” instead of “Why”, and they do a lot to self-prove their value and capability in the school.

As the participant observer, here is the metaphor I would like to use to describe the situation of SGTs’ in the political context in school for PGE development:

SGTs are provided with insufficient ingredients to cook by our boss (the D&G section team of EMB), in this kitchen (school). they do not know who can help or what resources to get, and they are asked to cook at least 72 dishes (i.e., to complete the 72 lessons of the PGE), with unclear instructions. They are asked to finish everything within a definite time. They have no idea about the taste, colour, smell and degree of health required. No one tells them where they can get help and support.

In this kitchen, there are a lot of cooks (other managers or panel heads) hard at work making their dishes. Everyone in the kitchen is so busy with their own menu that nobody has spare time to care for others’ workload. In the process, they cannot help but fight for more good ingredients, good cooking devices, or good assistants. So the SGTs try every means to reach f them: they beg, argue, and quarrel with other cooks. In spite of their reasonable requests, they are accused of being greedy, making interruptions, and creating nonsense. They

say, “It is your job, so do it yourself please! Please don’t disturb and interrupt our work. How it is going is your business! I don’t feel what you cook can fit the appetite of our clients [teachers, students and parents] and benefit our restaurant!”

Then, they all do it by themselves. When all the dishes are finished, the bosses are just concerned with the number of dishes they made. No further examination or comment about the ingredients they used is conducted, nor do the bosses even care about enthusiasm, creativity, and difficulties. When SGTs want to clarify the minimum standards required, the answer from the boss is, “Sorry, I don’t care what you actually cook if there has been ‘something’ in the dishes, but I just want to ensure the number of dishes you make. That is it! Whether they are edible? Healthy? I don’t care at this moment.” Then SGTs are instructed to let all clients [teachers and students] taste the dishes while they continue to cook.

One day, an inspector [External School Review] comes to examine the operations of the whole restaurant. All the cooks show their hard work as much as they can. The chief chef [principal] says to the inspector, “See, they have all followed your requests to do their best.” The inspector looks at the menu and the pictures inside and says, “Oh, well done! Keep it up!” Then he tastes only five dishes and leaves quickly.

At the end, SGTs had the strong feeling of being cheated; they felt that they work so hard by violating the relationships with other cooks. They start to wonder about their insistence, position and value in this kitchen.

Based on the SGTs’ experiences (Refer to Verbatim 5.3.6. and Appendix C2 and C3), they suffered from tiredness, loneliness, burnout, stress, and broken relationships with their colleagues. However, they felt that they had grown up and were proud of

completing the whole curriculum. The underestimation and the uncertainty of PGE policy leaves SGTs trapped in the feeling of unilateral contribution; their identity as “outsiders” means SGTs have insufficient power, time, and resources to commit to the task. The transition from counsellor to manager has caused some of them to react directly and promptly without in-depth analysis. Instead, counseling skills like active listening, empathy, respects, room for reflection, and decision-making could be applied.

Regarding to the current situations of SGTs, I suggest their present work should be shared by at least two persons: one would be responsible for internal affairs like administration, management, curriculum, screening of problem students, and the internal network for collaboration, and another one would be responsible for the external network, in-depth counselling (like family therapy), group counseling, and parent education. In the long run, the position of guidance teacher should be an internal post with a similar promotion ladder to that in secondary schools. Professional supervision, collaboration, training and sharing, and even a licensing system (Leung, 1996) should be considered to enhance the professional development of this position, and training in management skills for cross-disciplinary and political matters in schools would lie beyond the idealistic and humanistic in-service counselling training.

5.3.7. Section summary

This section shows that when power is given without extra resources and manpower input, it is difficult to implement a policy like PGE, unless SGTs with the dual identity of counsellor and manager have very good management and leadership skills. Otherwise, the additional obligations break relationships and create disturbances in schools. However, the unilateral contribution does not guarantee the outcome and

effectiveness of the programme. The incongruence of student guidance policies is unfair to SGTs in primary schools. A paradigm shift for are required for SGTs to adapt to their new role as curriculum organisers. Finally, additional manpower and fair workloads are suggested for coming guidance work.

Concerning the development directions of education in Hong Kong, three main points emerged from current official documents:

- to develop whole-person education;
- to increase the competitiveness of Hong Kong; and
- to increase the national identity of students.

The introduction of PGE is another “school-based” development for whole-person education evocated by the EMB. However, schools found it difficult to cater to the requests and develop PGE accordingly. Why? The EMB and society should be alert to the current pressure exerted on schools to achieve the goal of whole person education; all schools have to care about the different groups of students at different development stages within the education areas of subjects and generic skills. Since the EMB has a hidden agenda of EMB, schools are confused by the slogans and policies it advocates.

There are several levels of paradigm shift for a school to overcome in the recent years:

1. management, leadership, communication and self-reflection;
 2. curriculum with new syllabus, pedagogy and evaluation;
 3. education of generic skills, whole-person education and life-wide learning;
- and
4. catering to the individual difference with introduction of inclusive and gifted education.

In particular, the failure to achieve the first point may impede development. Because piecemeal reforms are ongoing, power struggles, internal conflicts, and teacher burnout can be the result. That is, it is unclear whether a school can achieve the paradigm shift. It takes quite a long time to change an entire system. At every strata,

there are actual (embedded) and superficial expectations and behaviour (politics). Discrepancies accumulate and create friction and conflict continuously.

5.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the involvement of top management, middle management, and guidance teachers in the PGE development process. It finds that the leadership for guidance development, the culture, the political nature, the developmental stages of schools, the discipline-biased mindset, and the pure longitudinal management has profound impacts on guidance and PGE development. In short, the context is not mature and ready for PGE, or even for guidance development. Many paradoxes are embedded in the school system, like the “principals do right” phenomenon, superficial harmony, “tactical” strategies and a hidden agenda. Unlike the situation with general curriculum reform, it is difficult to get chances for open discussion about PGE to gain the attention or consensus of teachers. There is an urgent need for a paradigm shift to let school leaders or managers learn to manage the new requests openly, reasonably, and seriously, instead of doing it passively, indifferently, or with critical gossip.

Sarason (1993) points out that schools and school systems are political in nature. Practically, a school is also a place where a group of adults compete for their future, fame, and status via different means. We must understand the power relationships that are operating within schools; these relationships are perceived as natural. Indeed, PGE could disappear because of the complicated power relationships and struggles in schools. Senge et al. (2000, Chap.10, Sec. 7) point out some important features of groups and the games they play: (1) Every group member gains identity recognition when he/she joins a group; however, their talents and abilities may not be helpful in group dynamics, and there may be no interactions and no friends in the group. (2) The

powerful members rarely share their power with others but keep the group intact. (3) People intend to become more powerful by fighting against each other. (4) If the management does not notice or just ignores the influence of groups, the game continues unrestricted. (5) With personnel change, some games disappear and some start again. Although the games lead to loss-loss scenarios, they are the biggest obstacle for reform and also appear partially in PGE. In spite of the beautiful expectations for the collaboration among teachers, we should also recognise the dark side of organisations, like jealousy, power struggles, selfishness, calculation, the presence of prisoners' dilemmas, crisis of losing "face", different personalities, promotion battles, influence of the informal groups, culture, and the past history of schools. Things never go smoothly in a place populated by PEOPLE.

This study shows the isolated working culture and the frustration of the "do not know how to do it" period for new policy of middle managers. Support from middle managers for PGE is limited, too. Collaboration among middle managers is found to be impossible. Loose coupling, Balkanized effect, contrived collegiality, and bounded collaboration are observed. Mainly, training given to middle managers is insufficient, especially their cross-disciplinary management skills.

Dyer (2000, p. 58) defines "veto points" the institutional or potential bottlenecks that have to be overcome to allow policy to be implemented successfully. These veto points might be the weaknesses in policy formulation or coordination at the centre, other organisational constraints such as problems at the point of delivery, conflicting policy objectives, or the activities of powerful pressure groups. Many of the veto points necessarily involve the relationship between policy-makers and implementers. A bargaining process is necessary to reach common ground. The processes of empowerment and communication are vital to bypass the veto points. Dyer found that

the veto points appeared again at the top and middle management level during PGE development. The mindset of “principals do right” is one of the causes for the veto points in the case study. It is a kind of power-centred strategy (Senge et al., 2000). It lets middle managers remain silent and offer no opinions about PGE development. The superficial harmony is maintained through the “tolerance” strategy, negative feelings accumulate, and struggles go on within schools.

Tan (1999, p. 42) points out a cultural difference between East and West. The attitudes and the ways of problem-solving in the East can keep harmony in a society; however, they also inhibit people from pursuing truth and progress. The conservative attitude indeed inhibits the development of schools for any reforms. Walker, Bridges, and Chan (1996) mention three differences between the cultures of East and West: individualism versus collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. In the East, the environment has trained people to be patient, enduring, passive, and obedient. To a certain extent, stress is created because of the hypocritical relationships and pressure for “harmony” that disregard suppressed feelings. When the majority wants or enjoys the hierarchical relationships and high power distance, it may hinder a paradigm shift in schools from conservatism to openness with more democracy, autonomy, and equality.

Of the pressure and conflicts, Huang (2006) points out that there are four different ways to solve the social conflicts: compromise, confrontation, avoidance, and tolerance. Huang (2006) stresses that a lot of Chinese prefer the method of tolerance to keep harmony and avoid confrontation and “losing face”. Huang (2006, p. 257) describes two types of harmony in human relationships: actual and fake. There is trust, support and acceptance for the actual type; for fake harmony, there is self-defense, passiveness, isolation, and refusal. The latter is not always found in the case schools.

A good moderator is in need to solve the conflicts and misunderstandings about PGE. Owing to strong defense mechanisms, power gaps, and insufficient communication, many unsolved conflicts evolve into hate, anger, or revenge, which is detrimental to the whole team. Thus, top and middle managers should equip themselves with moderating skills for the long run. Senge et al. (2000, translated by Yeung, 2002) also describe behaviours that inhibit an organisation from learning and reforming when people want to keep the one-sided power of control, expand “winning” and narrow down “losing”, or suppress negative feelings. Hoyle (1982, p. 88) adds that micro-politics “is characterised more by coalitions than by departments, by strategies rather than by enacted rules, by influence rather than by power....”

Cambron-McCabe and Kleiner (Senge et al., 2000) advise that open discussion and disputes are helpful to solving problems, because in due course, people learn the values of bravery, insistence, power, and compassion. Indeed, some are afraid of open discussion because it is also a platform to examine openness, vision, knowledge, experience, emotion, critical thinking, patience, listening power, and instant wisdom. They also (Senge et al., 2000, Chapter Nine) point out that the real leader of a learning organisation should be the learner with these four abilities: (1) to emphasise the values of learning (重視學習的價值); (2) to create the environment for learning (創造學習的環境); (3) to encourage learning to occur (鼓勵學習的發生); and (4) He/she should learn first (自己率先學習) (translated by Yeung, 2002). However, these features are missing from the results of this study, which shows that support from the top for PGE development was terribly limited. Gamage and Pang (2003) point out that the leaders of schools must deeply involve themselves in the reform process, but having an enthusiastic attitude is not enough. They must have the paradigm shift in their mindset from the first to facilitate individual and group learning in schools. Wen (2000) concludes that the type the principal is determines what type the teacher is. This

interactive cycle was proven true in the case study. The success of schools depends on the multi-hierarchical trust between parents and teachers, management and teachers, teachers and teachers, and teachers and students (Lam, 2004, p. 42).

Moreover, SGTs were empowered by EMB for PGE development on paper, but lost out when autonomy was given. Jamming “power” leaves everybody busy and struggling. The study shows that release of power, trust, enhancement of knowledge, skills, resources, time, and appropriate training are all important to the empowered ones; otherwise, empowerment may create chaos or make no difference, resulting only in lip service. Paisley and Mahon (2001), Sears and Granola (2002), and the State of Texas (2002) point out the problem of role ambiguity of school counsellors because they are asked deal with excessive administrative duties that hampered their job functions.

In short, it still takes longer to root the guidance concepts within the paradigm shift of the top and middle managers. SGTs will still be working alone in such a close-minded culture. Instead, relationship building, sensitivity to change, patience, openness, communication (and the time for it), collaboration, commitment, generosity, and team spirit are extremely important for the whole school to work toward holistic development of students.

In respond to Research Question One: Is PGE development a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?

As a mandatory policy issued by EMB, PGE should be a mission that can be achieved with EMB’s administration power and tools like External School Review. However, its real success depends on the mutual understanding and collaboration among EMB, schools, and teachers. SGTs try hard to achieve the mission in their deprived situation

without extra resources and manpower. The principal's support of PGE development was found to be limited. Deputy principals' support was scarce and passive. Schools at different development stages reacted differently, depending on their immediate focus, priority, and culture. In other words, prior to the implementation of a new policy like PGE, the programme organiser (such as SGTs) should understand the current status, the guidance culture, the hidden agenda, and the attitude of school toward different policies. Moreover, SGTs have to gain support from the discipline master, the principal, and the key members through liaison to minimise the potential power struggles by identifying underlying political obstacles. Somehow, this shows that internal and external evaluation may act as the additional forces to further facilitate policy implementation.

In respond to Research Question Two: What are the significances of developing PGE as the first formal guidance curriculum in Hong Kong primary schools?

The study finds that the "obedient" schools encounter the policies with the "wait and see" attitude and superficial conformation because every school has its own development plan, culture, and hidden agenda. Indeed, schools should be congruent and honest toward their own situation and teachers; EMB needs sensitivity, congruence, honesty, trust, understanding, communication, commitment (monitoring after empowerment), respect, humble (two-way) communication, empathy for schools, and preparedness for contingency (full preparation with pilot tests). The reflection of EMB and schools are crucial to producing quality education.

The apathy of the top and the middle managers becomes the bottleneck in the policy implementation process. Middle managers are hindered by the isolated working culture (including loose coupling among colleagues, contrived collegiality, and

bounded collaboration), the “do not know how to do” period, power struggles (comprised of hate, jealousy, suspicion, and aggression), lack of experience in cross-disciplinary management, the differentiation in the paradigm shift, and lack of communication for new policy (including mutual respect, trust, quality time, and open-mindedness) in busy schools.

In addition, both principals and middle managers need to process the stages of paradigm shift (be open-minded, reflective, creative, proactive, and collaborative to facilitate changes) with the current job demands (creation, reforming, general professional practice, and administration) to arrive at the eight stages of policy development:

1. creation and design;
2. system/mechanism formation;
3. training or retraining;
4. manpower and resources allocation;
5. implementation and monitoring;
6. evaluation;
7. review and reform; and
8. formation of new model.

In particular, substantial support from principals, mediation of deputy principals, and the collaboration and understanding of middle managers are expected. Hence, a paradigm shift is also necessary for SGTs to adapt to their dual roles. SGT reflected on their difficulties in PGE development, and they learned about the important attitudes of a curriculum organiser: open-mindedness, patience, positive thinking, healthy living, honesty, wisdom, and empathy. In the long run, additional personnel to share the increasing administration and counselling workload and fairness to guidance

personnel working in primary schools can help guidance development.

Policy implementation is a complex process. This chapter concludes that the more policies that have to be implemented, the more sluggish the schools will be; and the more superficial conformity and sticking to the old mindset will persist. Power given should be accompanied with training, monitoring, caring, and resources. Besides, the dual roles of counsellor and manager that SGTs carry must be reviewed for the sake of work quality. However, as Blase and Blase (1997) have asserted, “micro-politics deals with the realm of cooperative (i.e., collaborative, collegial, consensual, democratic) as well as conflictive forms of interaction in organisational settings” (p. 138), the “negative” situations found truly reflect the need for consensus and improvement in the future.

CHAPTER SIX MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

This chapter illustrates the resources management of PGE development, including issues about manpower, time, and external support.

6.1 Manpower Management

EMB recommends that PGE be developed as a school-based guidance curriculum (2004). According to CDC-ED (2001a), the critical factors for school-based curriculum development (SBCD) include teacher readiness, professional development, collaboration, coherence of curriculum strategies and initiatives, and leadership of principals. This section involves three parts. The first part discusses how teachers were invited to participate in PGE development and the difficulties identified in the process. The second part explores why teachers avoid guidance work like PGE. The third suggests some possible strategies to enhance teachers' involvement.

6.1.1. Involvement of teachers—the current situation

As a programme coordinator, I needed to recruit a team of committed teachers to help with the complicated process of curriculum design. However, the outcome was disappointing in Schools A, B, and other schools. The questionnaires returned (Appendix C2) show that only 34% of the schools have a special team to organise PGE, with about two to 10 team members. The team members are mainly the SGTs and some key members in schools like DM, principals, deputy principals, CC, panel heads of MCE, RE and life education, level representatives, or social workers from NGOs outside the schools. The data show that in spite of about 34% of schools having such a special team, only 21% are truly involved in design and management of the

PGE curriculum. Moreover, it shows that about 75% of the responding SGTs work alone. A one-person curriculum is not the goal for PGE development. Furthermore, this approach does not work in PGE implementation. Here is the observation of a teacher from School A.

Last year, you put a lot of effort into it. However, it is the individual effort. From the angle of curriculum reform, the PGE should be prepared by all teachers. Success and failure of a curriculum depends on the consensus of the colleagues. It cannot be individualized and cannot be implemented by one person. First of all, we must think it is the curriculum for all. Second, it must be implemented by all. We do not think it could be done by one person. Therefore, the biggest difficulty is to let everyone feel the importance and be involved with quality and professional input. Frankly, in a curriculum, some parts may be well-handled by teachers; some may still be explored by them. I think the biggest aim of a curriculum is to let students learn effectively. If teachers think they teach well, but student do not feel it, it will fail. So, it is not one way and not just for one person. It is an interactive process. (A-T8)

Teachers thought that PGE is being created by SGTs and teachers are forced to carry it out. There is a strong sense of “Not my turn, please!” and “Please do it yourself!” Teachers expect there is full input from SGTs for this new curriculum. The reports from SGTs indicate they had to deal with the following conditions (Refer to Verbatim 5.3.6.):

1. working alone;
2. indifference of the teachers;
3. expectation of schools and teachers;
4. different schools have different practices; and
5. complete PGE within the expectations of the EMB.

For me, I worked like a nurse, picking up the suitable pills for the patients. In the document, I had to write down how smooth and successful the linkage is to please the readers. In fact, the support from school was so limited. (A-T8)

In view of the teachers, they did not understand what the PGE is; they thought that it was solely produced by SGTs and SGPs. I don't know why. Their concepts are so wrong; they just think they are teaching the PGE FOR US. I don't think they are teaching for students, but the programme cannot reach the heart of the school's authority and the heart of the teachers too. (A-T8)

After a few years, teachers still think that the PGE is my thing. Their own involvement is teaching your thing in class. (SG-N)

When I was working alone, I just wanted to give up. Although the curriculum is good for both students and teachers, I had no resources to implement it. (SG-L)

Nevertheless, the EMB satisfied itself with the involvement of teachers by referring to the figures submitted by schools.

Compared to 1990, there has been great progress about the involvement of teachers, so now about 60% to 70% of teaching staff in primary schools are helping with the PGE. They are participating in the comprehensive policy with the counselling personnel. We will check it by numbers first: quite a number of principals are team members of the D&G team and they also attend the meetings, so their involvement is increasing. Also, every year, the plans submitted to us are shared by a team. We can see that the progress is satisfactory. (EDX)

The SGT's lonely work on PGE was expected by teachers and the EMB. Thus, the PGE is seen as SGTs' curriculum. (Refer to Verbatim 5.3.6.)

SGTs must bear the job because they are more experienced. For other teachers, each of them knows how to teach students of their moral value; however, SGTs can lead us to run the programme smoothly and professionally; otherwise, other teachers do the minimum only, so it is difficult to achieve the ultimate target. (B-T8)

I understand the importance of teaching and learning, but all of the time, our counselling personnel should do the job themselves, and the condition is even worse in village schools. They do it themselves. (EDX)

Compared to my previous school, the collaborations are totally different: they had a group leader at every level. Teachers grouped together and discussed the lessons they need, and produced the worksheets. They did it smoothly. They discussed and shared how to teach. Here in School A, the practice is different. They need my preparation and demonstration for them. (A-T8)

There are two groups of guidance teachers. The first develops PGE alone so as not to add to the pressure on teachers and to avoid being labelled "lazy" or "loafing". They do not believe in the concept of the "whole-school approach". The second successfully develops PGE via teamwork, which is based on a group of committed teachers, the guidance culture, and SGTs' image, power, and their relationships with teachers. From the interviews with SGTs, the worst cases showed that team members pretended to be "busy" and resisted everything. To maintain their relationships in daily guidance work, guidance teachers shouldered all the responsibility alone. Some good cases show that a smart team with regular meetings can cooperate, design, and review the curriculum together; some also involved the panel heads for better communication and

administration process. Different outcomes are based on the leadership of guidance teachers, empowerment and care from the principals, and support from DMs. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

During the implementation process of a novel curriculum, the curriculum leadership is an important element that affects the involvement of teachers. It should involve all key persons, including the principal, the curriculum officer, and the panel heads (Huang, 1991). Curriculum leaders should correctly lead all the teaching staff in the job of curriculum development, guide them to a consensus with good distribution and management of human resources, and give teachers rooms to deal with curriculum development, so as to enhance their involvement in the process (Cheng, 1991; ACITW, 1998).

The questionnaires for School A show that about seven teachers were willing to help with the integration, to learn about children's psychology, and to give their opinions as classroom teachers. Workload and interest are teachers' main concerns. Still, some teachers insist that PGE should be developed by guidance teachers alone. In School B, no teachers were willing to join in PGE development because they are inexperienced, unconfident, and not interested in PGE; other concerns are heavy workloads, further study, and health. Overall, the willingness of teachers in School A and B to participate in PGE development is low, and it is difficult to set up a team with teachers who are committed to PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

The PGE is for the whole school, so everyone must be involved in it. The D&G group must be involved in it. If some good teachers are selected to start first, it is difficult and brings them too much workload. So, we should simplify the method. We could ask them to promote, not to modify and restructure the lesson plan. (A-T9)

At the present time, every teacher needs to design at least one subject. I do not recommend all teachers be involved, but we can select some professional teachers as the focus group to design the curriculum, to be focused and professional. We can do it level by level each year, with several professional teachers to refine the content of the PGE every year. (B-T9)

In Schools A, B, and others, some teachers refused to join in PGE development and planning.

In School A, from 2002 to 2004, I tried to implement PGE, but failed to involve teachers in preparing the relevant teaching materials. Without support from the principals, I started the preparation work with the DM and the D&G team. During 2002-2003, I asked the team members to help with the compilation, integration, and modification of the prepared lesson plans; however, it did not work even though there was support from the DM. Despite the kick-off meetings with the team and the autonomy given to its members, I started to realize how great the resistance was to implementing the new policy. The team members were not happy and complained throughout the process.

Then, in 2003-2004, I lowered the threshold to just asking to check the lesson plans and modify the debriefing questions; still, only just a few handed in their work on time. I was shocked at the experienced teachers' feedback and their resistance to refining just two lessons during the summer holidays. At last, some gave up; some copied and pasted the original material, and even gossiped about the "heavy workload" in the office. At that time, I realized that there was big difference of teachers' attitudes toward discipline work and guidance work. They accepted simple discipline work like monitoring or record keeping, but refused to do the developmental guidance work like

PGE (Appendixes A4, A5 and A13).

Support from the D&G team? I can tell you there is none. What they present is a busy look. In addition to the advice of the principal, I am forbidden to “disturb” them. Regarding the two teachers to help with the PGE, I don’t know whether they have chosen freely to join the group. If not, they will be reluctant to do it. We had a meeting before and I found that it was difficult to start. They are so busy and do not want to accept the workload; then I thought that if the PGE is such a big issue to them, I could not make things worse and make them hate this programme. (A-T8)

I finally changed my strategy to reduce their involvement. They generally accepted the job of lesson plan selection (Appendix A5 and A13). Why was my colleagues’ rejection so great? Meanwhile, DM had also objected to bothering the team members because she thought it was my duty, but she kept silent in the process. DM helped me verbally by involving the whole team, but she reminded me not to demand that they do the paper work and made them “inconvenient” (give them trouble). As I perceived, she had mixed feelings toward PGE.

Actually, if we could bring out the moral values in the normal lessons, it would be a PGE lesson. However, if they are asked us to choose among the materials, they are afraid. Both you and the SGP are the pioneers. The SGP just let teachers select from the pool of lesson plans. However, you were a perfectionist: you wanted teachers to select suitable materials and rearrange them, which was demanding for them. It is the problem of “convenience” and “inconvenience”. Still, I think formatting could be a problem. The step of formatting should be skipped to lessen teachers’ worry. Moreover, one of the ultimate goals of PGE is to give children

positive values. Once we attain this goal, that is it. Anyway, the teaching material is really wonderful. (A-T9)

The DM did not agree that extra energy should be diverted to the PGE. Afterward, I worked alone and felt powerless to set up a PGE team and to request more in meetings. This failed experience demonstrates strongly the refusal of teachers (including DM) about PGE. Is it a problem of manpower, time, individual interest, or the capability of teachers? A lot of underlying causes need to be further explored.

In School B (from 2004-2006), I changed my strategy at the suggestion of the ex-SGT and introduced external resources. The workload of D&G team members was shifted from lesson plan preparation to collaborative planning. This was accepted by the team. (Appendixes B4, B5, B14). When I arrived in School B in 2004-2005, I renamed the D&G team and restructured the team members and their job duties. The suggestions were accepted by the new DM and the team. In 2004-2005, I got help from the NGO for lesson demonstration and preparation. In the second year 2005-2006, with the help of representatives in the team, everything became smooth and systematic. Unlike School A, the D&G team members did not have to deal with the content of PGE, but helped with the collaboration planning meetings and review of the PGE with other class teachers at the same level. They felt comfortable about that. In School B, the financial support, higher status of the SGT, and the pressure of External School Review made teachers willing to carry out PGE development and create a new PGE curriculum. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

As described by Morrison (1995, p. 66), “curriculum management is as much about the management of interpersonal relations as it is about structuring and delivering knowledge”. Obviously, in the case of PGE development, SGTs need to develop

good relationships with teachers. Indeed, at the very beginning, the D&G team was not fully consulted for the PGE development plan. As the programme organiser, I had overestimated the acceptance and willingness of the team members to join the development of this novel curriculum though it was a mandatory policy, which is unfamiliar and unexpected to them. Great resistance occurred naturally and the action violated the relationships between me and the team. With the lesson learned from School A, the actions taken in School B were adjusted to be more reasonable and acceptable by teachers and schools.

Comparing the experiences between Schools A and B, I determined that a programme organiser has to evaluate first the acceptance and readiness of teachers (or the team members), then their workload and capacity subsequently. Therefore, sensitivity, empathy, and critical thinking are important at each action step. I also learned that instead of pursuing perfection and the official targets, good feelings about working should be put first and would guide the team toward the destination.

Are teachers capable of helping with PGE? The next section discusses the quality of team members and the capability of teachers.

6.1.1.1. Quality of team members

It is important to select the right people for the team by considering their personalities, education/training background, preferences, ability, commitment, interest, and passion. The school should balance their workloads. In the cases of both Schools A and B, it was strange that the two schools always appointed the “less able” teachers to the D&G team, while the good teachers focused on development or other high profile projects like curriculum reform that could strongly affect the number of P1 comers and the

school's image. D&G teams always lost in the war for human resources. Without enough good teachers, both DM and I felt disappointed and helpless to further develop the programme, so we had to accept the priority of the schools and adjust the complexity of work given to us. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.) Schools C1 and C2 showed the best allocation of teachers who were all enthusiastic towards PGE and MCE. Schools D and E grouped some good teachers through the funded projects and continued their collaboration in the PGE.

In School C1, the form representatives are chosen because they are supposed to give guidance and counselling to students. The concepts are very good; some majored in social studies and humanities. My involvement faded out then. The team in charge of designing and teaching was led by another senior teacher, namely the MCE Officer. My role is to assist her. In school C2, the form representatives are happy to teach: indeed there is less examination pressure than other subjects. (SG-C)

Indeed, most SGTs work alone. The job division of the team was just on paper. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.).Support from the top was important.

6.1.1.2. Capability of teachers

From my experiences in both schools and other cases, I believe it is possible to carry out school-based PGE development. However, teachers were frightened and stressed about the process. They demanded more support, and named it a “dangerous” process to go through. This reflects a deficiency in confidence, skills, experience, and support for the new challenge.

How to handle “school-based” is very important and must be correct. We must work under the curriculum guideline and cater for the needs of our

school. Actually, the professional requirement is high: I am doing what was done in CDI. Therefore, it is frightening to work it out, but we must ask for external support. Otherwise, it is very dangerous, not only the failure of the course designers, but the whole school and the students. If it is not on the right track, teachers may spend a lot and gain nothing. (A-T12)

Huo (2003) describes Wu's comment (2002, p. 167) about teacher training of school-based curriculum development being rare in educational colleges and faculties; hence, the restraints on resources and training may be the greatest obstacles in school-based curriculum development. For instance, some senior teachers objected to modifying their teaching with the PGE curriculum. They thought that it could be done ad hoc individually, not necessary for discussion and extra paperwork. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

Is it really good to let teachers create the lesson plan? I don't think so. If the material found is alright, that will be fine. We cannot guarantee what created by the teachers is good. Indeed, different teachers can develop their own presentation and interpretation for the same topics, refine and refine it over years, me too. I teach in accordance with the performance and feedback of students....why some team members did not help with the modification of lesson plans, I think time is a problem....like me, if I think it is not necessary to do so, I will just "copy and paste", that is what some team members think about.... (A-T9)

Regarding PGE lesson plan writing or lesson plan modification, it is impossible to ask them start from the draft. They may be willing to select or to comment on the readymade materials. (A-T6)

Some had their own ideal proposals (A-T12) in mind. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

Let's start it slowly and let all teachers participate in PGE lesson design. SGT can just give them the sample and let them think of it themselves. When the output is made by them, they may become more involved, which will lessen their refusal. Moreover, don't push them so much. I think in one year, we can just finish one or two teaching kits. It is enough: don't give them too much [she seems to not understand what one teaching kit is]. (A-T12)

Teachers actually have the ability to contribute to the process (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.) if the right persons are gathered.

I think teachers in School A are capable of designing the curriculum now. However, they are so busy, with no time to join the planning stage, and the effectiveness would be increased by the direct participation of the teachers. (A-T5)

Training, fair job division, clear policies/guidelines, and time are the prerequisites. To enhance teacher participation, the data show that the feeling of necessity, capability, enthusiasm, time, workload, confidence, samples given, team combination, training, and interest are the factors. There are successful cases that show teachers can truly develop the curriculum. (See the examples in Verbatim 6.1.)

I think they have the ability to design the curriculum, but they do not want to involve themselves too much and wait for my provision....they would rather spend more time on their favourite subjects. (SG-I)

Zhang (1999) points out that autonomy is the critical factor for teachers to be involved in curriculum development: they are restricted between the additional workload and

the sense of satisfaction for professional growth. Some researchers noted that when teachers are involved in pursuing teaching effectiveness and personal growth simultaneously, they may feel pressured and exhausted, which will affect teaching quality. Finally, teachers may find that capital is too high for curriculum development and will consequently run away (Chen & Luo, 1994; ACITW, 1998). If teachers are working alone without others' appreciation and confirmation under high pressure, teachers will become tired of their jobs, and their enthusiasm for curriculum development will then decline (Lee and Wong, 1996). Therefore, if teachers are asked to be involved in any curriculum development, it is a big decision and commitment for them to devote their time and energy. Instead of following scholars' reminders, school heads and the special administration arrangement should be wisely made to make all participants comfortable and give them the autonomy to contribute more. It is not only a concern for teachers; it is also a matter of personnel management.

6.1.2. Why do teachers avoid guidance work?

This section discusses why teachers want to avoid guidance work by exploring teachers' acceptance of guidance, the bounded collaboration and isolated working practice of teachers, the transformative shifts and new demands for teachers to participate in guidance, and the impact of motivation and job satisfaction of teachers.

6.1.2.1. Teachers' acceptance of guidance

The Report on the Evaluation of the Pilot Project of Schools Support Scheme (ED, 1989) finds that teachers in general were aware of a need for guidance in schools, but over half of the teacher respondents felt that the guidance role should be undertaken by specialists such as guidance teachers or school social workers. Teachers thought

that they did not have the professional training for counselling work. Lee (1995) finds that although most teachers recognise that they play a caring role to students, a large proportion of them still perceive guidance as the work of guidance teachers. Chen's (1998) survey showed that teachers regarded the duty of handling discipline and guidance work as one of the most difficult tasks among their other duties. Yue (1995) reveals that teachers' perceptions of guidance were affected by the school context, the school management, the curriculum, and the vision and culture of the school. Chow (1998) finds that both teachers and students believe that teachers should and could carry the combined role of discipline and guidance.

The findings in this study show that teachers lack confidence in handling discipline and guidance. However, all teachers and students perceived ("agreed" and "believed") that both discipline and guidance are important in schools. In fact, in Schools A and B, there is no long-term staff development plan for the members in the functional groups. There is no strategy for upgrading professionalism, from the cognitive to management level, from the commenting role to the leading and managerial role. In the past, there was little training in moral education, guidance, and counselling in educational colleges. Hence, D&G tasks are not considered the teachers' "business", and the training given about discipline, guidance and counselling are scarce. Involvement in guidance goes to the matter of individual enthusiasm for it.

Wang (2005) emphasises the triple role of a teacher, teaching, discipline, and guidance and counseling. Obviously, the investment of manpower and energy of a school in teaching and discipline are always greater than that for guidance and counseling. Figure 6.1 illustrates the observed biases that occur in the case schools. The distance of the angles from the centre represents the degree of involvement of teachers, DMs, SGTs, and the whole school in the areas of teaching, discipline, and guidance and

counselling.

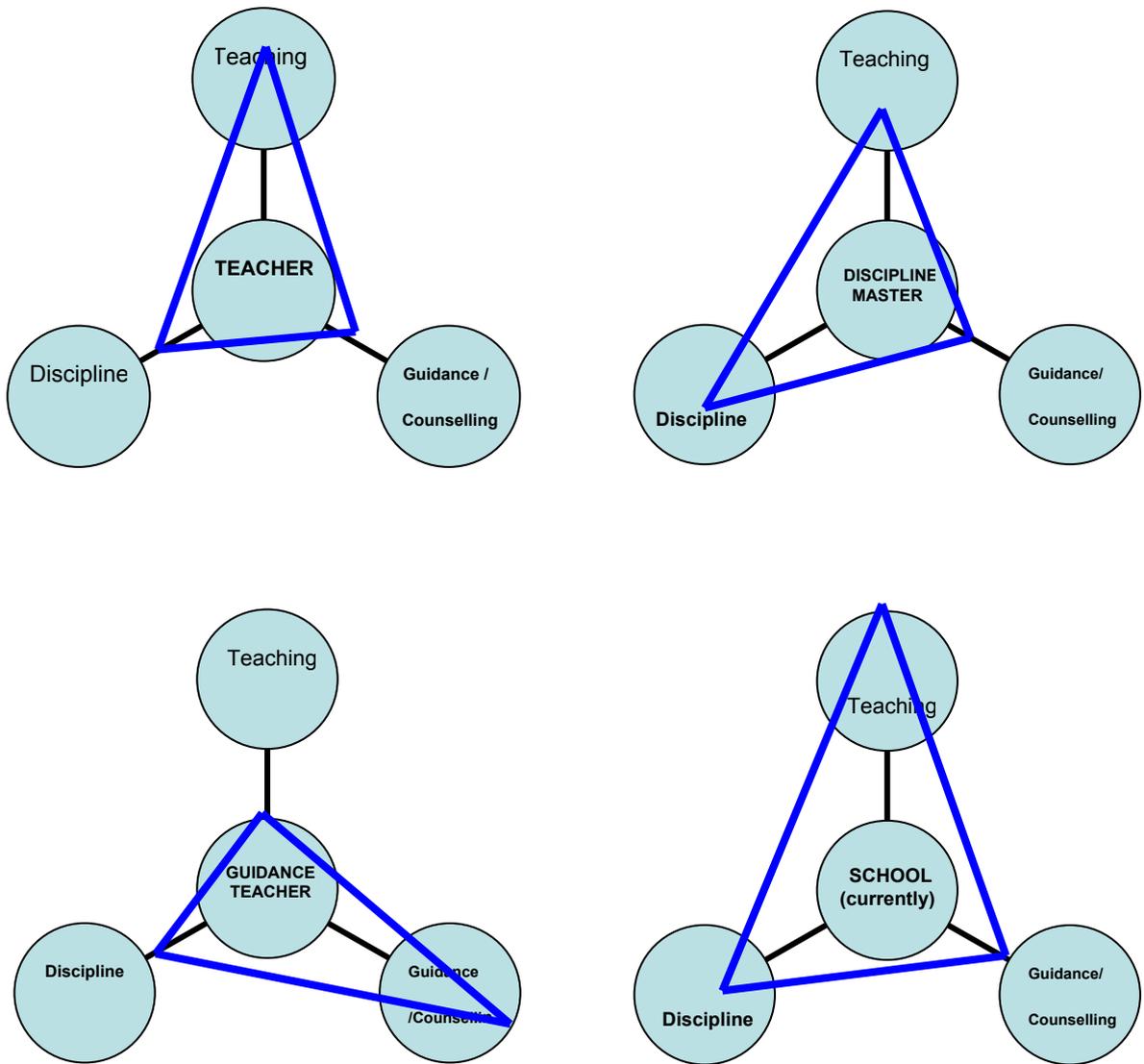


Figure 6.1 The observed biases or degree of involvement of teachers, discipline masters (DMs), SGTs and the whole school in the areas of teaching, discipline, and guidance and counselling shown in the cases of this study.

The delineation of guidance work to SGTs in primary schools is obvious from the evidence, so how can be the balance of teaching, discipline, and guidance and counselling be struck in the future?

6.1.2.2. The bounded collaboration and isolated working practice of teachers

Friend and Cook (2003) state that creating a culture of collaboration in education and ensuring that everyone who works there have the dispositions, knowledge, and skills to collaborate is the most complex challenge facing schools in the early 21st century: it is demanding and crucial. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) warn that the forms of collaboration that we should be more watchful of include Balkanization⁹, comfortable collaboration, and contrived collegiality. They also define “bounded collaboration” as “collaboration which does not reach deep down to the ground, the principles or the ethics of practice, but which stays with routine advice giving, trick-trading and material-sharing of a more immediate, specific and technical nature....” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992, p. 228). “Many forms of collegiality are superficial, partial, and even counter productive” (p. 82) Teacher collaboration in the real context of school may not be always positive. Hargreaves and Dawe (1990) criticise contrived collegiality for its flavour of “supervisory evangelism” under the aegis of professional collaboration and personal development (Lam et al., 2002).

Hence, what is a school? Ingersoll describes a school as “Numerous individuals, separated from one another in classrooms, carry out similar operations, supplied,

⁹ Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) caution against ‘balkanization’ in schools, which means teachers are working neither in isolation nor with most of their colleagues as a whole school, but in smaller subgroups within the school (Nung, 2005 26-27). ‘Balkanization’ could be a norm for people to seek the sense of security and recognition; these subgroups have their personality, expectations and special needs. Nung (2005, p.188) concludes: ‘In some departments, teachers conduct their work largely as individual, with limited interactions with fellow teachers in the same department; in other departments, teachers behave more collectively as a strongly subject-based teaching faculty; in some other departments, teachers behave as a collective group, but with a weaker subject-based identity. In fact, their subject boundaries are more blurred like the D&G group.’

controlled, and managed by a central office” (2003, p. 169). Hoy and Miskel (1987) call this the Loose Coupling Theories, which means that all events that happen in school are independent but may be inter-related. Cohen and March (1974) point out that school is full of unclear targets, ambiguous techniques, unstable involvement, and changeable decisions. “Schools are best studied as social organisations which are made up of nested layers—students within classrooms, departments within schools—so it will be important to conceptualise the ways in which one level influences another” (Sammons et al., 1997, p. 165). Sammons et al. (1997) have highlighted the possible limitations of treating the school as a single, homogeneous entity to understand its effectiveness. School effectiveness could then be broken down into its constituents. Thus, schools are mainly a combination of different groups of teachers: some groups function well, but some are cosmetic in nature. Simultaneously, we should be alert to the “toxic cultures” that have norms that reinforce inertia, blame students’ performance, discourage collaboration, and keep the hostile relations among staff. The principal is key in addressing negativity and hostile relations (Deal and Peterson, 1999). Therefore, school is:

- a place constructed by people with different personalities, needs, desires, and backgrounds;
- a hospital without medicine but with similar complexity;
- a laboratory for endless education experiments;
- a place more than a company, a community centre, a family;
- a place to hide from reality and mean society;
- a place to advocate love but where perhaps no love exists;
- a place to earn money, for ambition, for a better life with a house and wife;
- a place to seek self-esteem and self-actualization;
- a place to involve dreams, creativity;

- a place to work for the future of our world; and/or
- an ordinary “company” with quarrels, complaints, competitions and falsehood.

Hence, we should face the reality of school to prepare for the conflicts, selfishness, and politics. When a school is not a completely homogeneous organisation, how can we motivate teachers to act toward the same goal?

Nieto (2003) contends that elements that motivate and strengthen teachers’ commitment to their jobs and their schools are those that trigger emotions in the human psyche, such as love, hope, passion, and support. Teamwork, however, is not always essential to teachers’ work, as Adair (1997, p. 185) observes, in that only in a small proportion of teachers’ work is “teamwork is absolutely vital;” he shows that teachers prefer to work independently when they can. Wasley (1992) further identifies teacher isolation as one of the strongest detriments to professional growth.

Then what forces bind teachers together or even enhance the teamwork within an isolated working culture? Pang (2003) further finds that the variations in forces bind people within the school. A school can be a “simultaneously loose-tight coupled systems” between the “cultural linkage” and “bureaucratic linkage.” Such push-and-pull forces operate between the school and its subject departments. In addition to these two forces, Wallace (1988) has a similar idea; he adds that the current emphasis on teacher leadership and the “new professionalism” of teachers may serve to increase this fragmentation, particularly if a collegiate approach to curriculum management is ignored. Subject departments may be so different from one another that they give rise to compartmentalization and even fragmentation (Hargreaves, 1994). Does the “new professionalism” of teachers really work? Siskin (1994) has

alluded to different subjects being similar to different worlds:

By virtue of the subject they teach, these teachers bring the distinct perspective, procedures, values, and discourses of their fields into the school—and sometimes into conflict...What is evident from examining the differences among these subject cultures is that in many ways teachers have more in common with geographically distant colleagues in the same subject than they may with colleagues in the same school but an intellectually distant department (Siskin, 1994, p. 180).

Lee and Dimmock (1999) point out the crisis of fragmentation: “Leading and managing the school’s curriculum is more a subject-based or content-based set of activities, rather than a generic, principle-based one. It also tends to be fragmented and easily disjointed.” Presently in primary schools, curriculum reform also accelerates fragmentation especially of the core subjects. There are two ways of development, independent and intensive development for subjects verse comprehensive and cross-disciplinary for the whole-school approach. Can schools and teachers meet the demands?

I observed in the case schools that teachers worked alone, but the subject department gives them a sense of belonging and security, a sense of being professional. They are usually ready to cooperate. However, when they are asked to take on other tasks with which they are not familiar, they wait and see, with less impetus to involve because of familiarity, confidence and workload. Consequently, they may not want to spend time exploring issues beyond their subject matter.

Consider the example of the Chinese team and D&G team in Schools A and B in order to compare the differences in teachers’ involvement. The Chinese team includes the

consultant teachers and the level coordinators. They systematically share the teaching, planning, and assessment jobs and received plenty of support from CDI. All members have similar background knowledge. The teachers may be promoted to panel heads, deputy heads, or other higher posts if they can contribute to the subject. The organisation of the D&G team was comparatively loose, and the members included the level representatives with different backgrounds who were appointed by the top management. They usually shared the discipline tasks and matters, rather than the guidance issues, and they were not ready to attend training until they were asked to do so. There is no formal appraisal and clear promotion guidelines exist for the D&G team.

The problems with the D&G team are the mismatch of people with limited ability and willingness, with lack of training, monitoring, and chances for promotion. The D&G team members get used to be overly dependent on the team leaders' arrangement and provision, and it was reasonable for them to contribute more in their subject areas for better appraisal result at the end of the academic year.

I can see teachers are so busy in their teaching and subject development, so they are quite reliant on us [SGTs]....This group of colleagues are young and energetic, but the problem is that they are quite reliant on me and my arrangement, so if I am too busy to deal with the project, they pause. So, that is the problem! No one follows my lead if I leave.... I think I am the brain here, as I have planned everything...(SG-D)

I feel so lonely at the moment, as no one can help you: everyone is just waiting for your instruction and order. There is no direction and assistance for me . (SG-H)

Teachers are subject to the school's organisational structures, so the loose linkage

provides some flexibility and autonomy to teachers in their classroom work. Teachers will usually try to protect such flexibility and autonomy, and the subject department could form a buffer against “intrusions” that reduce their sense of flexibility and autonomy (Reynolds et al., 1994). Thus, teachers may prefer to retain their identities as subject teachers rather than the identity of other “irrelevant” groups like D&G or MCE. Sammons et al. (1997) suggest that one way to identify the source of such differences is to look at the meso-level operations of the subject departments. At a place where school forces and department forces meet, teachers choose to stay in their comfort zone (subject departments). Therefore, it becomes natural for teachers to ignore the D&G work; just as other careers (cooks, doctors, or lawyers) will normally neglect the tasks that are not their main concern. The principals and middle managers must be alert to this phenomenon, especially in job allocation.

6.1.2.3. Transformative shifts: new demands for teachers

In recent years, Lieberman and Miller (2004) have noted that teachers in Hong Kong schools may have to undergo “transformative shifts”, which include:

- shifting attention from teaching at the centre to learning at the centre;
 - changing from individualism to professional community;
 - teaching becoming more public and more open to criticism and improvement;
- and
- moving from the concept of “my students in my classroom” to “our students in our school”.

Hence, the adaptability of teachers to “transformative shifts” or “paradigm shifts” is a great hurdle for all teachers or schools to surmount under the various changes. In short, the “transformative shifts” are going to change teachers’ work from technical and managed work to inquiry and leadership, so they have to assume new roles as

“researchers, meaning makers, scholars, and inventors” (Lieberman and Miller, 2004). Nung (2005) also list some struggles of teachers. They include the request for collaboration, non-teaching duties, low participation in decision-making, and the separation between the school-wide world and classroom world. Obviously, the priorities have changed and become blurred at the present time when the teachers are expected to deal with unfamiliar tasks.

The interviews and the observations in Schools A and B revealed that some beliefs and stereotypes can be found among teachers (Appendix A5, B5, A13 and B14). They include their priority of education, their perceptions about discipline and guidance, and the schools’ obedience culture. Based on the ideas of Lieberman and Miller (2004), teachers and managers are now asked to care for matters at different levels, including the student level (i.e., students and their families), class level, subject level, functional level (i.e., curriculum integration, extracurricular activities, D&G, or resource management), school level (i.e., top management), and the relationship level (i.e., collegial, parents, alumni, and the community).

As to the readiness of teachers for the transformative shift, teachers react differently at different levels, depending on their psychological readiness, familiarity, and knowledge. Hence, the administration pressure put onto the teachers to “change” should be examined to determine whether it is a demand they can carry. Therefore, for a job like PGE, most teachers showed that they did not feel safe because it was outside their expertise, knowledge, and skills. Thus, abandonment and ignorance would be their first reactions. Although the Whole-School Approach (WSA) to guidance is used to input guidance concepts into the subject areas, teachers could respond it with “bounded collaboration” and construct a superficial climate together.

6.1.2.4 Impacts of motivations and job satisfaction of teachers

What makes teachers devoted to their job? Obviously, it is a matter of motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. Evans (1997) defines job satisfaction as “a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met” (Evans, 1997, p. 833). Coladarci defines satisfaction as “the degree of psychological attachment to the teaching profession” (1992, p. 323).

Hausman and Goldring (2001, p. 44) conclude that “forming a community of learners for teachers is a powerful strategy for enhancing teacher commitment”. Fresco et al. (1997) identify factors that affect satisfaction and commitment as teaching commitment, professional advancement and professional self-image. Figure 6.2 shows the perceived relationships between professional development and satisfaction and commitment of teachers.

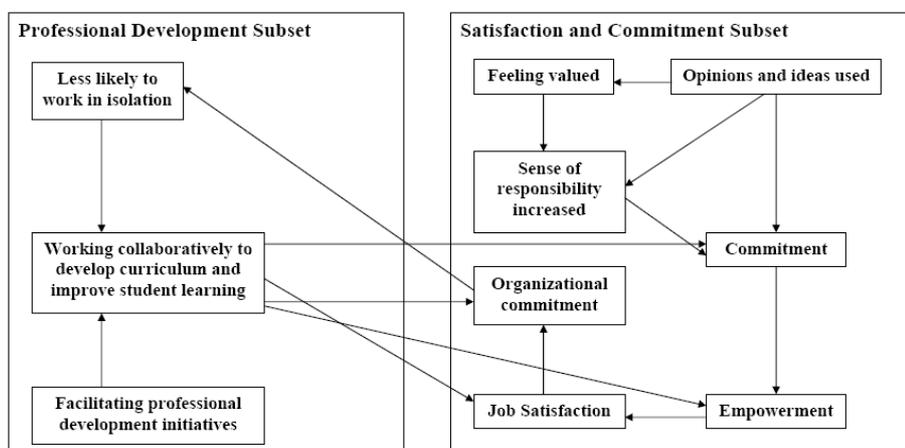


Figure 6.2 Perceived relationships between professional development and satisfaction and commitment (cited in J. L. Crocker, 2005, p. 7)

The extent of impact of each factor on teachers’ motivation depends on whether they see their job as just earning a living or as a professional pursuit. Equity Theory¹⁰ and

¹⁰ Adams (1965) developed Equity Theory. It is about the beliefs of individuals about fairness at work (Hoy and Miskel, 1991). The feeling of inequality by weighing input and output could result in reduction of motivation to work (Kulik and Ambrose, 1992). When people sense about the inequality, they may seek for more outcomes like benefits, leave the workplace and find a new job or devote less to the job

Expectancy Theory¹¹ are the biggest concerns because they concern salary, calculation of working time, linkage with appraisal, and better chances for promotion. Goal-setting Theory¹² may apply to some ambitious teachers, but it is rare.

Dimmock and Walker (2000) illustrate the diverse forces working on teachers in a study of Hong Kong secondary schools that shows teachers have to cater to standards and conformity on the one hand, and to make learning “relevant, stimulating and successful” on the other hand, so that schools can encourage “diversity, innovation and difference”. This finding reflects the partial truth of the present education climate: teachers are pulled and pushed by various disciplines.

Morley and Rassool (1999) have put it thus:

. . . we find teachers not as cultural workers able to engage freely in critique and self-definition, creating new spaces within which the parameters of educational debate and pedagogical possibility could be redefined. Instead, we find them rigidly locked into the techniques of school effectiveness taxonomies focused on quality control which, in turn, are subjected to a myriad of external and internal bureaucratic forms of control. [The] emphasis has shifted qualitatively towards concerns about the effectiveness of schools and the performativity of teachers

[characterised by]:

- narrowly defined professional competencies
- the regulation of task-oriented institutional practices and processes, systems

(Baron, 1998), so fairness and equality is requested to stress as the standard operating procedure in schools and other work organizations.

¹¹ Vroom (1967) makes expectancy theory which has two fundamental premises. (1) People have their own judgment to evaluate the expected value of the outcomes and produced own behaviour in organizations. (2) One's feelings, attitudes and values interact with environmental factors (the organization) to produce their behaviours. There are three fundamental concepts of the Expectancy Theory, they are (1) Expectancy, (2) Instrumentality and (3) Valence

¹² It is found by Locke (1968) who thinks motivation of work comes from the intentions to work towards a goal. Robbins *et al.* (2001) points out that people may have higher motivation if the working goal is special and difficult within employee's ability instead of general goal.

monitoring and the management of, largely attitudinal and behavioural change within organisations [emphases in original, p. 33].

Janssen, Schaufeli, and Houkes (1999) suggest that work overload, role ambiguity, or role conflict are the three main dimensions of teachers' jobs. On the other hand, the JD-C model (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990) focuses on two dimensions: job demands¹³ and job control¹⁴. Thus, the combination of high job demands and low job control precipitates psychological and physical strain (the so-called job strain), whereas jobs in which both demands and control are high lead to feelings of competence, productivity, and accomplishment (so-called active learning). Recent studies (Salanova, Peiro & Schaufeli, 2002; Schaubroeck, Jones & Xie, 2001) have suggested that certain individual characteristics (e.g., coping style, explanatory style, proactive personality, and self-efficacy) influence the individual's psychological adjustment to the constraints of the work environment. Some further studies show the importance of self-determination¹⁵: self-determined people adjust better psychologically to an environment that provides autonomy (O'Connor and Vallerand, 1994). However, it is estimated that teachers with a sense of helplessness may lack self-determination and self-adjustment to the changing environment. It is not difficult to find a negative cycle in our education system that reduces the self-determination, autonomy and capacity of teachers. The problem is "trust" between different stakeholders (Figure 6.3). It should be accompanied with encouragement, reinforcement, mentoring, demonstration, and evaluations to increase the job control of teachers.

¹³Job demands refer to the volume of work to be accomplished as well as the requirements and time constraints related to the work.

¹⁴Job control refers to the control over work process, that is, the ability to make decisions and the opportunity to exercise a degree of control over the work to be accomplished.

¹⁵The individual who perform an activity by choice and pleasure, have experience of choice in the process of intentionality of behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1991, 2002).

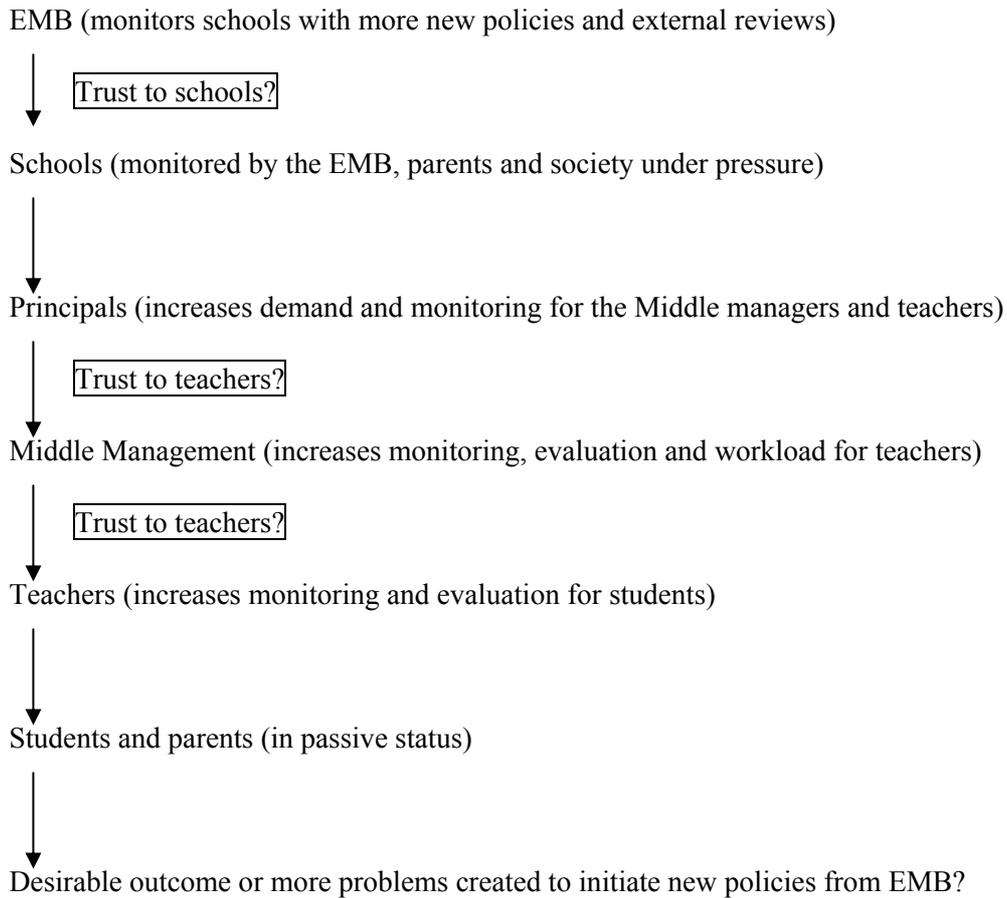


Figure 6.3 Trust among stakeholders

Teachers are fed up with handling too many policies from the EMB. The pressure on teachers comes from work pressure, time constraints, and the quality of their students. Some teachers feel that they are the “force-fed ducks” as well; they feel too tired to pursue the new trend (especially the aged colleagues) and the never-ending policy changes. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

Even as teachers, we find it so difficult to follow the new trend as well as the professional assessment test....We learn about life now, but should we push our students most of the time? Teachers have become “force-fed ducks”, the authority don’t expect the outcomes they want. If the “ducks” are unhappy, there could be none produced. (A-T3)

The pressure for teachers is mainly from work pressure, time, and the low quality of students. As other things have become complicated, it has

subsequently decreased the importance of the PGE. Small classes may be a way to go, with increasing manpower. There is too much from the EMB, so all staff are fed up with the heavy workload. Without time, teachers lose the passion to do things well. (A-T2)

I spent 27 years in this school, with new policies every year for every subject. I am so tired of the reforms. I nearly cannot adapt to the new teaching environment. So the priority is the most important now. (B-T1)

Some teachers point out that they are required to cater to many issues and find it difficult to concentrate on any one piece of work. Teachers resort to muddling through, as in the case of PGE, which is their lowest priority. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

Along with the drastic curriculum reform now in schools, the PGE is no longer a focus (one of the concern points) in our school. We are now crazy for TSA (Territory-wide System Assessment); our focus is back to the academic performance of our students. (A-T5)

If one person is asked to join too many things, finally, he cannot help anyone. When every teacher does what he can for the diversified work list, he may leave no energy for additional contribution and no time for the further development of some special issues, so he does the minimum only. (B-T8)

Therefore, teachers stated that they were forced to abandon and neglect PGE because of the pressure they were under. A policy like PGE, which they perceive has having been jammed in, then suffers an almost total loss in the clashes. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

A-T12 reminded us that schools should not consider teachers robots, and there should be more empathy for the teachers because their energy and enthusiasm will expire

someday. New human resources must be continuously explored to maintain the operation of schools, especially with the ceaseless reforms. Without room for relaxation and reflection, it is impossible to achieve a better outcome. This brings up the problems of maintenance of the brain and energy for the machine called SCHOOL. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

It is a good start. We think in the long run, we must think thoroughly that the capable ones will be fatigued someday: their enthusiasm has expiration dates. They must be energetic all the time, but it is not easy to find such persons. So, after a period of time, we must get the people in with ability and less enthusiasm. (A-T12)

I feel the capable teachers will say, "My god, there is too much work!" After a period of time, when you hear this, it is a signal that they are expiring. Yes, we are not robots. We must relax. I am one also with no room to rest, and it is impossible to think or create more. So we need to travel around. If the capable group gets no rest, there will be no more new ideas. (A-T12)

Three groups of factors cause burn-out situations (Siu, 2003): biological factors (illness and exhaustion), psychological factors (self-confidence, status, appraisal, conflicts, ambiguity of roles, and the changing nature of the job), and social factors (teaching passive students, classroom management, social relationships, poor working environments, and the duties for teaching, administration and management). I suggest that schools should reduce stress¹⁶ on teachers by defining their roles clearly with

¹⁶Stress is defined by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as a particular interaction between the person and the environment, appraised or evaluated by the person as being taxing or exceeding his or her personal resources, and, as a consequence, disrupting his or her daily routines or a state of psychological pressure influenced by three main sources or domains (Derogatis, 1987): personality mediators (constructs of time pressure, driven behaviour, attitude posture, relaxation potential, and role definition); environmental factors (constructs of vocational satisfaction,

explicit expectations, enhance appreciation, maintain good communication and simplified procedures, and allocate jobs fairly to create a healthy working environment.

6.1.3. Strategies to increase the involvement of teachers in the guidance work

This section identifies strategies to motivate teachers' involvement in school guidance development by investigating methods of teacher training, team management, and Whole-School Approach for guidance.

6.1.3.1. Teacher training for student guidance and PGE

As in other curriculum development, teacher training for PGE is important. Stenhouse (1975) proclaims that “there can be no curriculum development without teacher development” and argued that “curricula are not simply instructional means to improve teaching but are expressions of ideas to improve teachers” (p. 68). Eraut (1975) states that teacher development depends on three things: (1) the knowledge, experience, and personality of the teacher; (2) the school context; and (3) professional contact and discussion outside the school. Fung (2000) argues that the success of curriculum innovation relies heavily on the acceptance and support of frontline practitioners. However, Hawley and Valli (1999) feel that traditional approaches to professional development were shallow and fragmented. The new approach to professional development takes a constructivist orientation, emphasising the way that teachers bring prior knowledge and experience to all new learning situations.

domestic satisfaction, and health posture); and emotional responses (constructs of hostility, anxiety, and depression).

Professional development must be embedded in the systematic reflective inquiry of daily practice in the schools (Cochrain-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Crocker mentions some key issues about teacher education: “Similarly, those involved in teacher professional education need in turn to consider the “whole teacher” and his/her needs that determine an individual’s overall professional growth and well-being”(2005, p. 3). Hence, “reform” should not be only of the curriculum or the system; rather, it is reform of the mindset and even society. Best and Lang (1994) also remind us that teachers are humans, so aside from training and self-awareness, they need moral and emotional support.

Fok et al. (2004, p.4) study in-service teacher training needs in Hong Kong and identified an important factor: learning more about student guidance and discipline theories and practices to forestall or deal with student problems. Alder (1992) states that teachers are usually lack guidance skills to enable students to share their feelings or problems with minimum embarrassment. McGuiness (1998, p. 26) states that “all teachers need highly developed interpersonal characteristics, which are also the foundation characteristics of the effective counsellors”. That implies that for PGE to succeed, teachers should first equip themselves with good interpersonal skills.

However, Law (2000, p. 144) concludes,

The research highlighted the ambiguity of class teachers’ guidance role, not only for people around them, but even for themselves. The ambiguities of guidance roles, together with the negligence of guidance service from the school administration, weaken class teachers’ awareness of their needs for guidance training...

There is still a long road to developing a student guidance service in primary schools. The support strategies should be reconsidered and modified to offer teachers concrete

help.

In School A (Refer to Appendixes A4, A5, A6 and A7), I used staff meetings, training workshops (both NGOs and SGTs), demonstrations, and personal growth programmes to let the teachers understand the implications of PGE and experience its significance. The feedback was positive. Initially, co-preparation of PGE material was part of training for the D&G team, but it then failed as mentioned before. To help the ad-hoc teaching, I demonstrated PGE to classroom teachers one by one at the beginning with videos for their reference. The demonstration lessons ended and were replaced by the demonstration videos when SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) came in 2003. In fact, not all teachers borrowed the videos. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

We should make a workshop to teach us how to select it and how to do it at the very beginning. More training should be given to us. (A-T7)

I think the training given for the PGE was not enough; teachers are still hesitant in teaching the PGE. However, if we spot the target teachers for further training, is it possible? Are they willing to accept further training? If they are not, then...it is the problem of communication, collaboration and adjustment among people. (A-T9)

In School B (Refer to Appendixes B3, B4, B5 and B13) during 2003-2004, there was a pilot scheme in P1: the PGE lessons were helped by an educational psychologist and senior teachers on the D&G team. Since then, in the second year, the NGO helped with the lesson plan design and demonstration lessons class by class to show the pedagogy of PGE. In the third year, I kept up the demonstrations selectively for the difficult topics and the weak classroom teachers. In addition, co-teaching was tried; all senior teachers took turns helping the class teachers. The outcome was excellent! At the end of 2005-2006, I offered a personal growth workshop that was quite successful in School A,

but the feedback in School B was different, reflecting the different cultures of the two schools. Teachers in School A were more open-minded, frank, and sincere. In contrast, in School B, teachers were self-protective, conservative, and superficial; bounded collaboration was obvious. The principal and some senior teachers disappeared to take care of their own business during the workshop. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

I don't think teachers are not experienced in teaching the PGE, as they talk about it directly. They must know the core mindset of the lessons; the most difficult thing is to let students understand and digest the ultimate implications. Like using games or different activities, we did not learn it before. (B-T8)

I perceive that the training is good; however, how to apply their skills to present is a problem. Somehow, the training...I do not know...how to teach our students. (B-T4)

Some teachers felt confident to teach after the training. They wanted to seek help from the professionals, but then felt inadequate even with the help of NGOs. There is a gap between learning and application, and some of them requested more e-source support. The training in some schools was supported by Quality Education Fund or Non-governmental Organisations. Some experienced social workers stressed that training teachers should be in steps: theories, concepts, and practical experience sharing. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1.)

Most interviewees were positive about the training provided and requested more for the future. Some SGTs had arranged training for the schools, but teachers still felt it was inadequate. Different modes of training had been tried in the following forms:

- invitation of experts for seminars or workshops;
- help from social workers (seminars or workshops);
- demonstration in the workshops (especially about teaching skills);
- demonstration in the classrooms (by SGT);

- personal growth workshop for teachers;
- peer collaborative teaching (senior teacher or SGT with class teacher);
- long-term monitoring by lesson observation; and/or
- other means (meetings for lesson preparation and evaluation, pedagogy sharing, teaching video sharing in meetings or in school server).

Staff training is a process of learning. Training in pastoral care, which promotes thinking and understanding, is thus concerned with staff development from several angles of the learning process (Hanko, 1994):

1. the cognitive: information is generated that highlights the underlying issues, and knowledge about the interactional aspects of children's needs is supplemented;
2. the perceptual/affective: better understanding extends the perception of the difficulty and influences feelings about and reaction to it; and
3. the interactional level: teachers become experienced in the use of their inter-professional skills.

Research conducted by Best, Ribbins, Jarvis, and Oddy (1980) show that teachers usually take shortcuts to the person they think can help them. Hence, informal interaction is another important means for training. Teachers are found to seek warm support (individualized, ad-hoc, in small circles, and with in-depth conversations), rather than cold support (formally, mass training, class observation, or appraisal). In the course of PGE development, I changed strategies to give the staff more user-friendly help like pre-lesson meetings, level meetings, informal chats, demonstrations, and collaboration teaching to give teachers "warm" support beyond "cold" guidelines and lesson plans.

Several points emerged from these different experiences. First, to further improve the

teaching skills of PGE, special help must be offered to the novice teachers, with annual training for all staff. In addition, class-to-class demonstration of SGTs and discussions after lessons are important to give teachers confidence. Second, some teachers did agree with the necessity of teacher training because their experience is limited, so they lack confidence about the new policies. Third, it is quite difficult to fight for the training time about guidance for a workshop of two to three hours. It depends on the priorities of the top management. Nevertheless, formal training lets teachers perceive that the school takes it seriously and informs them it will be their job. Teachers preferred practical sessions to theoretical training. Fourth, Lang (1995) suggests three distinct aspects that need to be recognized when preparing teachers for pastoral care and personal social education: attitudes and beliefs, knowledge and understanding, and skill and competence. Hence, with respect to Hanco (1994) and Lang's (1995) suggestion, to give teachers basic knowledge of PGE, a guide book for reference, formal and informal sharing, and workshops for curriculum design and lesson plan writing (especially about the lesson plan design and the cognitive development of children) could be arranged. Finally, the values, attitudes and affection of teachers must be addressed in the training design.

6.1.3.2. Insight for team management

In terms of team management, School C2 was proactive in helping the SGT because of their special arrangement in MCE. School F showed another successful example of high team spirit. (Refer to Verbatim 6.1)

I serve two schools: in school C1, they already have the MCE lessons; introduction of the PGE enriched the curriculum and rendered it the direction...In the MCE curriculum, we mainly worked through the domains from self, to family, to school, to district and to the world. So, we modified

the curriculum by inserting the new topics and trimming the overlapping ones. In total, we had 18 lessons: one hour per lesson. The curriculum is vivid and it changes according to the contextual changes and the prevalent controversial topics. (SG-C)

In school C2, there was no PGE previously. I compiled the lesson plan and the teaching kits, and the teachers used them. We started in two forms first, then expanded to six forms in the second year. Later, we had form representatives, who have less periods of workload to work on the MCE lessons, to design and teach the lessons. They are very smart to create the mind-maps of the whole MCE curriculum of the school. The curriculum is also in line with the moral theme every month, which is clearly stated in the student handbooks. (SG-C)

I would like to thank to my PGE team: your love and care for the students. Indeed, you are so busy, but you all do it proactively for all single lesson plan and the activities. You have motivated other teachers to be more actively involved. Regarding the lesson plans, they are initially dull, but you are so creative to change the content. Gradually, a modified, school-based version is produced. It makes me not worry about the selection of any teaching kits. (SG-F)

Ho (2002)'s study about life skill education has shown her successful experience by starting with two teachers and expanding to a team of 16 teachers. She finds that the attitudes, skills and knowledge of teachers and the input of external resources were most important. Changes in students were gradually observed. To lead a team, Leithwood et al. (2001) have argued that departmental leadership is "situational and context dependent". Smylie et al. (2002) further defines leadership as "distributed in a dynamic web of people, interactions and situations.

Being a guidance teacher and one of the middle managers, I find it paradoxical to apply soft or hard skills in administration. To maintain good relationships with colleagues, SGTs always apply soft skills (like lobbying, negotiation, interactions and so on) to harmonise with the identity of a “counsellor”. On the other hand, hard skills (direct announcements, warnings, punishment, and other administration means) have to be considered if soft skills do not work. Appraisal is suggested to help. There is a need for more stiffness and consistency from SGTs, and more open-mindedness from other managers

For the lazy ones, what can be done is limited, but appraisal helps, so let them pass all assessment hurdles to push the lazy group. (A-T2)

Hence, clear administration guidelines, procedures, and monitoring processes are very important. In addition, the image of a manager is very important to impose power for good management to ensure quality work. Thus, the so-called harmonious relationships may be reframed for policy implementation.

6.1.3.3. The actual Whole-School Approach (WSA) to guidance

PGE is another form of the Whole-School Approach guidance programme in Hong Kong primary schools. Is it possible? How could it be succeed? Magretta (2002, Chapter 9) pointed out that management should aim to “provide a context of values within which individuals can manage themselves, and individuals to take responsibility for their own performance.” Thus, respect for teachers’ professionalism should start with teachers, stimulating them toward the new mindset and encouraging them to be willing to change. Since teachers are supposed to manage their work and commitment themselves, they may resist being managed and controlled to a certain extent and enjoy working in isolation.

Instead of the top-down WSA notions, bottom-up change should be executed to ensure that changes take place: every change should start from teachers, letting teachers change teachers. The real WSA should be student-centred on students' needs, be teacher-centred on teachers' capacity, and be subject or class-based on the setting to initiate reform in learning and teaching. If the ultimate aim of the WSA is to reform the mindset and culture of schools through full participation, WSA could be started from "teachers change teachers" through means like sharing, demonstration, and collaborative teaching. The first task is to lower the thresholds for all teachers, making them feel secure and confident to try new things. When successful experiences are accumulated and circulated, internalization and restructuring of mindset could be achieved!

6.1.4. Section summary

The action research in Schools A and B shows that the acceptance, workload, ability, and working capacity of teachers must be evaluated before recruiting them in a curriculum development team. The curriculum leader must have sensitivity, empathy, and critical thinking abilities. The working emotions and needs of the team should be addressed first. In addition, the D&G team is normally under-developed, with weak manpower, low willingness, insufficient training, and vague promotion ladders. Considering these contextual factors and the impacts of job satisfaction, job demand and job control, teachers mostly lack confidence in handling discipline and guidance and tend to ignore or quit D&G work. In short, teachers' responses are related to their efficacy in guidance jobs.

Sarason (1990) highlights the advantage of greater teacher participation in

decision-making in schools: “When a process makes people feel that they have a voice in matters that affect them, they will have greater commitment to the overall enterprise and will take greater responsibility for what happens to the enterprise” (p. 61). However, the combination of team members for PGE is out of SGTs’ control if the teachers are appointed by schools. Most of the teachers are hesitant to devote themselves to PGE development, though they do have the capability to help. Literature reflects that it is a big decision and commitment for teachers to devote themselves in curriculum development. The outcome depends on the joy and autonomy the teachers gain in the process. Teachers in general lack knowledge and skills in curriculum development (Law & Yu, 1995; Morris, 1995). Moreover, some studies show there are Balkanization, contrived collegiality, “simultaneously loose-tight coupled systems”, and the “new professionalism” further accelerate fragmentation, not collaborations, among teachers. It reflects that conflicts emerge because of the requests for intensive subject development and comprehensive / cross-disciplinary collaboration in the name of the whole-school approach.

In fact, teachers are now expected to be able to deal with matters at all levels from student, class, subjects, and cross-disciplinary matters to the community level. There are demands that professional knowledge increase from expertise in subject level to administration, leadership, and management level (O’Day et al., 1995). Hsia (1995) points out that because of double constraints from the education system and administrative management, something has happened to teachers physically and mentally: they have developed rigidity of thinking, closure of life, self-limitation, and avoidance of internal conflicts. Teachers with high energy should be vivid, sensitive, open, positive, and optimistic (O’Day et al., 1995). However, with the daily dissipation, teachers with high energy may one day “expire”. The current situation has resulted in teacher overload, role ambiguity or role conflict (Janssen, Schaufeli &

Houkes, 1999). The strain of the job makes teachers feel helpless in a negative cycle without “trust” between the different stakeholders. Furthermore, it reduces their self-determination, autonomy and capacity. To increase job control and self-efficacy for teachers, schools should reduce the stress on them by defining the role of teachers clearly, with explicit expectations, enhanced appreciation, encouragement, good communication, simplified procedures, fair job allocation, and appropriate support for a healthy working environment. Ultimately, it is the wisdom of leadership and management that most teachers just perform what they feel is “enough” in their organisations.

To enhance the paradigm shift of teachers about guidance, training given must cater to their attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Different training modes had been tried in the action research to give teachers “warm” and “cold” support. Senge et al. (2002) points out that training in teamwork and collaboration should be rendered to build new team spirit and to get rid of bad habits. The training experiences have shown that the Whole-School Approach should be started from “teachers change teachers”. It should be based on students’ needs, teachers’ capacity, and new requirements of a subject to facilitate the internalization of new mindset in schools. A process of organisational development should be applied to reset the mindset of all members through skills like sensitivity training, role playing, group discussion, job enrichment, feedback, and team building (Schultz & Schultz, 2004, p. 198). To let teachers go through the paradigm shift in terms of teacher training, I suggest : (1) changing teachers’ mindset to be multi-perspective, reflective, and critical; (2) enhancing teachers’ knowledge and skills, especially their deep understanding about children’s needs and social change; (3) encouraging changes from one-way to multiple communications, from authoritarian to democratic, from controlled to listening, allow bottom-up involvement, celebrate team work, and accept the new sharing culture; and (4) advancing teachers’ generic skills

especially in self-review, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity for PGE teaching because PGE also emphasises on skills like self-management, reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication. For team management, both soft and hard skills must be employed by the SGT as a manager. Clear administration guidelines, procedures, and monitoring processes must be at hand, instead of preserving friendly and harmonious relationships between SGTs and the teachers. In short, change is necessary for both the programme organiser and teachers to increase mutual understandings and process the paradigm shift. However, the biggest hindrances are the immature collaboration culture, the academic-biased tradition and neglect of D&G development, that let teachers avoid work and PGE.

6.2. Time Management

6.2.1. Time is the key element to developing a curriculum

Is it possible to fight for a time slot in the timetable for PGE, which is an “inserted” curriculum outside of the regular curriculum? Many interesting findings explore the implications of time allocation. Regarding the targets set by the EMB of 72 PGE lessons per year, the questionnaires to SGTs shows that just about 60% of schools can achieve this. Why is it difficult to arrange 12 lessons per year in a school schedule? It shows that about 83% of the schools can provide lesson time for PGE. For those that cannot, library lessons, assemblies, post-examination time, or Saturday mornings are used. Some schools try different combinations of PGE such as integrating it with other subjects. In the busy school life, time, money, and manpower are so important to make things happen. (Appendix C2)

Time is the greatest support from school. Manpower must be the class teachers. If they are not keen to do, what can we [the middle managers] do? It

depends on how the teachers think about the importance of value education on the students. If our students are perfect, the PGE can stop. How to develop the PGE depends on time, money and manpower. (A-T9)

As Bell & Ritchie (1999, p. 125) suggest:

Resources—time, money, people, space, materials and equipment—are limited in every school but depending on the overall situation, the actual level of running of subjects varies considerably both within and between schools. Given this, one of the tasks for the subject leaders is to secure an appropriate level of resources and to find ways in which the best use can be made of whatever resources are available....

Marsh (1992) perceives that the two problems of school-based curriculum development are inadequacy of time and money. Gross (1998) says that schools invest time in the hardware or the quick and easy administration affairs rather than on long-term business like curriculum development. Thus, time is a key investment in any development in schools, especially software like the curriculum.

6.2.2. Time allocation for PGE

Time is the most precious thing in a school setting; it is not easy for the SGTs to win the battle. Time could be awarded in proportion to the success, effectiveness, and quality of any project, policy or event. The war for time is not just for a time slot for the lesson, but also for preparation, meetings, training, review, demonstration, and evaluation. PGE is a jammed case for the current curriculum. Time in schools implies the priority, position, and importance of the issues, which is reflected in the appropriate amount of time at the suitable moment. Fixed or scattered time slots affect

monitoring. Modes found for incorporating PGE are fixed, flexible, and mixed with other lessons (integrations). Time allotted PGE is about 30 minutes to one hour, but it varies from school to school. (Refer to Verbatim 6.2.2.)

In School A, the principal reallocated the timetable since the school began operating as a whole-day school. At the beginning, PGE and MCE alternated from week to week for 45 minutes. Then after two years, it was shared with MCE and extra-curricular activities for only 30 minutes. School A also used this period to let other teachers attend the collaborative planning meetings. PGE was taught by class teachers or senior teachers in a scheduled timetable. The outcome was good and all teachers were happy with the clear arrangements. In School B, in spite of adequate financial support, there is no exact time allocation for PGE because the whole school must cope with the school band exercise. No other activities or lessons are allowed. I failed to change this. Finally, remedial class lessons at the end of the day were extended as PGE lessons. This made the frontline teachers feel frustrated and helpless at having to deal with PGE in a rush. These arrangements show the priority of the school and the status of PGE in schools.

The only conflict is time, so we need to fight for the time to develop and implement the new policy. It is a big question. Even RS and information technology are facing the same problem. All subjects are in a fight over time; we are thinking about which subjects will be cut in relation to teaching time. The PGE will be in a trend of integration. (A-T5)

I can fight for the time allocation for the PGE from the timetable. It represents the position for the curriculum. You know, no one cares about us, but now, there is a time slot for our subject, which implies success. (SG-K)

If PGE is taught at the wrong moment with limited time, teachers tend to support

integration, extension of lesson time, and autonomy to choose the teaching materials.

(Refer to Verbatim 6.2.2.)

...in the last period of a day, teachers and I are so tired to attend the lessons.

We have to make all things settle down before the lessons. It seems that we need to squeeze all our remaining energy of the day to complete the lessons. If it is arranged scattered over different periods, it may be better.... I suggest the integration of the PGE into other subjects. (B-T4)

Students are sensitive to all changes; they wanted to keep PGE as well; they also felt the ambiguity over the time allotments for PGE and wanted to fight for giving PGE a definite time slot. (Refer to Verbatim 6.2.2.)

Researcher: What were the differences?

[They kept quiet for a while.] There were too few PGE lessons for us this year.

(A-3-S)

This year, the PGE was designated an extra-curricular activity; we don't feel happy about it. (A-6-S)

Rearrange the time-table; don't put the PGE and M&C and extra-curricular activities in the same lessons, as it is a headache. Put the PGE on Friday Monday, to let it be independent. (A-5-S)

Some teachers felt stressed and frustrated about finishing the rich content of PGE with quality within a definite time. Some strongly suggested the integration of PGE to save time. Some class teachers prefer to share the workload with the senior teachers.

It is not enough for the PGE lesson to be just 30 minutes; we rushed to finish it as well. I prefer better teaching quality rather than follow the time schedule; we can select the appropriate way to teach instead of teaching them all, and teach it in a double period. Sometimes, the group discussion is so time-limited,

not deep enough, which is useless for students. I understand we should cover the framework, so I suggest fewer topics with more time or extend the teaching time to 45 minutes. For some topics, help from parents could be sought, such as letting parents start the lesson at home first. (B-T4)

Nevertheless, it was observed that some teachers just used 10 to 15 minutes to finish the lesson. They stuck to the lesson plans they were given. The so-called “time constraint” was attributed to immature teaching skills or poor classroom management. If the schools had developed MCE curriculum, there would be no problems with time arrangement. For those with poor support for student guidance, SGTs could only teach PGE flexibly by not disturbing the original scheme of work. Consequently, it depends on how insistent the SGTs are in fighting for reasonable teaching time for PGE. Verbatim 6.2.2. shows some successful and undesirable examples. The EMB was also concerned about the time allocated for PGE and agreed that formal allocation of PGE in the timetable would benefit all students. Meanwhile, they were happy with the figures “submitted” about PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 6.2.2.)

Roughly, three situations are identified when there is a definite lesson time for PGE: (1) a defined and consistent time slot that occurs on a weekly or bi-weekly basis; (2) alternate with other lessons, such as MCE, reading, and remedial lessons, and take turns; (3) allow no time for PGE; SGTs or teachers do it on their own and without monitoring. All cases show that SGTs tried to implement PGE with flexibility and insistence to avoid having it gradually faded away. In the past, librarian teachers have successfully fought for library lessons every week. Again, this implies the school’s priorities. This study shows that time means a lot in the process; it implies the priority, the possibility, the length of lessons, the frequency, and also the quality of PGE.

Of the packed timetable and the impossible arrangement, someone questioned whether

there has been an explosion of subjects. Teachers had these comments.

I feel that the problem is the explosion of subjects and with too many subjects, administration has largely increased. I suggest that some subjects should be combined together or deleted. Or we could try to make it with a special administration arrangement. Concerning the present timetable, I feel that we are wasting time in some lessons. It is too rushed to finish the lessons. Even for non-academic subjects, the same conditions exist. There are too many subjects for the little kids. The Principal has suggested the period timetable instead of the 5-day timetable, which may be a solution. I think some subjects like information technology and Mandarin could be fused with other subjects. Is it necessary to take a group of students out of the classroom to attend computer lessons or combine it with other related subjects? It is a waste of time. Some colleagues are trying to do this...now. We should refer to the experience of other schools, like combinations of information technology and GS, Mandarin and Chinese Now, but time is very limited. When everything is put into the packed timetable, is it a question? (B-T6)

The problem of subject explosion was also mentioned by parents. Integration was urged as a possible solution for non-core subjects. Some schools use periodic timetables or combine similar subjects to save time. Hence, we should think thoroughly about the number of subjects children are expected to learn and the feasibility of the current curriculum for the development and needs of children. We must explore the possibility of integration. Change depends on the willingness and determination of school management, and on support and autonomy from EMB. Then schools can reallocate time resources to accommodate individual differences.

6.2.3. Section summary

Time is the important resource in schools. Time allocation for certain activities and subjects represents the school's acceptance and recognition of the subject. Time becomes a "problem" for PGE, because of the school's acceptance, leadership, management, and politics. All SGTs tried hard to arrange for PGE in the school timetable unless there was room to incorporate PGE into the MCE curriculum. Because time allocation for PGE is not exactly required in EMB's guidelines, SGTs had to fight for it. The most important issue is the appropriate time length at the suitable moment for PGE curriculum. SGTs tried their best to allocate PGE with different modes. The position of PGE in School A reflects that school's inconsistency, while School B made the priority to inter-school music award and allocated an embarrassed time slot to PGE. . Undesirable time allocation let teachers support integration of PGE into other subjects.

6.3. External Support

6.3.1. Support from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and social workers

Galloway (1990) points out that teachers can establish contact with voluntary agencies outside the school to facilitate their guidance duties. SGTs cooperate with NGOs frequently as working partners. They work on a mutual benefit basis. Based on the cases examined, it is evident that quite a number of SGTs invite social workers to help with lesson plan writing, training, and demonstration for PGE when there is financial support. NGOs could lessen the manpower shortage and workload of SGTs. Somehow, external "experts" are always more persuasive than SGTs, especially in staff training

and lesson demonstration. SGTs helped to coordinate and to safeguard the quality of external help. Services directly provided by NGOs can cater to the individual needs of schools through different kinds of interactions with teachers.

In fact, NGOs' services have been a supplementary power to help schools meet market needs and the school-based requirement. The NGOs can also earn their status and reputation. Nevertheless, external support may reduce the autonomy of teachers in curriculum design of PGE. Sometimes teachers perform defensive with their welcomed and arrogant attitudes about outsiders. Cheng (2006b, p.195) has mentioned the resistance to cooperation between schools and NGOs. This was observed in the case studies. This may be because teachers feel challenged by the outsiders, considering them non-teaching experts, unless they are university professors or psychologists. This phenomenon was obvious in the training sessions in which some teachers were quite demanding and cynical toward the outside helpers. Indifference and refusal were evident. Interestingly, resistance decreases when they perceive that the external helpers have helped them save time.

By observation, the lesson plans produced by NGOs are mostly good and insightful, but some may be incompatible with the classroom conditions. The performance of NGOs depends on the experience and their presentations. They preferred creating a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere with innovative methods rather disciplining the class. The friendly and frank attitudes of social workers from NGOs made students happy to enjoy the lessons. As observed in the case schools, social workers stressed communication and interaction. Obviously, the performance of the social workers depends on their experience. However, some teachers were quite critical, arrogant and suspicious towards the external helpers; some even sat aside and offered no help. (Refer to Verbatim 6.3.1)

A coordinator is very important to let us know about the situation of the school and their needs, as we are not able to know everything about the school. We must provide the lesson plans and the teaching aids. Sometimes, we have to demonstrate the PGE in class to give teachers ideas about the PGE. If teachers still use the traditional way to teach the PGE, it abides to the prime spirit of the PGE. Moreover, we have to carry out the evaluations. (SW)

6.3.2. Support from educational psychologists

Beyond DM and CC, school-based educational psychologists in primary schools should be invited into PGE development. Gysbers and Henderson (2000), Kratochwill (1982), and Lehr and Christenson (2002) have high expectations for educational psychologists in the development of the whole-school approach to guidance and counselling in schools. “The school psychologist was seldom highlighted in the school pastoral care network...she should be one of the subsystems collaborating with others in promoting students’ personal and social development.” School-based educational psychologists in the case schools should take up the role of school counsellors as depicted in the comprehensive programme approach (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) and serve as primary facilitator in the organisational change and strategic planning process (Knoff, 2002). In the long run, involvement of educational psychologists in the PGE is highly expected.

6.3.3. Section summary

Because no additional support was forthcoming from EMB, collaboration with NGOs or social workers the funded projects became the stepping stone for PGE development. Because School B was lucky to be invited for a funded project, it gained a shortcut for

the project. In contrast, there was no external help for School A. Consequently, PGE proceeded unstably in a comparatively loose situation. External help lets SGTs save time for other urgent counselling issues. In addition, involvement of school-based educational psychologist is highly desirable in the long run to refine the quality of lesson plans and set up an assessment system for PGE.

6.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, three main issues are discussed: manpower management, time management, and input of external support.

In respond to Research Question One: Is PGE development a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?

In view of resources management (manpower, time and outsource), it is difficult to fulfill the mission. First, teachers are not ready for PGE development because they have had insufficient experience with it in the past. Hence, it is difficult to team up the committed teachers in the complicated and competitive school context unless there is already a smart team in place for guidance or MCE. Second, time allocation is another thorny issue and depends upon SGTs' lobbying skills to fight for appropriate time allocation of PGE. Third, input of outsource helps PGE development substantially by providing additional training, manpower, materials, or programmes such parent education. This study finds that internal resources (manpower and time) are outside of SGTs' control and are accompanied with plenty of complexities, from individual perceptions to contextual constraints. External resources appear by chance and depend on school heads' verbal and financial support.

In short, time, money and people are always important. In terms of manpower

management, teacher training for all staff is the first basic step. Thereafter, capability, passion, fairness, energy, training, and communication are vital to managing a PGE team if it set up. Input of external resources may be considered to relieve the pressure of implementation.

In respond to Research Question Two: What are the significances of developing PGE as the first formal guidance curriculum in Hong Kong primary schools?

The study finds that schools have quality members to deal with PGE development, but teachers avoid guidance work, which makes difficult to set up a team. Aside from political factors like the hidden manpower management policy of the school, this is mainly because of immature collaboration culture, the academic-biased tradition, ignorance of D&G development, and the increasing workload and demands on teachers. Obstacles abound:

- (1) the image of the SGT as a manager is not enough strong to impose power in schools;
- (2) contextual and cultural limitations: teachers have to tackle the transformation shift, the vertical push from subject teaching and horizontal pull from whole-school demands, which dissipates their energy and forces them to cater to needs at different levels (from students to school-wide issues); exhaustion results and makes them retreat into their comfort zones, such as their subject department;
- (3) teachers' motivation is governed by their preferences, self-determination, autonomy, capacity, job control, self-efficacy commitment, workload, and perceptions of fairness and career perspective;
- (4) the individual capacity of teachers: education/training background, skills, and knowledge about guidance and curriculum design; and

(5) support: cold support with clear administration guidelines, procedures, monitoring processes, and warm support with hands-on help through meetings, training, or informal sharing.

Hence, user-friendly strategies must be developed to increase teachers' involvement by starting small, and encouraging 'teachers change teachers' attitudes to accumulate and circulate reports of successful experiences. Great sensitivity, empathy, and critical thinking by the curriculum leaders are necessary to internalize and restructure the old mindset. Moreover, schools should reduce stress on teachers by establishing clear descriptions of roles and fostering appreciation, encouragement, good communication, simplified procedures, fairness in job allocation, and appropriate support and training to help them go through the paradigm shift.

Time is another important resource in schools. The time allotted to a subject or programme indicates its status in the school. Failure to gain an appropriate allocation and length of time for a subject implies failure in development and posting in school. Therefore, PGE survives in different forms. Integration is suggested as a consequence of time constraints. External resources like collaboration with NGOs or educational psychologists are steppingstones for PGE development, a shortcut to its success.

CHAPTER 7 MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

7.1. Introduction

According to the key points about curriculum development of PGE provided by EMBSDD (2004), PGE should be designed with the developmental needs of students in mind and based on students' experience in a progressive and spiral mode, PGE activities can be conducted by teachers or guidance personnel in a free and open environment, teachers/guidance personnel must practice "attentive listening", "reflection of feelings", "techniques to express oneself and be receptive to others' views and opinions", open-mindedness, self-disclosure and respects to students as individuals. Debriefing and self-reflection are emphasised; assessment is suggested with portfolios on students' growth, teachers' observations, and peer, parent and self-evaluations. EMBSDD (2004) encourages school-based PGE according to the school's aims, culture, characteristics and students' needs; life-wide learning is the extension of PGE, and integration with other subjects is strongly recommended with deadline in 2004/05.

The D&G section of EMB was prone to develop PGE by following the constructivist suggestions in the *Learning to Learn* document. Moreover, it is in line with the recommendations that emphasise student-centered learning (Stenhouse, 1975), teacher-student interactions (Elliott, 1998) and the open nature of a curriculum by involving the participation of stakeholders (Jones, 1989; Turner, 1996; Watkins et al., 1987). As requested by EMBSDD (2004), guidance teachers have to develop, lead and manage a school-based curriculum. Can SGTs lead the curriculum development by referring to the role of curriculum leader stressed by Doll (1996), Hall (1996) and Cai et al. (2005)? Cai et al. (2005) recommend nine strategies for curriculum development,

like modelling approach, job allocation approach or sustainable development approach.

Which approaches are applicable for PGE development?

Several sections of this chapter focus on stakeholders' perceptions of towards PGE, the necessity of PGE and their expectations of PGE; teaching about co-planning, co-teaching, demonstration, debriefing, self-disclosure and assessment of the PGE lessons; the mode of delivery of PGE about school-based design, use of textbooks, and the integration of PGE into the regular primary school curriculum.

7.2. Necessity of PGE and the Expectation for PGE

This section explores whether PGE is necessary by triangulating the feedback from different stakeholders. There are several rationales for PGE. The EMB point out that PGE can diffuse counselling concepts into classrooms, and encourage all teachers to care about their students. EMB people pointed out that the PGE is a way to standardize what is being done (care for students' growth) by different teachers. PGE could be phased out if all teachers had counselling skills and cared about their students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.2.)

The existing PGE provides one more platform to enhance their communication, to build up mutual understanding, and to convey the positive values to students. This can unify and standardize what is being done by all teachers. If we just let it be handled freely by the teachers without any monitoring, the outcome would not be good. The success of the PGE depends a lot on teamwork and co-ordination. A teacher doing well would help others to improve more. However, proper mutual sharing of the experience in implementing the PGE would raise the standard of the PGE.

(EDX)

If every teacher can shoulder what we request of them in the PGE, that will be fine. I think there is no problem if the PGE disappears one day. A regular lesson time would let all students learn the basic concepts and skills like problem solving and anti-bullying; other teachers can help students to strengthen the abilities in other areas, which is a perfect match. I hope teachers can help students in other subjects together. (EDX)

Appendix C2 shows that most SGTs (89%) agree on the necessity of the PGE. According to the interviews, the SGTs believed that the PGE is policy and must be implemented. However, PGE is seen as the “dessert” of the regular curriculum by teachers; it regulates the current academic-based curriculum. Strictly speaking, it is not a subject, but an accessory.

Basically, I don't think the PGE is necessary. However, if the subjects are less academic and can include elements of the PGE in them, then it is the most successful situation. However, now the problem is too academic, so we have no choice than to input the PGE. Even in morning assembly, it cannot be discussed with students deeply. The PGE is not a formal subject: it has no examination or test, so it is not in focus; it is the dessert for the whole curriculum. It is good to have but I would have no regret to lose it. (A-T8)

I do not see the PGE as a miracle for personal growth; students are indeed affected by a lot of external factors. Overall, I agree with the need to introduce the PGE to let them adapt to the changing world. (SG-C)

According to questionnaires for teachers in Schools A and B, 80% of teachers agree with the use of PGE. Integration with other subjects is suggested in School B. Some teachers think that they have no choice to reject it because the EMB requested it.

No schools object to the PGE because it is issued by the EMB, so they must do it. (SG-O)

Some feedback from the interviews was positive. Teachers agreed that the PGE is a good platform for communication with students, especially those who are silent and have low-esteem. It supplements the MCE. (Refer to Verbatim 7.2.)

I find that the teaching materials enhance better communication with teachers, especially class teachers and their students. This kind of communication is different from the one-way communication and the casual communication in the class. Some students are not capable to express themselves, but through the games and discussion, they can express their feelings and ideas in a different way. Class teachers could be more understanding about their needs. (A-T12)

Different voices are heard: Some teachers thought that the PGE exists in a strange way and supported integration at a later stage; some teachers hoped for a full development plan of value education in order to reduce the chaos and overlapping of different subjects; some still hesitated to prioritize the PGE and questioned the rationale for its implementation; and some were concerned about incorporating the elements of PGE into the core curriculum (Refer to Verbatim 7.2.).

The elements should be included in our curriculum, but how, depends on the preference of the schools. (A-T5)

Unless all subjects come together and it is figured out how the moral elements could be totally included in our normal curriculum, then there is no need for a single subject like the PGE (as she mentioned, she supports inclusion, or implicitly, she expects a very systematic approach in MCE instead.) (B-T9)

From the lesson study, Teacher T stated that the PGE should be a systematic and regular D&G activity rather than a curriculum or subject; it should stand alone and not be integrated. (Refer to Verbatim 7.2.)

The students' voices are impressive. Most of them strongly believed in the necessity of the PGE. They thought that PGE is a lesson to solve everyday problems and the quality of the lessons depends on who teaches it. Some students suggested removing the overlapping part; it should be noted for the development of the PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 7.2.) The perception of the PGE is generally positive and most students support the introduction and the necessity of the PGE.

The questionnaires and interviews revealed that many parents support the implementation of the PGE in schools (Appendixes A8 and B8). They are quite appreciative of the PGE's content and arrangement; some were interested in the details. They thought that the moral values, courtesy, respect, self-protection and resilience are the most important things for their children to study. Some thought that the PGE should have been launched earlier. Parents believed that actions speak louder than words; they worried whether their children were improving themselves; some were frustrated that their children never let them know what was going on in the PGE lessons. (Refer to Verbatim 7.2)

To sum up, there is different feedback about the necessity and positive expectations of PGE. Different comments from teachers fall along a spectrum whose ends are acceptance and ignorance; this governed the success of PGE. Hence, EMB, teachers and parents agree that PGE as a meaningful program for students. Teachers hoped the PGE could make children happy, change their misbehaviours, correct their values and help them grow. They expected it to benefit the students who were academically weak

and encourage them to be positive through the support, contentment and achievement in the PGE lessons. Some teachers expected the PGE to change students' behaviours magically in a short time; and improve their own classroom management. However, owing to the similarity of the PGE with subjects like General Studies and Religious Education, some teachers found it repetitive, and honestly told that they were the "just make" teachers (like A-T3) by doing the minimum.

7.3. Teaching, Learning and Changes

7.3.1. General feedback about the PGE

Beyond the high expectations for the PGE, how about the actual experience of students and teachers after they experienced the PGE lessons? (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.1)

Students' feedback

The lesson study and interviews in School B (Appendix B12) showed positive feedback from students; most of them appreciated the PGE lesson for teaching them something useful beyond the regular curriculum. Overall, the classroom atmosphere was desirable, and teachers were more patient with them. Students in both Schools A and B were especially excited in group discussions, and felt happy and relaxed. Some students in school at higher levels were grateful for the PGE. Some even said they could recover their identity as a "student" because they could interact with their teachers and truly express themselves. PGE was a valuable lesson for them. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.1.) The survey in School B (2005-2006) shows that students' feedback declined slightly from P1 to P6. Except P3 and P6, teachers underestimate the students' feedback. The underlined problems need further exploration.

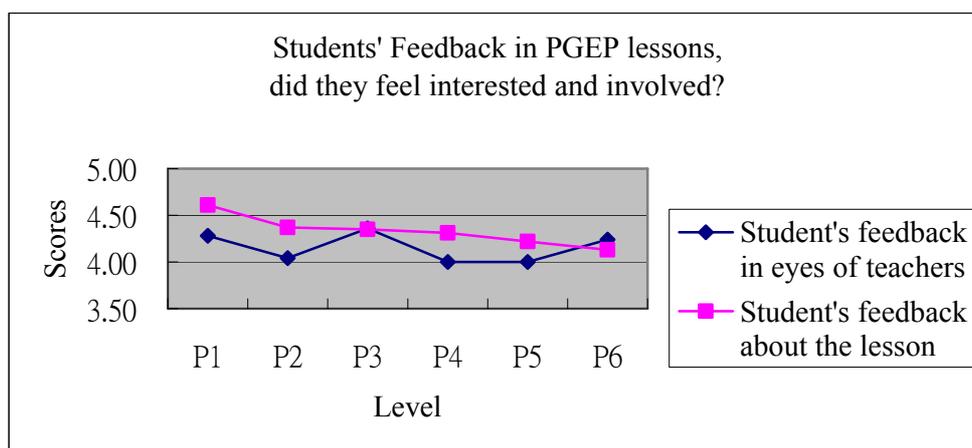


Figure 7.1 Students' feedback in the PGE lessons

Teachers' feedback

The questionnaires for School A (Appendix A13) show that teachers' feeling about dealing with the PGE did not change in the pre-test and the post-test periods. There is a slight decrease in the negative feeling about teaching the PGE. Some teachers have accepted the PGE as part of their teaching and their responsibility as teachers; they thought that PGE was a good way to communicate with their students. From the questionnaires for School B (Appendix A14), the percentage change about the perception of the teachers is generally the same. Previously, they felt angry, stressed, and frustrated with the additional work. After more than a year, they were more satisfied because of the fairness, definite time slot and a more structured organisation of the PGE. They became confident in teaching and concerned about the integration of PGE. In the interviews, it emerged that teachers had mixed feelings about the introduction of the PGE. The most prominent feelings of teachers towards the PGE are curiosity, happiness, worry, nervousness, love and contentment. They were curious about the new materials, and eager to learn new teaching skills. Afterwards, they enjoyed love and respect from interactions with their students. Some teachers gained insights and reflections in teaching and on their roles as teachers. They were proud of the changes in their students. PGE allowed teachers to understand their students'

actual feelings. They thought that PGE could succeed if there is love, care, sensitivity and if teachers had sufficient time for their students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.1.)

The negative feelings of teachers came mainly from the workload and pressure brought by the programme. The pressures on the frustrated teachers include the teaching skills required, time, energy, discipline control, counselling skills for the problem students, lesson preparation, co-teaching, negative feedback of students, management and implementation strategies of the new policy, interference with the present curriculum, unsupportive attitudes of principals and colleagues, fear of being invited for curriculum design, loss of autonomy and ambiguity about PGE. Some teachers still focus on the teaching of knowledge rather than on interactions in PGE lessons. Some teachers reported that their students were bored and inattentive. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.1)

Some teachers gradually accepted the PGE and were demanding of their performance in the lessons. The teaching of PGE changed the mindset of teachers; they thought PGE could enhance the positive values in students and give them hope, joy and chances for sharing. Some even said that the ultimate goal as a teacher was to care for children's needs. Teachers wanted to explore PGE more, and were concerned about the teaching quality, collaboration, time, support and classroom management. Interestingly, both students and teachers learned something valuable in the process, such as the retrieval of teachers and students' identities, the joy of teaching and learning in a relaxed atmosphere. Teachers could show their love, care and concern for their students. Overall, PGE lessons allow students and teachers to express themselves freely in the classroom without limitations, fixed syllabus, heavy workload and the masks of "obedience".

7.3.2. Teachers' performance in PGE lessons

Although students appreciated the PGE lessons and the improvement in teachers' perceptions, this section explores the performance of teachers from the perspectives of students and co-teaching partners.

A survey was done in School B (2005-2006) to study the students' perception of teachers' performance. Both teachers' and students' curves dropped from P1 to P6, and there is a sudden drop in P4, which may reflect the weakest teachers' quality in P4 of that year. P4 students are especially dissatisfied with their teachers' performance. Teachers in P5 are conservative and the students appreciated their effort. The curve is similar to that for curriculum design. There may be a correlation between the teachers' self perception and the quality or design of the lesson plan.

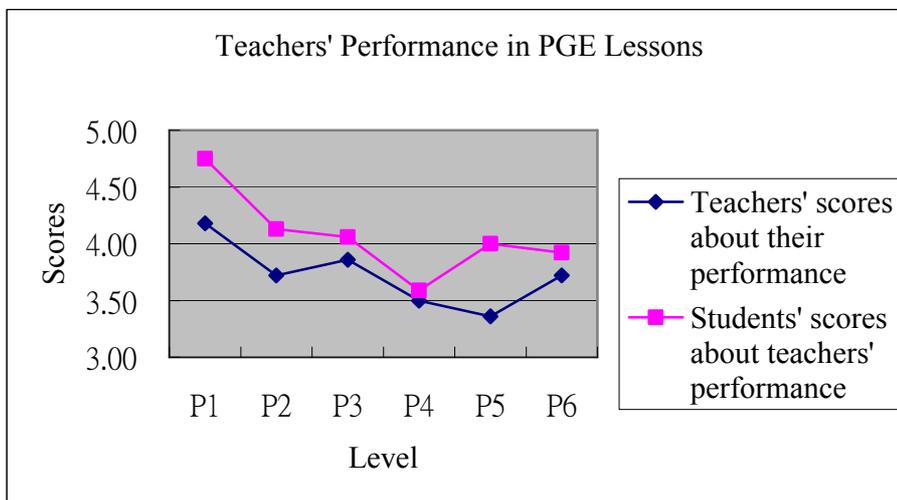


Figure 7.2 Teachers' performance in the PGE lessons

Students were very sensitive to teachers' performance especially the students in the higher forms, as they could point out and compare the teaching styles of teachers and social workers. In their eyes, teaching style is the presentation skills, and sense of

humour. They preferred the active listening of teachers and wanted discussions to be “to the point”. Some even thought that some teachers were not “qualified” to teach the PGE (see Appendix B11 and B12) because they were weak in skills, discipline control or disingenuous during and after the PGE lessons. Some students did want SGT to teach them because they assumed that SGT was the program designer who was the best prepared to teach PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.1)

According to the questionnaires, some SGTs reflected some teachers who rejected the PGE exhibited negative performance: they taught other subjects or muddled through the lesson plans; some teachers just used the lessons for complaining to relieve their negative emotions but ignored the interactions with the students. The following comments were written on the questionnaire. (Appendix C2)

Because of the perceptions of some teachers, they just teach it as routine work, with no in-depth discussion with students, or ignore the teaching time of the PGE in their classes. Even worse, some teachers make use of the PGE lessons to share their own views aggressively with anger and dissatisfaction. The teaching attitude should be improved. It reflects the fact that not all teachers have the same values.

As guidance teachers have shared the biggest portion of their job about PGE implementation, teachers do it to show they are doing it.

When observed by SGTs, teachers were found to be progressing, but there was room to improve their interactive teaching. The SGTs found the role of “teachers” was still dominant; some teachers were uncomfortable to chat with children genuinely; some conducted their lessons only because of a sense of duty. Still, some teachers could not handle the lesson well or used the lesson time for other subjects. Nevertheless, introduction of the PGE has initiated change in teaching skills, and enhanced the

teacher-student relationship with innovative pedagogy, self-disclosure of teachers and a more interactive approach. Some teachers even said that the PGE was the most valuable student guidance activity.

Some senior teachers have their opinions about the performance of their peer colleagues through observations and co-teaching practices. They found that teachers responded to PGE conflictingly with complaints and commitment, but were confident teaching the PGE when there was enough material support. The positive perceptions and good teaching skills of teachers were essential. In addition PGE was found to help teachers who were open-minded, humble, supportive and accepting. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

I think that concern and love towards students are the basic criteria of a teacher. If a teacher does not have this, does he/she qualify to be a teacher...No matter what they feel, and you must love them because they are your students.....we must accept them and be patient to teach them. It is their personality and features. Anyway, it is the basic criteria of a teacher. (A-T9)

Some senior teachers thought that the elements for the success of a curriculum are the enthusiasm of teachers (in both Schools A and B), Teachers' attitude to the PGE is all about "heart" (commitment and enthusiasm) which is the tone of the PGE. Some teachers were found to be reluctant, lacking the energy or capability to teach.

Heart! To teach from the heart! Even though the best quality teaching materials are provided, without heart, it is a waste! The basic tone of the PGE is to let people affect people, I think. If the teachers are not involved or do not put communication as the most important element in the PGE lessons, the lesson is Communication is two-way, which is what the PGE emphasises. If teachers could teach it well, it means they can use the PGE to guide their

students properly. If teachers just finish all the games and say they have finished a lesson.....then it is the problem of Heart. (A-T12)

I do appreciate Miss V because she is a good teacher, with her own values and persistence to teach her students; she voices out her ideas where necessary and she is not a “Yes” Woman. She is creative to modify the lesson plans during our PGE preparation stage. She is humble and loves the students always. (A-T9)

If teachers can teach well, they can use the PGE to guide their students. Some teachers suggest that all teachers should share the responsibility and learn the skills to teach the PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

If teachers do not support the PGE, I think they are not good teachers..... I still suggest them to teach the PGE and let them learn through the teaching process....., the question is whether they agree with the concepts of the PGE. (A-T9)

I think about 70 to 80% accept the PGE. Those showing objection to the PGE may have difficulties to follow the teacher schedule and complete the curriculum on time. In the case of our school, we have a definite time to teach the PGE, so she/he should do as required. (A-T3)

Some teachers think that the opponents of PGE were driven by their refusal, laissez-faire attitude, personality, the difficulties following the teaching schedule or even their passion in education. Some senior teachers suggested that they need more practice and may not be the fault of PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

If they do not accept the PGE, they will not get involved in it and teach the children well, seeing it as a lesson only, a kind of extra work only. Teachers need to grow up also. Finally, it could be a personal problem; he may be the

same in other subjects. More time is needed to explore and improve the situation. (B-T6)

I would like to comment on a young teacher without passion and treat the PGE in a laissez-faire way. He also lost the teaching kits and the lesson plans; he is so defensive and difficult to communicate with. I do not know why he behaves like that..... (SG-D)

From teachers' reflections, one can conclude that the PGE had provided an alternative contribution to the curriculum reform, it was not simply a counselling programme: it brought teachers a lot of novel ideas, let them practise in PGE lessons and encouraged the teachers to be interactive, open-minded and sensitive for the personal growth of students. The peer comments showed that teachers could teach PGE, the negative performances of teachers could have been improved. Passion, commitment and enthusiasm are basic to the PGE. The positive changes reflected by teachers are as follows (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.):

1. Attitudes
2. More active listening or careful feedback
3. Enhanced relationship with children
4. Increased patience with children
5. Reflections about teaching skills (including methods for value education)
6. Reflection about self-growth with students' simultaneously
7. Perceptions of the power and necessity of counselling
8. Reflections beyond direct teaching

I enjoy teaching the PGE now because we gain a closer relationship with students. The greatest benefit I think is not only for the students, but for me too. Before this, I did not think about the psychological issue of students' growth. I learn a lot when I teach them and it let me think of my unhappy

childhood. If I was not assertive, strong or pessimistic, I might have committed many bad things. I reflected a lot through the teaching process.

(A-T7)

I...I think I blamed some students too much, because at the end of the term, they felt angry with me. It is not related to the PGE. I just want to point out that some students are not easy to be managed. Overall, there...is improvement. (B-T2)

I did more in the class teacher lesson this year, but I think the activities of the PGE help me a lot, rendering me greater reflection. I do think one-way teaching is ineffective in MCE, but stories, drama and games work. (B-T5)

The PGE is a lesson of counselling. I feel teachers are somehow at the contradictory position with counselling teachers. As teachers, we are quite rigid: we have our standards in our mind. We like to judge our students. Our students are so worried about their answers being wrong. As counselling teachers, we should listen to our students' problems and then guide them through, instead of telling them or commanding them to do everything. I can find some colleagues are so rigid and provide no room for the students. We should learn more counselling skills and not criticise the children first.

Besides, their enthusiasm and acceptance of the PGE is important too. (B-T6)

In practice, most of the students appreciated and enjoyed the PGE lessons, the survey in School B shows that students' feedback varied from P1 to P6 and it is different from teachers' estimation. Students felt their real selves and the amiable side of teachers during the lessons. There was positive and negative feedback from teachers towards PGE at the beginning. Most of the teachers reported positive feelings after they taught PGE. PGE let them be more curious, gave them insights into teaching and into their roles as teachers.

Students were able to identify good teaching. They are demanding but patient with their teachers. They are able to identify teachers' presentation skills, and sense of humour. They want teachers' presentation to be interactive, precise, and accurate. They want active listening. Some students want a curriculum designer (like SGTs) to teach them.

The PGE has enhanced the teacher-student relationship with an interactive approach, innovative pedagogy and self-disclosure of teachers. It helps teachers change their attitudes, practise active listening and give careful feedback. They then have a better relationship with children and increased patience. They reflect on their teaching skills (including methods for value education), self-growth, the power of counselling and more beyond direct teaching.

Teachers' passion, commitment and enthusiasm are the requirements of the PGE teaching. Those teachers oppose to PGE may because of their negative perceptions and understandings about guidance, their laissez-faire attitude or their personality. PGE lessons provide both the backstage and the platform for students and teachers to express themselves without the masks of "obedience" and "control".

7.3.3. Collaborative lesson planning meetings (CLPM), co-teaching and demonstration

This section depicts how collaborative lesson planning meetings (hereafter, CLPM), co-teaching and demonstration function in PGE, especially in the case schools, and the feedback of the stakeholders. Are general curriculum management skills applicable to a guidance program?

7.3.3.1. Collaborative lesson planning meetings (CLPM)

Some of the teachers who were interviewed prepared for the PGE, and others skimmed the lesson plans five minutes before class. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.) Most of them were too tired, lacked the time to prepare the PGE lessons (Appendix B12). Collaborative lesson planning (CDC, website¹⁷) may be a good chance to further develop the PGE from lesson plan discussion to lesson modification, along with suitable guides and training.

Collaborative lesson planning refers to the joint efforts of teachers in planning for their lessons in scheduled meetings. They co-operate, share and reflect on teaching and learning....During the meetings, teachers examine student performance and feedback, discuss students' learning difficulties, identify learning objectives in different key learning areas, talk about learning experiences that may contribute to attainment of learning outcomes. (CDC, website¹⁸)

CLPM in School A

In School A, some senior teachers supported the CLPM for the PGE. They thought that it was important to modify a curriculum continuously through meetings. It was a way to enhance the teaching skills, to change their isolated working practices, and to learn from each other. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

Some teachers are slow and cannot manage well. Mutual preparation can improve the independent working style, remind each other and upgrade the lagging ones. Mutual preparation for the PGE is a good idea, but impossible

¹⁷ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1&nodeID=3769>

¹⁸ <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1&nodeID=3769>

because time is limited. (A-T2)

However, the opponents saw CLPM as a waste of time and unnecessary for professional teachers; some worried about the workload and some thought that the PGE was out of the scope of the External School Review. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

Interestingly, some teachers concerned about CLPM might lead to over-emphasis of the pedagogy and content of PGE rather than the caring for the individual psychological needs of students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.) Lang (2002, p. 39) also worry about the over-emphasis on the content of curriculum in affective education, and put too much concern on what but not how students learn. Hence, the learning process should be more important than lesson plans.

I think mutual preparation is not OK. Indeed, in the process of lesson plan selection, it is a mutual preparation too. If not, it is just to reach consensus. Ultimately, time is a problem unless the PGE is the developing target. You know, I don't think it is necessary to have a meeting to modify the PGE lesson plans. We must focus on the four key areas, but the PGE is not one of them.

(A-T9)

CLPM in School B

Regarding collaborative lesson planning meetings, I was lucky to be able to arrange CLPM at School B. At the beginning, I led the meetings for every level. Teachers in School B were requested to involve the senior teachers in collaborative teaching; clarify the objectives, ideas and the design of the lesson plan; discuss the lesson plans; modify or simplify the activities; make the modification and innovative addition; and get help from SGTs when necessary. Very often, some colleagues could think about the innovative ideas and find shortcuts to simply some complex design. However, it

was done in a rush in the busy school. After the lesson, teachers gathered informally in the staffroom to discuss the lesson and to write comments on the evaluation form. The final evaluation meetings were held at the end of each semester. The practice of CLPM in School B was not up to the professional requirements, but it was a good start. SGT or the programme planner is important to facilitate the ideas around and to reach consensus together in the CLPM.

In School B, the level coordinators (the core D&G team members) were comfortable with the arrangement, but they wanted a definite meeting time assigned by SGT. In fact, owing to the limited meeting time begged by the level coordinators, everything was rush and would have gone better if teachers had read the materials ahead of time.

Because all material is prepared by school, we think that it is acceptable, as the workload is OK. If we are requested to prepare it, there is no time to complete because it requires all class teachers sit together and discuss things....even for the normal pre-lesson meeting; we have to rush to do it. For instance, in the morning, some are eating breakfast, some are marking the assignment. After school, it is still difficult to pin down all members, there is nobody in the seats; they go around attending different meetings. As a D&G team representative this year, I perceived the difficulty is to gather all members for discussion, unless a definite time slot is allocated for PGE preparation..... The meetings are quite superficial, so if we all understand the lesson plan, let it go. If the lesson plan is novel and complicated, we may try to cut it down with our judgment. Usually, we trimmed the lesson plans, extra modification was not likely to happen. (B-T7)

The lesson study in School B concluded that good preparation and ad hoc justification are both necessary. Misinterpretation of lesson plans by teachers could lead to careless teaching if teachers only relied on the CLPM and the audio-visual aids without

preparation. Teacher T was a good example of a prepared teacher. (See Appendix B12 and Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.) Other SGTs had different experiences. Some arranged CLPM but some dared not to add pressure to the frontline teachers. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

To sum up, whether or not CLPM for the PGE can be launched in a school depends on the support of the top management. Teachers in case schools generally supported and found it necessary and useful; their main concerns were time and workload. Some teachers worried that CLPM may over-emphasise the pedagogy and overlook the individual differences. Nevertheless, CLPM provides a platform for teachers to clarify their worries and ambiguity about the lesson plans. CLPM of PGE increases the confidence of teachers and it is easily accepted if the culture of CLPM had been established like School B.

7.3.3.2. Collaborative teaching

From the questionnaires and interviews, almost all teachers like the arrangement in Schools A and B.

In School A, collaborative teaching took place with class teachers and the SGP selectively after 2005. In School B, collaborative teaching arrangement in the PGE was new in 2004-2005. I arranged all senior teachers to help the class teachers with co-teaching. Instead of performing collaborative teaching together, they attempted to teach together only. Finally, lesson preparation, teaching skills, tacit understanding among teachers and evaluation of co-teaching should be improved.

In School B, some frontline teachers ignored senior teachers in the collaborative lesson meeting and claimed that the senior teachers were busy to contact; they then

prepared the lesson themselves. Some of the frontline teachers were nervous about co-teaching because they thought that they were being monitored or supervised by the seniors. Some were annoyed with co-teaching because they did not want someone else in their class. Some teachers requested more training and guidelines. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.) In contrast, some responsive senior teachers proactively conducted the preparation meetings with the class teachers. Indeed, it was my intention to help the less able teachers with co-teaching. Through the co-teaching practice, the feedback of teachers showed that the patience and open-mindedness of class teachers had increased; teachers started to listen to different answers and ideas of their students (not the “standard answers”); and some teachers further developed their questioning skills. The co-teachers (the senior teachers) thought the co-teaching and demonstration lessons had helped them with their teaching.

Although the classes for repeated co-teaching are not many, I can find that in one or two classes, the patience of class teachers had increased, he/she can allow students with different answers and sharing, not like what I observed at the very beginning, so they improved by reducing their judgment, like, “what you think is not correct - do not think in this way.” I think co-teaching and demonstration lessons may help them to a certain extent, to let them know that the freedom to express personal feelings is important, with no need to suppress it. (B-T6)

Sometimes, I learnt from other teachers. I do appreciate the arrangement. I think as senior teachers, we could help the less capable teachers to a certain extent. I hoped they learnt some skills from us through the co-teaching. (B-T1)

I quite liked the arrangement of co-teaching. I felt annoyed about it at the beginning, with a lot of lessons for us. But then, I was happy with “spark” with my partners. Before lessons, we discussed the lesson plans. We had a

tacit understanding during the lessons, for instance, when some points had been reached, the teachers would ask me to share my experience, to let the lesson be smooth. (B-T6)

If a person is more familiar with the PGE, she could help. (B-T1)

From the lesson study in School B, students showed that the co-teaching was good, they were happy to have familiar teachers in the PGE lessons, but some students questioned the labour division between teachers and thought that some teachers did not handle collaborative teaching well. They were sensitive to teachers' collaborations. Here is the feedback from some students in School B:

I prefer two teachers, because one more teacher can help Teacher S.

I prefer one because I don't know who is teaching us, unless they have clear division of labour. I don't like two teachers because it is too noisy when somebody is naughty in our class.

Class teachers also sensed the needs of students. Students wanted care and communication with the subject teachers beyond formal lessons. Tacit understanding and collaborative planning meetings were important between the co-teaching teachers. Otherwise, it might create chaos in lessons and annoyance for students.

I feel so good about co-teaching, because with one more colleague to help me.

If we can prepare thoroughly before lessons, that would be excellent..... I feel that they want more teachers who are familiar with the lessons; they want the sense of familiarity.....If I can share more with Miss C (the co-teaching English teacher), then it would be better. (Teacher S)

During debriefing, M D helped me a lot and reminded me of the missing points. (Teacher T)

In Schools A and B, co-teaching was helpful for PGE development. Teachers needed more guidance and time to handle it. They thought that co-teaching helped them with debriefing, and enhanced communication and sharing among the colleagues, they felt safe and comfortable with it. Teachers learnt from each other, and shared hints or useful data. Some teachers also found that they gained more insights and inspirations about teaching through the collaborations. The problems of co-teaching were lack of preparation time and the resistance to co-teaching. In the view of SGTs, co-teaching implies direct participation and implicit class observation. Some SGTs even participated in all co-teaching and after-class discussion with the whole school. Hence, co-teaching was a key step to help the whole school adapt to the PGE stepwise.

I had put a lot of effort in PGE training and the co-teaching scheme. The co-teaching scheme means the collaboration between a teacher and me. I helped one half of the teachers in the first semester and another half in the second semester. Co-teaching implies direct participation and class observation; we take turns to do this and discuss it after the lessons. (SG-E)

7.3.3.3. Demonstration

Demonstration helps teachers understand the new materials. In School A, I was not able to demonstrate to all teachers because of time constraints. I videotaped the demonstration lessons for teachers' reference; the feedback was not desirable. In School B, I conducted the successful demonstrations with the social workers who had the funded PGE project with School B.

Demonstration is very important. It enables all teachers to understand the pedagogy of PGE and to examine the feasibility and in-situ feedback of students towards the lesson plans. Teachers were generally happy to learn. In other case schools, some SGTs

demonstrated all PGE lessons to all classes, year by year, to help all teachers master the PGE. Some SGT used the demonstration lessons to identify problem students. This approach was very successful and had kept good relationships between the SGT and the teachers and students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

My role is to support teachers. I demonstrate to all classes with a new lesson plan. After every demonstration, I discussed with the teacher the problem I perceived and the problem students I spotted; it is my greatest aim..... Now the mode of implementation is the combination of the demonstration lessons of SGTs and the lessons conducted by class teachers. I demonstrated the lessons starting from the lower forms. I was not the exceptional case; all of our colleagues (SGO) were doing the same thing. (SG-O)

Ironically, some teachers used the demonstration lesson as an opportunity to relax.

Previously, I would try the demonstration of the new lesson plans in different classrooms before it is formally launched to the whole school. At least I taught every class twice - once per semester. I intended to select the most difficult topics to teach. However, the teachers are unwilling to stay in the classroom; they prefer to stay in the staff room for a break. (SG-N)

In short, CLPM for the PGE can be launched depends on the acceptance of the top management of schools. Teachers supported it because CLPM allows teachers to express their worries about the lesson plans, some reminded that CLPM's attention to individual difference may be overlooked, so pedagogy should not be over-stressed. The ready culture of CLPM helps schools adapt to CLPM for the PGE. One the other hand, co-teaching provides one-to-one support to teachers who appreciate the Whole School Approach to guidance. Teachers should be open-minded, innovative and

cooperative on teaching matter. It enhances mutual learning among teachers, and constructs a sharing platform. Co-teaching is a good practice and an essential step to enhance the teaching skills in a cooperative way that exerts the least pressure on teachers. Most of the teachers accepted the arrangement, some worried it was counted as the appraisal. If co-teaching is begun with the demonstration by SGTs with the class teachers in a one-to-one arrangement, it will fulfill the expectation about teacher training in the previous chapter and support WSA's guidance by enabling teachers to assist other teachers via interaction and mutual learning. In fact, the aforementioned strategies are a form of teacher development.

7.3.4. Debriefing and self-disclosure

This section explains the significance of debriefing and self-disclosure in the teaching process.

7.3.4.1. Debriefing

Debriefing is an important step for internalization in PGE and it has been introduced in Chapter Two. Leat and Higgins (2002, p.71–85) list the theories related to debriefing skills:

- cognitive acceleration (Adey and Shayer, 1994);
- instrumental enrichment (Feuerstein, 1980);
- philosophy for children (Lipman, 1991);
- “probes” for understanding (White and Gunstone, 1992);
- reciprocal teaching (Palincsar and Brown, 1984);
- scaffolding (Wood and Wood, 1996);
- research on talk (Edwards and Westgate, 1987);

- social constructivism, self-theories (Dweck, 1999);
- collaborative group work (Webb and Farrivar, 1994).

Some teachers tried to discuss the issues with children, but they felt the pressure of time, class size, and inadequate skills. They asked for more training in their debriefing skills. Some teachers worried that careless teaching would harm their students.

When I give them the feedback and hint at change, my own value is very important and may affect them. I hope my response can help them and guide them in the right direction.....usually there were students helping me, as they have ideas from those students; then I will let the whole class think about the outcome of different ideas. It is not necessary to force the students to follow you, and through discussion, they can think. They may still disagree with you, but you could feel that there is gradual change deep in their heart. (A-T9)

Some students are not keen to cooperate, so when I asked them, they give no answers to me. I am not happy with that. However, I also blamed my own skills not being good enough leading to a dull lesson with inadequate training. For the passive students, I give up and try to encourage the active students to speak up. If some emotional students share their feelings, what should I do? Follow it, discuss it, just listen and give no response? Or just give them the message I want to give, that is, no explorations? I try to consider and trade off what should be done or not. If I continue the discussion and motivate them to share their feelings, I have to follow it. So, I have to learn what to do correctly in the lessons. (A-T11)

One of the embedded aims of launching the PGE is to screen students with family and personal problems. If teachers are not sensitive, passive students might not speak up. Some teachers felt helpless and guilty about that. Some teachers were afraid to speak

to students about their problems especially when they taught the sensitive topics. Some teachers conducted after-class counseling for the students in need as best they could.

We must be careful for some topics, like the family relationship. Some activities may hurt the students if there is a problem in their family. They may be sensitive and the teachers must consider their feelings..... I remember, a single parent family student, she kept quiet in some related topics. So, be careful and alert to the children's needs.I remember a girl I mentioned before with the family problem in the PGE lesson. I will then take great care to talk with her and care about her daily life especially. I tried to chat with her in the recess time. Later, she became proactive to chat with me. She shared her family problem with me, which let me keep close contact with her parents.

(A-T6)

Besides, some teachers could handle the topics related to moral values better than those related to communication and problem solving skills. In the lessons on moral values, some teachers noticed that students tended to give the standard answers. Hence, teachers must use questioning skills to probe the actual voices deep in children's hearts.

What I think is difficult is to let them apply what they learn in the 30-40 minutes in their daily life, because it is about value education: it is not possible to change them suddenly. Yes, they can fully answer you in the lessons about what they would do at home to respect and talk to their parents. Is it true in the real situation? Besides, we have different topics every lesson. How much do they remember after every lesson? I suspect little. (Teacher T)

7.3.4.2. Self-disclosure

After a period of time, some teachers found that to link up PGE and daily life was important to encourage children to act positively. They then used the self-disclosure as part of the debriefing with their personal experience to facilitate the sharing atmosphere in their class.

To guide them for sharing is a difficult skill. For lower forms, it is more difficult. Usually, I share myself, then that will initiate them to share more. “Oh, I have!” The debriefing skills are the professional trained skills, which are not easy to follow. I try to encourage them to share more: what I can do is quite superficial, as I may not be able to let them share the problem deeply. Sometimes, they do not understand what we are talking about; we must be careful about the terms we use. We may misunderstand that they know them; indeed, they do not, especially the abstract emotional terms. We must give them examples. (B-T4)

For instance, Teacher T in the lesson of “Are we friends?” explored with her students the inner self of the offender, his motivation and the implication of “conscience” or “face” in general.

The successful things I think are that I used myself and their position to re-discuss the situation, guiding them to think in an easy way instead of playing the roles in the stories which are not familiar with them. If their names are used in the example, our distance will be shortened and the discussion will be authentic. (Teacher T)

Teacher R was very happy to share her experience about helping her mother, but left less room for children to talk about their real life:

That is my practice. In this lesson, I shared how I am helping with my family. I hope my sharing could help them to understand that everyone should share jobs at home. (Teacher R)

The lesson study in School B also finds the part of debriefing is a challenge for teachers to handle. Self-disclosure, role play and linkage to daily life are important in the process. Teachers should learn patience during questioning so that students can digest and organise their ideas and feelings. Some teachers knew that they had inadequate preparation, no skills in counselling, questioning and critical thinking, but co-teaching helped to compensate. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

To improve the teaching and debriefing skills, teachers need more training in sharing and demonstration. A clear lesson plan can help. Indeed, if teachers can acquire these skills, their daily counselling work and questioning skills will improve. So, the PGE is a way to generalize counselling skills and upgrade the teaching skills. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.2.)

However, we must consider time consumption and debriefing; we should balance them to achieve the target. After the activity, we need to give room for reflections.....Some teachers are not skilful at debriefing.....The most skilful point is to let the students speak out, discuss and sum up their experience.....Internalization is the crux of debriefing. Internalization represents his/her interpretation about their daily life. Teachers like speaking “You should...” this obstructs the reflection of a student. Time, skill and patience of teachers are required in debriefing to guide students to make conclusion with their daily experience. (SW)

7.3.4.3. Sharing time in the PGE

Most of the students liked the group activities, presentation time and the group discussion time, in which they felt comfortable sharing their views. Moreover, some students were proud to be invited to present their ideas, and were appreciated by their classmates. Some students found that they had learned to ask, to share and be more proactive than before. They treasured the sharing time with teachers and classmates. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.4.3.)

The PGE is necessary because it lets us talk to each other, unlike other subjects. The PGE can give us chances to share and talk. I raise my hand and I am not selected by teachers. Besides the PGE, in English, Music and Chinese, we have the chance to express ourselves. More sharing time is found in PGE lessons. (3R)

Sorry, I had no chance to share in spite of putting up my hand so many times.

I like sharing with my class. The teacher did not see my hand. (3T)

Some teachers valued chatting with all their students and agreed that the PGE has offered a communication platform and time for students and teachers in a busy school day.

I think the PGE gives a period of time to us: in the busy school life, it is almost impossible to do this, so we can only selectively talk to the problem students and their parents that may miss some students who have potential problems and crises. It is a good chance for interaction between me and my students. I did not see it as a subject, but a valuable time for opening up one's heart for frank sharing. (A-T7)

Their feedback is within my anticipation. I know they like expressing themselves in class, however, owing to time limits, I must shorten the

discussion and the sharing time, so not everyone has the chance to express themselves. (Teacher T)

Overall, PGE provides an invaluable sharing time for students and teachers, the feedback from students, teachers and SGTs are positive.

Debriefing is a core part of each PGE lessons. Most of the teachers tried to handle it carefully despite their limited confidence, questioning and counselling skills. Some teachers even spent extra time with troubled students after the PGE lessons. Besides, teachers are more capable of handling lessons heavy in moral values and students were seen to give the standard answers. Teachers found that self-disclosure, patience during questioning, role play, and linkage to daily life are important in the teaching process., Co-teaching, formal training, demonstration or the guided lesson plans may be helpful. Ultimately, PGE provides an invaluable sharing time for students and teachers.

7.3.5. To assess the changes of students after the program

A lesson taught is not necessarily learnt, digested, internalized and practised by the students. Is the PGE helpful for students' growth?

Power (1996, p. 99-100) points out that "For pupils to internalize pastoral readings. . . . While such awareness may be easily acquired in relation to the academic domain, where evaluation is explicit and the results in visible stratification, that is not the case of pastoral care. The rules of evaluation and subsequent pastoral assessment are not public, and are not easy to access."

Indeed, students' behavioural change may be attributed to numerous causes other than

PGE. In this study, I carry out an evaluation with all stakeholders and examine the changes of students with assessment forms, family worksheets, observations, the Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO)), and focus group.. Since there was no tool to assess the effectiveness of PGE, each SGT developed his/her own. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

The Questionnaires to Stakeholders developed in 2004 and Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) developed in 2003 by the EMB are important to collect feedback from different stakeholders. One of the stakeholder groups was students. However, the result shows the general picture and provides no direct answer about the influence of PGE. Worksheets, school-based assessment, observations and focus groups were used in Schools A and B to access the changes of students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

EMB had noticed that the assessment for PGE was not mature and other tools like APASO were not absolutely reliable. However, they were satisfied with PGE implementation, and had no further research to assess its effectiveness. Besides, they thought the External School Review report partly reflected the effectiveness of PGE.

Now, about 100% of schools are running the PGE. However, is it directly related to the PGE? There are a lot of affecting elements. It is very difficult to measure and up to this moment, no such research has been done yet. (EDX)

If your school is going to have an external review, then the audits' observations and evaluations will be another reference for you. The report will show descriptively the atmosphere of your schools. (EDX)

7.3.5.1. Introduction of family worksheet and the findings

To monitor changes of students after the program, I worked with a NGO to design the family worksheets for School B. From observations at both Schools A and B, some parents were frustrated about educating their children because traditional practices, such as scolding and beating, were no longer used. So, some relied upon the external help, such as schools. For dual-income parents, the situation was the worst because they lacked the time to take care of their children. Tired parents produced tired and lonely children (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.). Some teachers hoped that parents could provide the resiliency training for their children, as they felt that most of the children were over-protected, spoiled, and unconfident. It is the crisis (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.). Some teachers and social workers pointed out that children are lucky but stressed and cannot behave in humble, considerate and polite way. Teachers wanted to see more parental education. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

Hence, family worksheets for PGE were designed in School B (starting from 2004) to facilitate parents' care and enhance the parent-child relationship. The family worksheets were designed according to the content of PGE lessons to evaluate how much students learnt and act in their daily life. Parents were asked to complete the "homework" with their children together. Appendixes A12 and B13 show some samples of the PGE worksheets and comments from students. Whether parents and children communicated or not, many parents in School B completed the worksheets. The following shows the findings from the study and the interviews with parents, teachers and students.

The finding from the lesson study in P3 of School B shows that Teacher R and Teacher S were confused about the worksheets with their over-emphasis on standard

answers. For instance, Teacher S had scolded a boy who honestly told her he never did any housework; her disciplinary approach missed a chance for the deeper reflection and discussion. The implications and design of worksheets were misunderstood and misinterpreted.

After that, reflecting from the family worksheet, some of them showed me that they had no responsibility at home. I felt that it was nonsense and I suggested him to think about it and try to have more duty in class. (Teacher S)

Teachers found that some children showed special interest if the worksheets are related to their family. However, they did not have sufficient time to follow the students.

One student with good parent education phoned me because she discovered some secrets of her daughter and then discussed with me. I think that it good for them; lets parents have more understanding of their children. (Teacher S)

Some parents did the worksheets it seriously; some just signed their names. That is all. I think most of the parents understand what the PGE is. I had no time to discuss or review the worksheets with my class again because the lesson time is really tight till the end of the term. You know.....we are so busy throughout the academic year. (Teacher T)

The worksheet could raise the concern of some parents and encourage the change of students, like the third lesson, *Hotel and Family*, in the lesson study in School B: the worksheet asks student to share the housework, some students succeed but others had parents who did not allow this. Some students were quite eager to do the “homework” with their parents. Others just treated this as another assignment.

My mum does not allow me to do any housework. (3R)

After I completed the worksheet, I found that most of the housework was shouldered by my Grandpa, father and mother. I just have one chore. So, I decided to help more by washing the dishes and tidying the rubbish bin. (3T)

The family worksheet is OK and I can follow the worksheet to help my mum like sweeping and tidying. (3T)

I found that one of my students, the naughty boy with ADHD, Ming, has family problems, and he was very interested in the family worksheet when the topics were related to family. Once he got the worksheet with family topics, he would ask his classmates immediately to ensure the worksheets must be signed by their parents. He was eager to know. (3S)

However, other naughty students might tell me that they had lost the worksheet or their parents were not willing to fill it in, or they were too busy. (B-T7)

Indeed, SGTs and teachers were astonished by the students' creativity shown in the worksheets. Some teachers suggested follow-up activities. It is too early to know if the impacts of worksheets on the parent-child relationship and the extent of internalization of good values and behaviour. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

Good parents of good students return and complete it in a better position. As I guess, their parents do not know what actually happens in the PGE. Sometimes, parents' feedback is more than my expectation.....I was quite impressed. (B-T7)

By reading the worksheets done by the students, I could understand them more and I am astonished by their creativity. For the family worksheet, the feedback told me the extent of support and care of parents for their kids and their parenting skills. All these helped me to understand what is really going

on in the students' homes. (SG-G)

To parents, the worksheets had a different meaning. Some perceived them as a reference for parenting skills, while some parents were annoyed by the worksheets because they had limited homework time on a daily basis. There were differences between students and parents, and the worksheets' good intentions were partly ignored.

The family worksheet is another pressure for us if there is too much homework on that day! (B-6-P1)

I know there are worksheets for the PGE. The worksheet is nothing, as I communicate with them every day. I share with my kids about my expectations and my past experience. It should be done every day (a good mother). Regarding the curriculum design, they feel it is OK! (B-6-P2)

Some students never or seldom mention the PGE lessons and the worksheets to their parents. Some parents said that they guessed their children gave answers that showed that they were good children. If some parents still put the academic performance first, they would overlook the importance of parent-children relationship and the PGE.

The feedback is OK. They do it like homework and our teachers mark it. (SG-J)

Worst still, most of the parents just put the academic performance at the first place, students then cheat the family worksheets of PGE like the general homework only. (SG-J)

Here is an interesting conversation between a boy in P6 and his mother that reflects part of the truth during their interview. The significance of the family worksheets must be reconsidered if they were completed without communication and sharing:

Researcher: Mrs. U, how do you feel about the PGE?

Mrs. U: It is interesting that my son brought the family worksheet back home with special stress on the content; he just asked me to complete it and submit it to him later. I did it accordingly and did not mention anything about the lessons. I remember some family worksheets are about emotion control. After I submitted the family sheet to him, his reaction was so-so and he was not proactive to discuss it with me regarding my wording: actually it was all about him or our relationship. He was not enthusiastic about the worksheet. For him, it was just another piece of homework. Did he improve? My son did it to comply with the homework requirement only. I appreciate the group activity in the lesson. I expected that there is follow up for the worksheet no matter whether it is true or not.

Researcher: Why is it not true?

Mrs. U: He tended to conceal his drawbacks and not want parents and teachers to know about them. The same for adults, we are so generous when describing our feelings in questionnaires - not aggressive...right...(laughter...), not to pinpoint some event and people.

Researcher: How about the homework given? Was it heavy?

Edward: I can complete the homework every day within one hour. However, recently, we had the Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA), so we did three papers in the morning, and were tired and stressed. After school, my tutor gave me three more papers, Oh! My god! If I did not do it, my mum would scold me for being lazy and not serious.....more and more homework, poor us.

Researcher: Did you complete the worksheet for the PGE at home?

Edward: No at all because every day when I went back home, my mum normally

takes out all my homework and then she does the family worksheet herself and puts it back into my schoolbag. Before going back to school, I usually discover the completed worksheet; I do not ask her again. You know, she did it, so I would not discuss it with her again, unless some parts must be finished by me, so then I muddle through it.

Mrs. U: (She supplements more in-between) So, for the family worksheet of the PGE, I will help him to complete it and let him have a good sleep first. Hence, there is no communication and discussion about the worksheets between my son and me. I agree with the importance of the PGE, but the problem is time. I do want to do it; however, for double-working parents, we have no time even for homework, let alone time for PGE worksheets, so we muddle through it. My son complained to me about how much time I could earn for a rest: now my life is “8 in the morning to 8 in the evening”, i.e. it is miserable for working parents.

The content of the submitted family worksheets could reflect the extent of family care and the parenting skills partially. It allowed teachers to understand their students. Some parents ignored the worksheets, some muddled through, and some asked for help after they learned their children’s secrets. Students mostly liked the worksheets, some shared them with parents, some skipped the parents’ part to protect their privacy and some children and their parents did their worksheets separately without sharing. The worksheets collected by teachers showed that the feedback of family worksheets from lower level students was better than that from higher levels.

I hope the parents could be relaxed and not be too stressed on the academic performance of their children. Besides, skills like emotion control, communication and problem solving are very important to their children too. If they accept the ideas, the PGE could be implemented smoothly with their

support. (EDX)

7.3.5.2. Beyond worksheets, what else?

Beyond worksheets, can PGE improve the students? Appendix A10 shows that students' feedback in School A (2002-2004) was excellent: 52 out of 68 students interviewed by teachers were satisfied with PGE. Nearly half of them had tried to apply what they learnt in PGE in their daily life. Most of them thought they learnt a lot from the PGE, like presentation, courtesy and social skills, zero bullying, respect, positive values, and problem solving skills. Some said that they had changed their impressions for some classmates, been brave enough to apologize and made more friends than before. In School B, Appendix B10 shows that the feedback of students during 2004-2006 towards the PGE was good. About 80% of students were satisfied with it. Over 60% of the students stated that they applied what they learned in the PGE to their daily life. Students saw their positive changes in collaboration, communication, respect, caring for others and teacher-student relationships.

In the lesson study in School B, some teachers worried about the effectiveness of the PGE, then they reminded their students about the content of PGE by with daily events, posters or other means. In fact, students changed their behaviours, some students in the interviews could list having learnt problem solving skills, social skills, emotion control, self-protection, collaboration skills, and not tolerating bullies; some children showed that the lessons had helped them with emotional control, self-improvement, and enthusiasm and had improved their classmates' performance. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

I help my family in that period like sweeping, cooking, table cleaning (3R)

I wash the bathroom, the bath and the basin. I mop the floor with the sweep....

I am used to doing the housework now. (3T)

I learnt that I need to calm down and use my brain to think about the solution. It can help me in my daily life. For instance, during the homework time, I will try to use it. (3S)

I used to lose my temper all the time, but now I have learned how to face the difficulties with the 5 steps. (3S)

From this lesson (Family and Hotel), I learnt that every person has a duty in an organisation: nobody can do everything, so we must share the jobs together. We cannot overestimate ourselves to shoulder all jobs. (3T)

Some members of the parents' focus group, had questioned the effectiveness of the PGE and how much their kids learnt, but some appreciated the change in their children's behaviour that might related to the PGE.

I remember this year, my kid changed a lot. Once, he gave me a glass of water: I was so astonished; then, some guests came to my house and he knew it is polite to give them some drink. I wondered who taught him. Now I find out he was taught in school; you see, this lesson teaches them how to respect parents. I think that the curriculum is good and gives me confidence to teach my kids. (B-2-P)

Appendix B10 shows that about 90% of parents in School B said that their children liked the PGE and MCE lessons in 2004-2005. Nearly 90% of parents felt that their children had made progress in social skills, courtesy (77%) and responsibility (73%) in 2005-2006. The result is satisfying but the contribution of PGE to the figures is difficult to prove.

In the view of the teachers, the students were happy and engaged in the PGE lessons.

Students performed differently in these lessons: some hesitated to express themselves or resisted changing their mindset; others were impressed when they heard the in-depth sharing from their fellow classmates. Some passive students became more willing to share; and some became mature and brave enough to solve their problems. Teachers had different expectations about the effectiveness of the PGE; some wanted to wait and others wanted sudden changes in a short time.

Positive Comment (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

The greatest impact is that it stimulates me to care about the growth of the students. They are especially happy to attend the PGE lessons. It is probably because there is no boundary and no homework, together with various activities. They show great interest in that. After the PGE, students are more focused on their lessons. (A-T5)

The most successful thing I perceived is in the lessons: they can try to think about the issues in another angle from parents and teachers. I hope that it can help me to analyse when they face true dilemmas.....I found a naughty boy started to know how to distinguish what is wrong and right. (Teacher S)

Negative Comment (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

Regarding the effectiveness of the PGE, the action and vocal reaction is different. Especially the bullying atmosphere in my class did not change throughout the whole year,.....I am not happy because some students repeat the mistakes again..... (B-T2)

According to the SGTs and SGPs, children enjoyed the lessons. The effectiveness of the PGE was difficult to measure and depends on various factors like family background. Behavioural change takes time to observe and it is unrealistic to expect a

sudden change in thousands of students. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.5.)

I think the PGE or a curriculum is not like instant noodles: we cannot see the changes immediately,....., there are successful cases and failed cases, so changes happen continuously. It is nonsense to change a thousand children at all. (SG-M)

In short, having compared different points of view, changes have happened both inside and outside the classrooms; improvement in students' attitudes, collaboration, communication skills, and the teacher-student relationships are noticed, but still take longer time to observe. The high involvement of students is a partial reflection of the success of the lessons, but do not secure the internalization of the positive values and skills conveyed in the PGE lessons. Changes in students are difficult to assess by formal assessment tools like APASO which are not tailored for PGE. Of the family worksheets established in School B, some teachers misinterpreted the implications of worksheets to pursue the standard answers. Though family worksheets are designed for parent-child communication, it may become the "homework" for the academically focused parents and the independent children, or be ignored. Whether the positive changes are sustainable depends on the effort made by teachers and parents. PGE has drawn teachers and parents' attention and raised students' interest in exploring the issues of personal growth.

7.3.6. Redevelopment of teacher-student relationships

This study raises another question: "What are good teachers?" with the discovery of the student-teacher relationships in the PGE. (Students' feedback on teachers' performance is found in Verbatim 7.3.6.) Some parents worried that the teachers might rely on the PGE lessons as the only counselling and guidance time for students;

they wondered whether PGE is the best way to go. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

In School A and School B (especially the lesson study), students who were interviewed scored high for the performance of their class teachers, but they were demanding and sensitive to teachers' performance and disliked the talk-show guy. In the lesson study, Teacher R was typical: she was quite directive in the classroom, she controlled the lesson, and taught the PGE in the same way as Chinese or mathematics. She could finish the lesson plans on time but might overlook how much the children understood, and gave them limited room for discussions and reflections.

A good teacher should listen to us, so when we have any mistakes, she explains clearly to us, with clear punishment. I feel she must teach us the substantial things and with a good attitude. If she has a bad attitude, students will do bad things towards her. If she is good, but she cannot teach us anything, it is nonsense. (3T)

We like the interactive teachers because.....if teachers allow no feedback from us, it means she does not care for us too. (3T)

I don't like Mr. W because he talks too much; I hope he talks less like Teacher R..... I don't think he is good. I think Teacher R can talk to us softly, which is better. I missed her after she left the school. (3R)

Teacher T because she is experienced and familiar with us, knows about our personality. If a teacher does not know us, it makes a mess. (3S)

I like Miss W, as she was extremely good. She can articulate the message and the ideas in detail. She lets every student share their idea and chose the best one. Everyone had the chance to speak out. (A-4-S)

I think that teachers could be relaxed in attitude..... If teachers are friendlier, better communication will result. (B-6-S)

Miss L, we liked the games and activities in your lessons! I hope she did not

punish the bad guys until the end of the lessons. Please be more open and friendly to us....don't refuse to give me the answer. (A-S)

Miss G, I like the PGE! Please don't cancel it! I hope you can be relaxed in the PGE lessons. Don't cancel the PGE please! You scolded Stephen all the time; be patient: don't scold him and waste of our time. Sometimes you stop the activities, so don't do that! (A-S)

Mr. Q teaches so well and he can skillfully control the class discipline. His preparation is wonderful and tells us jokes. (A-S)

Overall, in the eyes of students, good teachers should be

- knowledgeable, open, friendly with nice attitude and wisdom;
- treasure the sharing time and the interaction in the class;
- restructure the lesson with their own design;
- willing to listen and answer different questions without suppressing students' motivation and curiosity;
- give students room to think, to share;
- give them freedom to choose among the difficult decisions;
- good, smart and skilful in teaching and classroom management; and
- able to keep their caring attitude beyond the PGE lessons.

From the lesson study in School B, Teacher T stated that she perceived the genuineness of her class during the PGE lessons that is totally different from what appeared under her "control" like the English lessons where students performed obediently and follow the rules set by the subject. She thought students might feel relaxed in a trustful and loving setting to express themselves.

I understand them so much; I found that their appearance and performance in PGE lessons are incompatible with their daily behaviour and social skills.

(Teacher T)

Some teachers discovered that the PGE provided them more topics to share with students, especially for when PGE lessons were conducted with the mother language.

(Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

I think it is because they can express themselves freely in Cantonese in the PGE because I am also their language teacher as well. (B-T7)

Some teachers found it difficult to give students correct responses and to build relationships with students in a limited amount of teaching time.

We complete the lessons in a rush, so I can't see any breakthrough. (B-T3)

Now, with less class teacher time, individual guidance for students is not enough. (B-T4)

Nevertheless, some teachers thought that good teachers could build relationships with students, anytime and anywhere they like. Some agreed that the communication time with students was less than it had been before. Although there were similar topics in GS, the discussions were comparatively shallow and short (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.).

Some teachers felt guilty that they did not have the time to teach students positive values (Refer to Verbatim 5.2.3.2.).

Through co-teaching, the teacher-student relationship was found to influence the effectiveness of the PGE. If the relationship was good, students talked freely, or even raised challenging questions for their teachers. Conversely, if the relationship was tense, students tended to give the "standard" answers. In these cases, falsehood produces falsehood: if students are sensitive to adults' feedback and real concern, they behave accordingly. (Refer to Verbatim 7.3.6.)

I can see the relationship between teachers and students. If their relationship is good and the atmosphere is in harmony, they talk and share freely in the class, or even raise some challenging questions for their class teachers to answer. For other classes with less harmonious relationships, students tend to give the teachers the “standard” answers so as to please their teachers. It is not real at all. Standard answers are easy to tell, but it is possible to carry out questions again. (B-T6)

To conclude, teachers in the case schools found that teaching PGE was their own responsibility. There should not be any excuse for teachers to escape the responsibility. It does not require any special skills except genuineness, respect, and sympathy. Such are the teachers’ attributes that Patterson (1973) recommends, but Lau (2007, 45) argues that PGE should be taught by specially trained teachers.

Shann (2001) indicates that student-teacher relationships most influenced teacher satisfaction, followed by salary, autonomy, teacher-administration relationships and administrative support. The importance of warm, positive and secure relationships between young children and adults is emphasised by Elicker and Fortner-Wood (1995), who also show that a secure attachment with a teacher can compensate for an insecure attachment with a parent (Werner & Smith, 1992). Teachers’ qualities include tolerance, firmness and fairness, reasonableness and a willingness to explain (Hayes, 1993; Taylor, 1996) and, for older pupils, respect and freedom from prejudice (Rhodes, 1990), gentleness and courtesy (Haberman, 1994) and sensitivity and responsiveness. In the UK, John and Osborn (1992) suggests that schools with more participation and freedom of expression had a stronger influence on pupils’ values than the “traditional” school. Students would also like their views and needs to be assessed when teachers

plan the curriculum and, listening to student voices could be a central part of any strategy for school improvement (Rudduck et al., 1996).

7.3.7. Section summary

This section gives the partial positive answers to the first two aims of PGE issued by EMB. Different stakeholders agree with the introduction of the PGE. Parents were suspicious but hopeful for this new programme. SGTs were optimistic about bringing this innovation to school. Students are excited about PGE lessons.

Teachers had mixed feelings and perceptions of PGE, but their acceptance for PGE increased. Some gained their greatest happiness and reflection on their pedagogies through the PGE lessons. They found that the PGE was not only a counselling lesson, but brings them a lot of insights, improves their counselling skills and enhances the student-teacher relationship. Mentoring and training for debriefing and questioning skills are still necessary.

Most of the teachers performed with confidence, skills and passion. Some teachers rendered the troubled students with post-class counselling. Students were patient, but were critical of teachers' instructional and classroom management skills. They want the teaching process to be interactive, precise, accurate and empathetic. Teachers concluded that co-planning, co-teaching, debriefing, self-disclosure, role play, questioning skills, linkage to daily life and demonstration are all helpful to PGE teaching. In addition, more training or guided lesson plans should be arranged to improve the teaching quality.

Both students and teachers found they could unmask themselves in PGE lessons and

enjoy the interactive process. The sharing time in the lessons encourages students to feel valued and recognized. The impact of PGE is positive, but cannot explain everything. Moreover, it takes time for sustainable internalization of positive values and skills. Introduction of family worksheets succeeded; however, there was struggle between students and their parents. Whether the family worksheet is viewed as a piece of “homework”, communication memo, a reminder or something about students’ privacy, it reflects the attitudes and concerns of parents and children about their relationship.

Teachers’ passion and their relationship with students affect their performance. In spite of the difficulties in PGE development, teachers are crucial to their students’ growth. They realize the program and can initiate change.

7.4. The modes of delivery of Personal Growth Education

The part discusses the mode of delivery of PGE, and compares the significance of different forms of PGE with use of textbooks, school-based design or integration with other subjects like Moral and Civic Education (MCE), Religious Education (RE) or General Studies (GS).

7.4.1. School-based design or textbooks?

In School A, the curriculum is compiled from different lesson plans along with school-based design. In School B, the curriculum is copied from various resources and largely created from the collaboration with the NGO funded by Quality Education Fund. The following sections explain the selection of teaching kits and lesson plan writing.

From the figures shown in the questionnaires for SGTs, there is no 100% school-based design, so 71% of guidance teachers refer to two to five PGE teaching kits among which three teaching kits are highly employed by schools: “*Happy Classroom (開心教室)*” (HKPA, 2002), “*Growth Express (成長列車)*” (WLPL, 2004), the EMB teaching kits and developmental lesson plans in the “*Understanding Adolescence Project (UAP)*”. Most SGTs adopted the combined mode by referring to different teaching kits. Some were opposed to creating a “perfect” material as they believed that the PGE should be started in simple steps; the content is less important than sharing time between teachers and students. The lesson plans should be discussed and modified step by step.

In my mind, teaching materials are not the most important element in the PGE. I will concern myself with the involvement of teachers and students, their feedback and interactions inside the classroom. I do not agree we should intend to make it good and to improve it continuously. (SG-M)

Although the teaching material provided by the EMB was found to be inadequate, some guidance teachers thought that it was suitable for the frontline teachers to manage. Some SGTs aimed at producing the best curricular material for the schools. They rewrote the lesson plans with their schools in mind, but whether the final version is the best for school is subject to review by all teachers. The design and quality of the lesson plans could vary from insightful to “chalk and talk”, and from simple to complicated. During the rushed production and introduction, some teachers may not be able to handle all the new methods. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.)

Regarding the teaching kits developed in 2003-2004, the games are very good, so don't waste them. Strangely, teachers are used to teaching all the teaching

material by following the lesson plans. Hence, I split it into two. Some are very good, like the chess game. However, owing to the inadequate material, I gave up. Moreover, some have audio-visual aids, but I found that the sound on the tape was not clear. Finally, I abandoned these activities.....a video about family problems is very good and reflective. We reserve it. Some are not updated and we changed it. (A-T8)

About the selection of teaching kits for school-based one, SGTs' main concerns are the copyright of using textbooks, balanced themes and content, user-friendliness, comprehensiveness and price. Different SGTs had their own perspectives. Some thought that PGE is just a lesson for sharing more than a lesson for knowledge conveying. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.)

The previous chapter concluded that teachers can design the lesson plans of the PGE, but this is done by SGTs. When more teaching kits for PGE have been published, should we still insist on a school-based design? Should we choose the textbooks from the market directly if teachers are not the experts in child psychology? Information technology education reminds us that schools should not rely on the untrained teachers to develop a novel curriculum, professional input from experts are inevitable and necessary. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.)

Morris (1996) points out that Hong Kong's high schools do not have a well-developed system for planning their own programmes to meet students' needs and as a result they tend to rely on the central curriculum designed by the CDC. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.) There is no agreement between SGTs and teachers as to whether the school-based design or textbooks of the PGE should be used.

School-based design is the best way to develop a curriculum for students because it can be modified continuously. There was no ideal lesson plan; trial and error is important to create a feasible one. Some teachers find the teaching kits quite dull, the use of textbooks may restrict the development of the PGE, “subjectise” PGE and affect the teacher-student interactions.

We write up the materials, then the colleagues change the content of the PGE according to the situations of the schools. We negotiate with the school, work out their needs for a PGE curriculum, and what types of PGE lessons they want. We want to design a series of PGE lessons that cater for and are tailor-made to the needs of the particular schools. Nowadays, there are different teaching kits; however, not all are school-based or suitable for all schools. (SW)

When all students and teachers have the textbooks, some students in the higher forms told me, it was never taught throughout the year, and the complaints from parents are heard. It was quite wasteful.....the “*Growth Express*” was abandoned because the principal told me that teachers dislike the series and thought that it was not suitable for our school. They want a new and tailor-made curriculum for the school. (SG-N)

It is more cost-effective to use textbooks which can reduce the pressure and workload on teachers and SGT. Textbooks free SGTs for other guidance activities; the school-based design and the ready-made teaching kits are more or less the same and can be modified as needed. The quality of textbooks is comparatively stable.

Limited by time and resources, we brought a teaching kit as the basic framework: it is the “*Growth Express*”. We think this teaching kit is good

because it is designed according to the ability of teachers, and for them, it is quite handy and lets them easily manage lessons. Moreover, there is religion-related chapters and appropriate value education. The activities designed could be done in the classroom, quite conveniently. There is no need for us to prepare a lot of teaching kits or game cards. It is chosen because it has the textbooks for teachers and students. We chose it at the end. We could modify it step by step. For our organization, I am the only SGT. (SG-F)

Indeed, it is a struggle between the ideality and the reality upon the constraints of time, manpower, knowledge, skill, enthusiasm and financial support. School-based design is an ideal but a luxury choice to invest a lot of resources from school. In contrast, teachers have to tolerate the uniqueness, the rigidity with use of textbooks. EMB had no guidelines about the teaching kits selection and they accepted the present situation because of time and resource limits.

7.4.2. The facts of school-based curriculum development

About designing a school-based PGE curriculum, many SGTs could have been affected by the first seminar conducted by the EMB in 2002 about the PGE. In that seminar, some senior SGTs shared their successful experiences. Many SGTs worked hard at the expense of the daily counselling. It was “one-man curriculum” rather than a “school-based curriculum”. The workload for SGTs was multiplied if the design and compilation for PGE were done by SGTs themselves. Hence, a smart team or other alternative supports are essential. Otherwise, textbooks are a quick fix to balance the workload.

Take the example of GS curriculum. Curriculum Development Committee encourages

schools to develop an open curriculum framework of GS which allows flexibility and innovation in curriculum planning, to provide different learning experiences for students by considering the mission, background, and strengths of a school (Section 3.3, CDI-ED 2002b). Therefore, owing to the “one-size-cannot-fit-all” principle, primary schools are expected to design their own GS curriculum. “Learning through experience” or “Hands-on and Minds-on-Activities” are stressed (Section 4.22, CDI-ED 2002b). Although a school-based curriculum is the most suitable, some schools may prefer to rely on textbooks. Improvement of textbooks contributes to student learning in a cognitive perspective (Fok and Wong, 1995) and based on the developmental requirements of the students (Lan, 1999). The school-based curriculum may be a complicated mixture without a philosophical rationale (Chan, 2004). Indeed, development of school-based curriculum will bring great changes to a school, including timetable, class structure, classroom setting, training and retraining of teachers, the assessment, community involvement. But, whether the total open direction is feasible is to be questioned (ibid.). More studies should be conducted to assess the effectiveness and quality of the local school-based PGE curriculum.

In School A, I modified the school-based curriculum. The teaching kits for each class were packed with lesson plans, worksheets, evaluation forms and teaching aids. (Appendixes A4, A5, A10 and A13). In School B, I transformed most of the lesson plans and teaching aids into electronic form for easy access from school servers and provided a more comprehensive evaluation of the PGE for students, teachers, and parents (Appendixes B4, B5, B10 and B13).

From the interviews, SGTs prepared the lesson plans, teaching kits, worksheets and evaluation forms for PGE curriculum. The binding and printing job wasted a lot of their time. Some spent their summer holidays or a year preparing the PGE curriculum.

For those schools with good management and a smart team for the PGE, SGTs could save time for preparation, but this was rare.

Maybe I found that I am in the post of curriculum manager in the development process of the PGE, so I need not provide everything for them, as I am the facilitator to provide the resource and material if requested and initiate their involvement. Teachers are the most important people along the whole process.....The PGE is actually part of the student guidance work only, so I have to balance time to deal with other important issues. (SG-F)

Some SGTs let teachers choose the lesson plans from a pool. Some SGTs felt stressed to prepare the teaching materials without help. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.)

I think the most difficult task is the organising and binding process. I made the lesson plan guidebook: two for a year at each level, which uses up most of my time to make it, and then I prepare the teaching materials and the worksheet. I need to rewrite and compile the lesson plans every time; it is really a hard job. Also, the whole programme must be renewed every year. For instance, regarding the topic about persistence, we might use Miss Lee Lai Shan (the first HK Olympics Gold Medal Athlete) as the example, but now it is outdated, so I have to put in Professor Hawking to arouse the interest of the students. (SG-G)

With some resistance to the PGE, teachers and schools expected the “fast-food” mode of the PGE, which was user-friendly with handy audio-visual aids. Some teachers just wanted to complete the lessons in the most convenient way to please the school (and the EMB). Some teachers wanted to take the “buffet” or “fast food” option, and also enjoyed their autonomy in the classroom. Nonetheless, some SGTs initiated PGE strategically by letting teachers explore PGE and accelerated development when more

resources were available. It reflects the wisdom in curriculum development.

Our main target in the first two years is to let class teachers understand the needs of students through the activities in PGE lessons, with intimate communication and interaction. In the first two years, teachers are exploring what the PGE is. In the third year (the present time), we modified the PGE curriculum to be school-based to meet the special needs of the school. (SG-F)

From 2002 to 2003, there was no formal PGE, which was mainly conducted by me in the form of level-based activities without involvement of teachers. It was the pilot stage.....I tried to persuade and introduce the PGE, to let them gradually understand what the PGE is, and provided demonstrations for teachers, to let them know it is an important process to identify the problem students and provide further guidance and counselling services. We developed the PGE from P1 to P6 in 2003 to 2004 fully; we used the teaching kit “*Growth Express*” and the material provided by the EMB, supplemented by other ready lesson plans. I was responsible to compile all lesson plans and prepared the teaching kits for all classes. The PGE is mainly taught by class teachers. From 2004 to 2005, we started Understanding Adolescence Project (UAP): the elements inside the UAP programme strengthen the framework of the PGE. (SG-M)

Why I started it was because I just followed the ex-SGT’s practice to provide these guidance programmes to the school.....Owing to the long history of such lessons started by the ex-SGT, they were used to it and liked the time to let children express more and get the chance to understand it. Now the PGE lessons were conducted once bi-weekly. Initially, it was the assembly time for the whole school; after the school expanded, half of them went to the hall to

join the seminar, and half of them stayed in class to join the PGE. (SG-G)

For administrative purposes, using standardized textbooks helps schools to monitor lessons and the progress of students and teachers. Textbook content could also be highly relied on as assessment criteria for learning. It provides a fair and open source to parents (Chan, 2004). On the contrary, textbooks may not fully take into account the students' needs. The content in textbooks would finally become the only source of right answers. The degree and scope of integration of learning elements would be delineated by the textbook publishers instead of teachers. Traditional textbooks and teaching materials are criticised for being inflexible and not amenable to individualization (Davis and Meyer, 2002). Morris (1998) predicts that schools would keep their reliance on traditional disciplines and standardized subject matter and yet provide some integrated learning experience for students. Therefore as Huang (1991) suggests, teachers are de-skilled by the textbooks.

7.4.3. Comments on school-based PGE curriculum design

Because of different contextual factors, a lot of SGTs prepare the “school-based” PGE for their schools to cater to the unique situation of school and students' needs. Therefore, I developed the school-based PGE for both Schools A and B. From the process, I tried to adjust the content of PGE with numerous times according to colleagues' feedback to make the curriculum more convenient, comprehensive and simpler. The net section lists the comments on the school-based design curriculum and two little surveys done in School B about the quality of the lesson plan.

7.4.3.1. General comments from Schools A and B

Overall, comments from Schools A and B about the teaching materials were positive.

Teachers thought that the lesson plans and teaching kits were good, useful, enough, understandable, resourceful, and informative, and some expressed that they learnt a lot from the information. Teachers were thankful for the rich materials. With material support, they were confident to teach and develop their teaching skills for the PGE. With the versatile content of the PGE, some teachers believed that it could bring a change in teaching and the classroom atmosphere beyond the era of “Chalk and Talk”, Teachers expected the selected lesson plans to be handy, easy to follow, well-organised, interesting and relevant to the development of children. Some SGTs pointed out that teachers prefer simple lesson plans and activities. Some teachers demanded more autonomy to choose the lesson plans for their class. Whether it should be an “open” curriculum or a “closed” curriculum depends on the attitudes of teachers because some teachers questioned the effectiveness of the PGE and objected to collaborative preparation. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.3.1.)

Some negative comments concerned the overloaded, complicated, and difficult content. Teachers wanted simple lesson plans that contained audio-visual aids. Some teachers were uncomfortable with the Academic Learning Area in the PGE. Some cared about the language that was used in the lesson plans. They were concerned that the topics that overlapped with RE were boring to the students. However, it is important to note that the relevant lesson plans had been chosen by the RE panel heads in advance.

In fact, at the beginning, we selected the topics and some lesson plans, but I am worried whether they are appropriate or not. Because it is new and we are not specialists, I was worried. After that, when the lesson plan was ready, I found that especially the social skill sections were good. The Academic section could be deleted. In the due course of restructuring the lesson plan, we needed to look at it carefully. The Learning section is so theoretical, so we did

not need to spend too much time on it. In other words, lesson plans about psychological needs like some special and sensitive topics are more important and should be emphasised. (A-T7)

Some senior teachers worried that teachers used old teaching skills and they were not capable to handle, digest and present the teaching material to achieve the expected learning outcome. More reflections about the materials were the limited teaching time of PGE lessons, so that a loss-loss situation resulted. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.3.1.)

With experience, observations and interviews, here are some points about lesson writing of the PGE (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.1.):

1. The framework of the PGE is very important in considering the needs of our children, their background and the school culture. The lesson plans should be continuously reviewed with the teachers' feedback. Support from EMB is insufficient.
2. The objectives for each lesson must be clearly stated. The content must match the objectives with well-designed activities which are practical in the classroom. Activities must be easy to understand and conduct. The debriefing should be challenging, meaningful, funny and smooth. From experience, the lesson plans should be user-friendly on double-printed A4 paper. Lesson writers should consider the information technology ability of teachers and the equipment available in school.
3. The writers should know children's development and have the hand experience in teaching the PGE. Some writers reported that creativity, divergent thinking, and sensitivity to daily events are important to create and modify PGE lesson plans. It takes time to accumulate novel ideas and experience.
4. One of the lesson writers (a social worker) concluded that attractiveness,

consistency and continuity are the three main elements of the PGE curriculum. Students like interesting and interactive programmes, such as games, role playing or experiential learning activities. Besides, all kinds of current topics, cartoon figures, stories, chess, psychological tests, IQ tests, competitions, video or sound tracks can attract children. Teachers should review the curriculum annually to improve the quality and the appropriateness of the content.

5. The lesson plans are written for students at different levels, but are not tailor-made for any individual class. Teachers have to modify them to meet the needs of their own classes. Teachers should also consider other factors like grouping and communication styles of their classes. A social worker recommended that complicated content be edited. An optimum PGE curriculum is produced by trial-and-error in classrooms. In the view of the lesson writer, teachers should be involved in design and consultation.

There are gaps between teachers' and designers' understanding of the lesson plans, so pre-lesson meetings or collaborative planning are necessary.

7.4.3.2. Teachers' and students' feedback on lesson plan design

Results from a survey in School B in 2005-2006

In 2005-2006, every class teacher and student in School B was asked to score the content, the teaching performance and students' feelings about PGE after every PGE lesson, from 1 to 5 (least to most satisfactory). Feedback from all class teachers and 30 students randomly sampled from each level (six from each class) were investigated. Interestingly, teachers' scores were lower than those of students, reflecting that teachers are more cautious and demanding.

Perception of lesson design and content (Appendix B10)

Figure 5.7 shows the scores from teachers and students were different, especially at higher levels like P5. The students were most concerned with the attractiveness, fun, games of the lesson, and whether the topics are relevant to them (like family problems, social interaction with friends, emotional control, care from family, bias of parents, bullying or collaborations in groups). Teachers cared more about courtesy, respect, pressure and the learning skills like memory skills, self-regulation, or internet friendships, etc. Ultimately, teachers and students disliked those are long and boring.

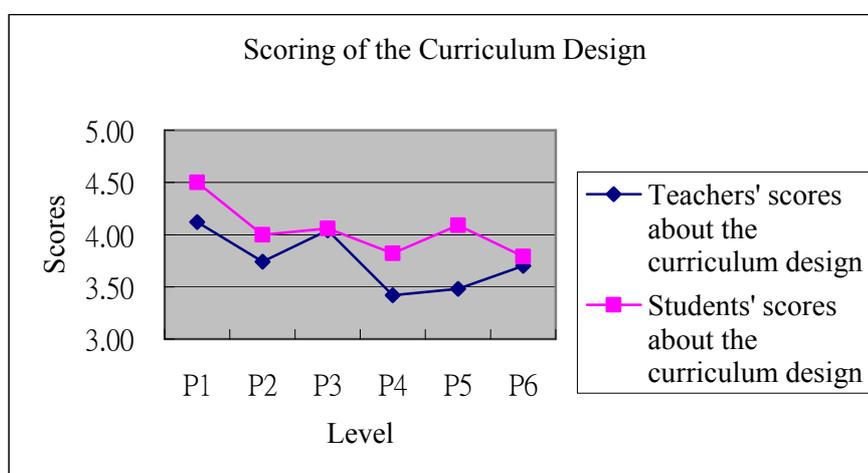


Figure 7.3 Teachers' and Students' Scores about the curriculum design

Results from the lesson study in School B in 2005-2006

A lesson study in School B P3 (level 3) was tried with three classes: 3R, 3S and 3T. Their class teachers were Teacher R, Teacher S and Teacher T respectively. They were responsible for teaching three PGE lessons by following the schedule set by the school. The lessons they taught were:

1. Superman of Problem Solving (problem solving skills)
2. Are we friends? (friendship and honesty)
3. Hotel and Family (responsibility and labour division)

Lesson plan 1 was the easiest, and lesson plan 3 was the most difficult. Referring to Appendix B12, in the first lesson (Superman of Problem Solving) some bored faces were observed in the classes though the content is clear and handy to teachers. Group discussions should have been added. Nevertheless, teachers were satisfied with the fully guided lesson plan and the aids, and students were stimulated by the attractive design.

I feel this lesson is directly related to their daily life. They are so elated and very involved in the discussion, they are very familiar with the stories in it and catch up quickly. I had no difficulties in conducting this lesson; I think some students had come across this event before. I just reminded them once again of the value. (Teacher R)

I feel good about this lesson with its cartoon stories. The lesson plan is step by step to guide me to finish the lessons. (Teacher S)

I appreciate the lesson plan, as it is easily accepted by students and they are involved so quickly in the story. (Teacher T)

I think this lesson is the most impressive one of them, because until the summer holiday, they still remembered what the lesson was about. After the lesson, I stuck a poster next to the blackboard, so they can read it all the time and memorize all the problem solving steps, and because it is in the form of a story, this lesson is quite successful. (Teacher S)

I felt bored by the content, but the content was good (contradictory). I hope there will be more stories using visual aids, rather than just sound. It is “nonsense” because it is a waste of time to wait for the story. (3R)

In the second lesson (Are we friends?), students still enjoyed the role play and the discussion. They were engaged in and satisfied with the lesson.

The old content, but taught in different ways. (3S)

I am happy with this lesson because the content is not found in the textbooks.

(3R)

I feel it is a good lesson and I learnt no cheating and no stealing. I feel this lesson is quite novel in spite of old content because teachers let me share more opinions than before. (3T)

They can try to think about the issues in another angles from parents and teachers, I hope that help me to analyse when they face the true dilemmas.

(Teacher S)

The third lesson (Hotel and Family) had a matching game about labour division. Teacher S wondered why her students failed to match the department with their functions in a hotel. She stuck to the details and the correct answers, and misinterpreted the design and the targets of the lesson. She had prepared the lesson superficially and relied too heavily upon the teaching plans without considering the implications of the design. Their inflexibility and misinterpretation spoiled the lessons. This case shows that the training of collaborative planning and individual mentoring should be considered.

They are asked to have division of labour. I think they do not understand the terms of the positions in hotels given, so they have no idea how to match the position with the job. The aim of the lessons is to let them know their responsibility in their families; however, the game could not bring them the message, but just created a mess.....I suggest replacing the matching game with role-play. P3 students are very interested in role-play, so they could play different family members and try to negotiate how to share the jobs at home, by changing the matching cards to family members and jobs at home, letting

them think about their jobs in the family. I think hotel and school can be linked up together. For me, it is difficult for me to link up directly the hotel departments with anyone in my family. During the pre-lesson meeting we were suspicious about the game especially which department is the most important.....I prefer the direct telling about the departments in a hotel instead of a game..... I think if the rules are not clear, students do not know what to do because even I am not sure what the game is about. (Teacher S)

Compared to the previous two lessons, my feelings are “Superman for problem solving” is the most convenient for us to teach with clear steps. However, “Are we friends or not?” and “Hotel and Family” were a mess in the class, and during the group discussion, some arguments occurred. Some students yelled, “I don’t want to work with him!” It made the classroom noisy and a little bit chaotic. “Superman for problem solving” is step by step, so they were impressed in that lesson. (Teacher S)

The content is acceptable, but the problem is time: to finish it on time, the lesson plans need to be easy to handle and digest...The successful thing is as a new teacher with just 3 years of experience, I am happy that I can conduct such new lessons smoothly using my limited skills to explore the way to conduct it.....I took some courses about moral education and counselling in my degree in education, which helped me to conduct the lessons. (Teacher T)

To conclude, the findings from the survey and the lesson study in School B show that teachers are more demanding than students when it comes to the design of the lesson plan. Probably, teachers should be more confident in conducting the lessons with appropriate feedback and sensitivity to students’ needs. In addition, this survey shows

the different foci of teachers and students. Teachers like topics that assist with learning and discipline, but students prefer those with rich contextual interests like family and friends. Teachers should be aware of children's needs and opinions. From the lesson study, students were found to be passive in accepting what the teachers taught to them. Some teachers were keen to follow the lesson plans and the standard answers, lack of reflection and creativity. They were quite nervous for the non-structured lesson plans with fewer guidelines. Overall, the comment from children about the content was positive.

7.4.4. Is personal growth education really a “subject”?

The top management was initially astonished to know there is a curriculum from D&G group. Management had assumed that it would be separated from the D&G system.

From another angle, I feel that the PGE is something separated from the formal job of D&G teams. They are two things. The PGE just exists under the D&G job. Actually, it is independent. They are not related. The PGE is...a curriculum. But the D&G jobs are mainly counselling and formal training; there is no relation with the curriculum PGE..... (A-T11)

Is the PGE a subject? As Stodolsky (1993) has put it:

“Subject matter is both pervasive and invisible in schools. It is such a fundamental contextual variable that it is frequently skipped over in analysing educational experiences. Yet we believe that the lens of subject matter is a valuable one for understanding many of the experiences teachers and students have in high schools. Subject matter also helps us understand what teachers and students bring to educational experiences and what they take away.”

Subject disciplines influence teachers' workplace culture:

By virtue of the subject they teach, these teachers bring the distinct perspective, procedures, values, and discourses of their fields into the school – and sometimes into conflict. Intellectually and professionally, as well as socially, they inhabit quite different worlds. What is evident from examining the differences among these subject cultures is that in many ways teachers have more in common with geographically distant colleagues in the same subject than they may with colleagues in the same school but an intellectually distant department. (Siskin, 1994, p.180)

Some SGTs thought that the curriculum could apply different teaching strategies and strengthen students' discussion and presentation skills. It is a free and open curriculum to match the curriculum reform.

I feel that when the PGE is not put into the normal curriculum and school authority does not stress it, it is a waste with only the framework, but no content. (A-T8)

The PGE in the role of curriculum is actually a very vivid curriculum to apply different teaching strategies like group activities in class and to strengthen their generic skills, especially discussion and presentation skills; they are allowed to present themselves freely on different topics, which is a free and open curriculum to match the curriculum reform. (SG-E)

Both the PGE and MCE exist in school in a strange form, not like GS and RE (one or two lessons per week). Is it possible to put personal growth into the framework of a "subject" with a syllabus? It is a programme, a guidance curriculum, but could it be a subject? According to Dewey, subject matter is a form of human experience which cannot be overlooked (Dewey, 1902). Subjects' boundaries are the product of

historical factors, although the difference among these forms of knowledge must not be confused with the long-standing university subjects or disciplines.

Critique about subject

Hirst (1974) also reminds us that “whether we like it or not, all knowledge is differentiated into a limited number of logically distinct forms or disciplines.” Facione (1990) advises “too much of value is lost if critical thinking is conceived of simply as a list of logical operations and domain-specific knowledge is conceived of simply as an aggregation of information”. Dewey (1916) also reminds us of the dualism of mind and world: the idea that mind and the world are separate and independent realms.

However, Hirst (1974) thinks that a subject-based curriculum restricts students in their thinking, ignores the important links between different forms of knowledge and hinders the development of integrated points on life. Pring (1976) also criticises the traditional curriculum for neglecting pupils’ interests and undermining their motivation; it ignores the linkage and skills among subjects, lacks concern for pupils’ experience, prior knowledge, local community affairs and current issues, and gives insufficient emphasis to address personal and social education.

When some programmes or informal curriculum is “subjectised”, it will then be rendered the above deficits with its limited framework and content. That is why some teachers want the autonomy of lesson plan selection, want to add controversial topics or want to keep the openness for modification without textbooks. Textbooks symbolize “subjectisation” or “standardization” of a program or an informal curriculum.

Goodson (1983 cited in Power, 1996: 134) argues that, “the process of “becoming a

school subject” involves the marginalization of pedagogic or utilitarian values.” Power (1996: 134) reminds us that “the pastoral care cannot travel down this route because it does not strike for academic respectability, and has few objectives other than pedagogic and utilitarian ends....it will not share the same fate as the subject-based reform movements....”

Should the PGE be subjectised? In the view of some teachers and the EMB, there are two schools of thought about the subjectisation of the PGE:

Supportive side

Some teachers think that the PGE should become a regular subject in order to share the workload evenly among teachers, but some class teachers did not want to carry the burden forever. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.4)

The PGE could be a subject that is singled out. (B-T9)

Is it a must for class teachers to do it? We are working in multiple functions.

Can it be a subject and let others do it? (B-T2)

Objection side

In view of RE, what is the soul of a religious school? Why is it an independent subject? What is the impact of it being subjectised? Subjects are now stereotyped as listening to teachers, paying attention in class, reading books, doing homework, and getting good test results. RE has fallen into this restricted framework. Is it an effective way to convey the message of God? Does it spoil the virtuous spirit and implications of RE? How do students feel about?

The EMB and some teachers oppose the suggestion because they are worried that once the PGE is named a “subject”, its implications would be lost. Teachers might treat it as the regular curriculum and forget the purpose of sharing and communication. Teachers

may return to the mode of “conveying message or knowledge” rather than life sharing. The feedback of students about this formal “subject” might become difficult to estimate, depending on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers. Some teachers are worried about subjectisation because it might spoil and ossify the atmosphere of lessons. There is a paradox to solve the problem of lack of time for such education with positive values and for teachers’ autonomy to teach the PGE flexibly. (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.4.)

It means the content of the PGE should be plentiful, but the problem of personal growth appears continuously; we can’t scope them into a so-called curriculum.(A-T10)

Teachers should not think it is subject; otherwise, it becomes a regular task to commit on time. We must treat it as a period of time..... (A-T7)

The PGE is designed by the people with commitment.Nowadays, teachers here are so busy, with too much work to do and to follow. They have no time to offer their students positive values. In contrast, in the form of a curriculum, it becomes rigid. How about giving time to the class teachers to let them do it flexibly? It is my own point of view.(A-T1)

In the view of the EMB, the PGE is not a subject, but an important, regular and preventive D&G activity. Some SGTs and teachers thought that the PGE should not be scoped as a “curriculum”, as it is a fluid thing and can be modified. A “curriculum” is rigid. Therefore, some teachers stereotype what a “curriculum” is: it is an unchangeable, stable and rigid thing. Is it good news for education? (Refer to Verbatim 7.4.4)

I am worried because some schools have problems in direction. For instance, they treat the PGE as a kind of subject, not a counselling process because of a lack of training and resource input. It results in laissez-faire lesson, such that

the PGE is not conducted seriously. Teachers talk and then give the worksheets to the students without any follow up. This case is not common; it is exceptional..... (EDX)

Whether PGE is a subject or not is not an important question, but so are the perceptions of “subject” in teachers’ minds. Although there are plenty of benefits to “subjectising” PGE, the opposition is strong to preserve its subject-free status so as to retain its flexible nature and fluid identity, and to keep its caring features. Hence, if PGE is termed as a subject one day, it implies something other than counselling and guidance.

7.4.5. Section summary

This section has explained how researchers tried to develop the school-based curriculum in Schools A and B, and the difficulties in making a trade-off between school-based design and textbooks. Teachers did not notice the heavy workload of PGE preparation but requested the “buffet” or “fast food” PGE. Considering the factors of convenience and quality, some SGTs chose textbooks in order to save time, resources, and manpower. Although it is a shortcut and a quick fix, it is a costly choice. More studies should assess the effectiveness of either the school-based or ready made PGE teaching kits.

School-based design is an ideal choice, but it is labour-intensive and time-consuming unless there are additional resources for it. The feedback about school-based PGE in Schools A and B is positive, teachers were confident teaching it and students were satisfied with the content. The content should be funny, interesting, interactive and

complemented with visual or audio aids. The attractiveness, consistency and continuity of the lesson plans are the key points. Lesson study and survey in School B show the positive feedback about the school-based curriculum design. Teachers and students have different perspectives and preferences about the lesson plan design. Teachers prefer those rich in moral values or discipline-based topics, while students like those related to their daily life and funny content. Teaching skills were found to have plenty of room for improvement.

Reported by other SGTs, a combined format could be considered by mixing the textbooks with addition of school based design to cater for the schools' need and the changing world with the curriculum provided by the textbook as the core materials. Meanwhile, some teachers did not agree with the "subjectisation" of PGE as "subject", and they worry that the "subjectisation" of PGE with textbooks cannot preserve the counselling features that enhance the interactions between teachers and students.

Concluded from the issues about time and curriculum design, questions were raised about PGE and its alternatives. The next section explores the feasibility and the possibility of interacting PGE with other subjects.

7.5. Is Integration Possible?

Because of time and resources constraints, some teachers in Schools A and B had suggested integration of PGE into other subjects like GS or RE. This suggestion was mentioned in EMBSDD (2004), but it raises several questions: Is integration one of possible delivery forms of PGE? Are the elements of PGE present in MCE, GS and RE? This chapter tries to share the experience of integration in different schools to explore the feasibility of integrating PGE with subjects like MCE, GS and RE.

7.5.1. Integration of guidance curriculum into the regular curriculum

Clark and Clark (1994 pp. 10-11) describe the curriculum of Hong Kong primary schools as fragmented and overcrowded, incoherent, overemphasising rote memorization and the “linear mastery of decontextualized skills”, and premised on a view that students have a fixed quantity of intelligence. In Hong Kong, curriculum began in the secondary schools. In ECR4 (1990), the concept of “subject integration” was promoted in order to solve the problems in the curriculum in Hong Kong. In 2000, CDC published a consultation paper “*Learning to Learn*”, which emphasises “project based learning” as one of the key tasks in curriculum integration (Stimpson & Morris, 1998). Hence, integration development has shifted from centralization to decentralization (i.e. school-based), and teachers are given greater autonomy.

There are numerous definitions of curriculum integration. Integration is a philosophy of teaching in which content is drawn from several subject areas to focus on a particular topic or theme. Rather than studying (individual subjects) in isolation (McBrien & Brandt, 1997). Parker (2005) sums up the definitions of an interdisciplinary or integrated curriculum by describing it as

a curriculum approach that purposefully draws together knowledge, perspectives, and methods of inquiry from more than one discipline to develop a more powerful understanding of a central idea, issue, person, or event. The purpose is not to eliminate the individual disciplines but to use them in combination (p. 452-53).

Integration of guidance curriculum has been discussed since the 1980s, when education developed a more proactive view of students’ personal development. McGuinness (1989, p. 28) claims that a guidance-oriented curriculum would promote

students' all-round development. McGuiness (1989) advises that self-esteem and social skills learning should be tackled in the academic lessons and integration should be central to everyday lessons in school.

Personal and social development through the curriculum cannot be left to chance but needs to be coordinated as an explicit part of a school's whole curriculum policy, both inside and outside the formal time-table. Personal and social development involves aspects of teaching and learning which should permeate the entire curriculum (Watkins, 1996, p. 121).

Pring (1984) suggests that the integration of personal and developmental education into the curriculum could be placed across the curriculum. Watkins (1994) promotes total school guidance. He proposed using the terms "cross-curricular" or "inter-subject themes" with whole-curriculum dimensions. He highlighted the challenge of making "curriculum infusion" in the broad means of guidance something more than a slogan. Galloway (1990) also stresses that curriculum planning was a joint responsibility. Gehrke (1991) agrees that curriculum integration requires effective teacher collaboration for "information exchange" about individual and common interests and talents, current subject-area teaching goals, themes, and organising concepts, as well as general academic knowledge (Wan, 2002). Lo's (1995) study shows that guidance masters could promote pastoral care programmes through cross-curriculum collaboration.

EMB worried about the integration possibility of the PGE.

I was quite worried when the PGE was first issued; many concrete details behind it were not considered thoroughly by our team like the new senior secondary education, 3-3-4, so a lot of problems remain to be solved. When

the PGE was first issued, schools raised numerous questions, e.g. “What is the PGE? How can we implement the PGE in schools? Is it a regular lesson? Or can we integrate it into the regular curriculum? How can we integrate the PGE into our regular curriculum? At the beginning, our team was not alert to these problems. When we discussed it with schools, we located the problem and tried to solve it. Now the integration could be done with MCE or RE. I think these are the two main subjects most schools select to integrate with the PGE or integrated with the whole-school approach activities. (EDX)

Hargreaves (1994) criticises the “balkanization” in schools, where there is little communication between departments. Traditional structures, cultures and political forms might make integrated curricula an enormous challenge (Hammerness & Moffett 2000).

7.5.2. General feedback about integration

As the EMB D&G team has set no limit on the integration of the PGE in schools, schools have more autonomy to deal with the PGE in terms of “integration”. However, whether the integration has really worked out needs further exploration.

Simply speaking, we are concerned about how the PGE could link up with other subjects like the topics about problem solving skills. Completion of the related lessons does not mean that students can do it. Except the PGE, how can the problem skills penetrate into different situations, like other learning conditions and areas? This is very important. (EDX)

Supporting ideas for integration from teachers

Some teachers supported the integration of the PGE into the regular curriculum, and

objected to the recent shift of moral education from the core subjects (embedded in Chinese) to other areas like GS or independent MCE activities.

I agree with the integration of the PGE into different subjects. I remember in the old days, we taught students the concepts in the PGE in the Chinese lessons; however, due to policy changes, teaching in this way is not allowed. Now, we are encouraged to teach the skills only, so it is difficult for me. It separates the two things (skills and attitude), but if the PGE could penetrate into the normal curriculum, it would be great and impress the students more...(A-T10)

Some supporters thought that integration can lighten the workload and improve the undesirable time allocation for the PGE, they suggested adding games and the debriefing skills of PGE into other subjects; they agreed that the PGE should be part of regular lessons conducted in a relaxed atmosphere, rather than a designated period. Simultaneously, some worried that it was impossible for other subjects to pick up all elements of the PGE. (Refer to Verbatim 5.6.1.3.)

If we can teach these kinds of topics in the regular lessons, using part of the lesson to let the class discuss in a relaxed atmosphere, it may be great and better than just teaching it in the arranged period. (A-T1)

Some teachers pointed out that PGE has overlapped with other subjects. B-T4 was a typical case who reluctant to accept PGE and concerned time and workload. “Integration” was equivalent to time-saving in her mind:

You can put it into GS and RE within just 15 minutes. You know, some classes are very good, so we need not teach all.....I think 2 to 3 lessons of the PGE per year is OK, and include the other parts into other subjects. Different elements in different subjects would be OK. I think most teachers can

complete it professionally. It is not easy actually to put it into the exact lessons in the timetable. I think.....it could be.....then more time could be saved for us in the class teacher period and discuss with time of other problems.....it is dull to repeat similar things in different subjects, so work could be done year by year. If you are afraid of losing the PGE in the regular curriculum, you can put it into the lesson schedule of the related subjects and let teachers hand it to the after class evaluation each time. I do not think it is a problem.....students always forget things. I am not saying that it is great engineering, but modification and integration is necessary. (B-T4)

Teachers welcomed the integration of the PGE into other subjects For a variety of reasons. Some wanted to reduce overlapping, others wanted the integration of Academic Development of the PGE into the regular curriculum; some thought the PGE should be an extension or elaboration of certain RE and GS topics; some suggested integration of PGE could be done in form of school annual targets for curriculum. (Refer to Verbatim 5.6.1.3.)

About the problem of overlapping of different subjects, I think it must be solved in a school-based way, so every school has its own mission and vision, and focus every year. Each school should tailor-make their curriculum accordingly. There should be no answer... Personally, I support integration of the PGE with other subjects. (A-T5)

The PGE could be integrated into other subjects as it is mainly about the domains of values and moral education. Curriculum reform involves too many subjects; it is difficult to pick up the PGE. (A-T9)

I think the PGE could penetrate into the formal curriculum like memory skills. There is no need to teach it with one special lesson. In contrast, topics about

self-esteem and social skills should be stressed because time is so valuable to share with our students. I will see it from the angle of the D&G, to let teachers have more understanding about the psychological development of children.

(A-T7)

Students' points of view about integration

Some students saw the similarity among the PGE, RE and GS, and perceived that moral values are taught in different forms. Some supported the integration of the PGE with RE. They noticed that RE and PGE are not exactly the same, and that some elements of the PGE are missed in RE lessons.

Students' perception of the similarity between the PGE and other subjects:

We learnt something new in the PGE and with sharing time is not in RE.(A-S)

I support the combination of RE and the PGE, because they are similar.....

(A-S)

I found no difference between GS and the PGE. (B-S)

I think RE, GS and the PGE teach us moral values. (B-S)

Students' perception of the differences:

We have not found any RE teachers using the teaching methods of PGE in RE lessons. (B-S)

In RE, we learn forgiving and stories of Jesus which are not included in the PGE. (B-S)

We seldom learn this in RE (B-S)

GS and RE seldom remind us of this concept. (B-S)

The PGE is necessary, as sometime GS cannot cover all the topics. (A-S)

I think the PGE should be independent, even with RE. (A-S)

I don't agree (with integration), as it will put us in a mess if two things are added together. (A-S)

Experience and points of view from SGTs (about the PGE, RE and MCE)

On the questionnaires for SGT, one SGT pointed out that the PGE should begin with integration with other present subjects like MCE, with input of more teaching power from other related subjects. An example shows that if a similar curriculum is already present in a school like GS or MCE, integration could blend the PGE into them and teachers accept introduction of the PGE.

Now, the PGE is the most systematic curriculum out of the regular subjects, so I hope that there will be a systematic curriculum involving the PGE, RE and MCE for the students. (SG-I)

The successful thing about the PGE is that curriculum integration was done to trim off the overlapping topics. The lesson time is always limited. I try to make use of the limited resources to implement what I want. I think that is the direction..... You know subjects like GS and RE in the regular curriculum are so fragmented: this is their characteristics. But I found that the PGE, MCE and life education are outside the regular curriculum, but they are easy to be integrated. (SG-J)

The EMB's attitude was open if schools were targeted to input the elements of the PGE into their curriculum. In fact, the EMB claims that the objectives or generic skills of the PGE are neglected in the regular curriculum; they are singled out in the PGE. They clearly knew that integration was immature and that it would be a painful experience. This was schools' preference for integration.

I am not suspicious about integration if the school can provide us a clear timetable and curriculum. If the schools are clear about the targets and can

introduce all elements in a spiral approach, I think I would prefer the overlapped approach with the elements introduced repeatedly and deeper each time they are introduced to students. This kind of integration would benefit our students better. However, it is difficult to accomplish that. If someone can do such integration, it would be excellent. Moreover, the coordinators should serve to enlighten all teachers about the learning objectives of the PGE to ensure that they can be achieved in the lessons. (EDX)

I think integration can be done. I know some schools do the integration with a team of staff but it is a painful process and it is very difficult: a lot of work on curriculum modification and organisation must be done to re-design the lesson plans and activities. (EDX)

The EMB D&G section believed in the figures which show some integrations of PGE were successfully done with RE, GS and MCE. Is it the reality?

In the recent years, we tried to link up the PGE with the ready subjects like MCE and GS, and we are exploring the possibility of integration, but it is still a long way off. (EDX)

I think it is possible but very difficult. I will say it is up to the school conditions, the readiness and the ability of the teachers; the teachers can sit together to discuss how to integrate it with lesson preparation meetings, to trim and modify the curriculum. It is all school-based. I will expect the CC may help with the curriculum modifications, the concepts and ideas of integration. I think it is just at the starting point, i.e. immature. (EDX)

7.5.3. Integrations of Personal Growth Education in Schools A and B

From the EMB's experience and the interviews with SGTs, MCE and RE are the most

possible subjects for integration. Most of the integration with MCE was done naturally. For RE, some SGTs added the bible proverbs into the PGE lesson plans. In addition, some organisations had developed a new set of the PGE with their religion like Confucianism and Christianity. Some schools directly used RE lessons as their PGE lessons or input the PGE elements into mathematics, morning assembly and project learning. (Refer to Verbatim 5.6.1.3.)

Sometimes, the elements of RE is also added according to the religious background of schools: some have prayers before or after the lesson. (SG-O)

Integration in School A

Before 2004, I explored the possibility of PGE integration with GS and tried to initiate collaboration with the GS panel head (also the MCE coordinator), however, the panel head suddenly refused. Lack of resources could have been one of the causes.

For GS, I think the integration is comparatively difficult, for instance, sex education: they have too much to cover in the textbook, with no time to include the PGE. They feel that this “extra” thing cannot meet the targets of GS, so they have abandoned the integration temporarily.(A-T8)

Starting in 2004, the new CC in School A supported integration and attempted to coordinate integration through kick off meetings with panel heads.

I try hard to make a compromise between the PGE and RE or GS. Simultaneously, I hope what we could be in line with our yearly school targets. I found teachers are more acceptable about the PGE. Besides, to try to clear up the topics of the PGE and those in Moral and Civil education lessons, we neglect the overlapping topics in order to save more time. (A-T12)

Regarding integration, I disagree that it is a problem of time. I hope they tell me the actual difficulties when they input the elements of the PGE. I will try

my best to help them. It is good to let them voice the true problem, to understand the direction, and not to just receive the job, do it superficially, if it is nonsense and cannot help the students.....I encourage them to try..... to get the experience first..... I told the SGP this year, “Don’t rush!”I advised to observe how much the teachers could handle and justify the pace of integration. Don’t put too much pressure on them. (A-T12)

When there is a clear picture for the PGE, I found that the panel head teachers of GS and RE are so proactive to try their best to include the topics of the PGE as much as they could. I am happy they are so enthusiastic this year. I still do not know what the outcome of the inclusion is. (A-T12)

Yes, she (CC) has linked up the PGE, GS, RE and moral and civil education together. They had a meeting. They rearranged them in a more systematic way and tried to eliminate the overlapping elements. (A-T9)

In 2005-2006, in School A, the RE panel head started to pick up related PGE lesson plans for “integration” and distributed them to the RE teachers without guidelines about how PGE and RE curricula could be integrated. Meanwhile, the RE panel heads claimed that they had tried their very best to “help” with the “integration”, to save time, to care for the teachers and the students were happy to learn. Indeed, it was “integration” without monitoring.

I think to increase involvement, by including the PGE in the normal curriculum will be a way to do it; let teachers know more about it and be alert to it. In RE, I encourage integration between RE and the PGE: we found that it is desirable for P6; more matching could be made than other forms because curriculum for P6 emphasises moral values, so integration is easy. We try to see whether the effect is good or not. When we finished the mid-year evaluations: some were good and some were bad. If the content is about

morals and ethics, there is no problem. However, for other topics, it is not smooth. More negative points are that some colleagues think that it is too much for RE and they feel reluctant to include the PGE. I hope I can slow down and penetrate it slowly. Undoubtedly, some of our curriculum is rich and rushed: sorry, I can't do it any more. (A-T11)

For RE, they choose matching topics. I then copy the original lesson plan for them to choose the plan in need. The same is done for GS. Quite a lot of topics are picked up by RE. I did not ask about the conditions of integration, but they told me they find the content and games are useful and rich. Students are happy to learn and match the topics. (A-T8)

Students in School A did not notice integration of PGE in RE lessons.

No RE teachers teach the PGE in the RE lessons. (A-4-S)

We did not find any lessons similar to PGE lessons in the RE lessons. (A-3-S)

In School A, integration of PGE and RE was tried verbally and administratively, however, there was no monitoring, follow up or evaluation. RE teachers actually did not know what to do, but reported that they had done it.

Integration in School B

In School B, integration was suggested by CC and the GS panel heads in 2004-2005, then there were meetings about integration with both the GS and RE panel heads. A similar situation in School A failed. I found that the panel heads misunderstood the concepts of integration and offered no monitoring. Through the GS panel head seemed very eager for integration, she did not follow up.

With respect to integration, Hargreaves (1991) questions the coherence and

manageability of the cross-curricular mode. Buck & Inman (1995) argue that the themes lacked rigour and needed clearer definitions. Saunders et al. (1995) also find that the delivery of integration was constrained by a lack of resources and staff expertise. By the end of the last millennium, cross-curricular themes had faded away.

7.5.4. Conclusion for the comment and actual situation about integration

Prior to further discussion about the possibility of integration, Tables 7.1 and 7.2 illustrate the picture that emerges from this study. Table 7.1 compares the actual development of GS/PSHE, MCE, RE and PGE, with respect to their situations in School A and B. Table 7.2 summarises the integration cases in this study.

Table 7.1 Comparison between GS, MCE, RS, PGE and values education

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
AIMS	<p>GS (CDC-ED, 2002f: iv) :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain a healthy personal development to become confident, rational and responsible citizens. 2. Recognise their roles and responsibilities as members of the family and society and show concern for their well-being. 3. Develop a sense of national identity and be committed to contributing to the nation and the world 4. Develop curiosity and interest in the natural and technological world as well as understand the impact of science and technology on society. 	<p>MCE (CDC-ED, 2002e):</p> <p>It is one the five essential learning experiences for whole-person development and one of the four key tasks; it aims at helping students to develop positive values and attitudes by providing an affective basis for effective learning.</p>	<p>RS</p> <p>In terms of Christianity: to let students know about God, to behave like Christ as the model with Love. (CDHK)</p> <p>To make students more critically aware of their beliefs and behaviour in relation to the common values and religions practised in the pluralistic society in Hong Kong. It seeks to encourage them to explore and challenge their personal positions in these areas by broadening their horizons and learning to reason for themselves. (CDC-ED, 2001c, p. 10)</p>	<p>PGE (EMBSGS, 2003 and EMBSDD, 2004):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. exploit their individual potential, develop in them a healthy self-concept, as well as take a positive attitude towards the challenges in life and effectively solve their problems; 2. promote social development and build up a good interpersonal relationship; 3. develop a diligent and proactive learning attitude and master various learning skills, thus preparing them for life-long learning; and 4. cultivate a proactive attitude

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
	<p>5. Develop a care and concern for the environment.</p> <p>Aim for PSHE (CDC-ED, 2002a: iii): To enable students to understand themselves, society and the world at large, maintain a healthy personal development and contribute to the well-being of the local community, the nation and the world as confident, informed and responsible persons.</p>			<p>towards work and acquire career information and the required skills to lay down the foundation for future career development.</p>
<p>Embedded aims (from observation and documental analysis)</p>	<p>To cater for the changing world in the future with sufficient generic skills, values and attitude are of second priority.</p>	<p>National identity is the main focus after the handover.</p>	<p>To sustain religion in society through education and to encourage people to choose Christianity for eternal life.</p>	<p>To alter the culture of a school and to penetrate the ideology of student guidance in terms of a systematic curriculum.</p> <p>To upgrade the counselling skills of teachers and provide a platform of communication between teachers and students.</p>

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
Values	Varied (depends on the content)	Mainly the five priority values	Love, justice, freedom, grace, peace and honesty	Mainly respect, empathy, love, genuineness, resilience, confidence and so on.
Generic Skills emphasised	All	Collaboration skills Communication skills Critical thinking skills Problem solving skills Self-management skills	Collaboration skills Communication skills Critical thinking skills Problem solving skills	Collaboration skills Communication skills Critical thinking skills Problem solving skills Self-management skills Study skills Creativity
Status in schools	Very important and is expanding continuously in the recent years.	Varied, depends on the schools' priority.	Varied but a crucial symbol of Catholic Schools	Varied but normally at low priority compared to other new policies.
Status in the curriculum development	It is an important and integral part of PSHE in primary schools and important in school-based curriculum development, project learning and cross-disciplinary integration. (in hot focus)	It is one of the four key tasks and in the scope of other Learning Experiences for Life-wide learning. The EMB gives plenty of freedom for its development. It exists in different forms in	Except the Advanced level, there is no RS curriculum guidelines produced by the EMB. All religious sponsoring bodies produce their own teaching materials. (marginal status)	It is not emphasised in the Curriculum Reform but treated as part of the MCE lessons. It exists in different forms depending on the efforts and attitude of guidance teachers and principals. (marginal status)

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
		schools. (sometimes ambivalent, sometimes comprehensive)		
Pedagogy	Discovery learning, experiential learning, project learning, outdoor visits and activities with rich electronic support. Cross-disciplinary activities are found.	Lectures, outdoor visits, competitions (with D&G activities), sometimes class activities or in the form of project learning.	Class lessons with mainly story telling, VCDs and simple worksheets as follow up.	Class lessons with games, activities, group sharing, story-telling, debriefing with daily experience and family worksheets as follow up. Sometimes, lectures or activities at the same level, correlation with D&G activities.
Mode of assessment	Both formal and informal assessment	None	Formal assessment in the past. Some schools had cancelled it.	Informal assessment
Support from the EMB	Strong support with plenty of resources and training	General and more teacher trainings have been provided recently.	None in primary schools.	Scarce, no substantial resources are allocated except some annual training provided.
Change since 2002	A new syllabus enacted with new forms of assessment and content.	New guidelines published with 3R (refocusing, re-engineering and re-organisation)	CDHK in Hong Kong had noticed the external change and prepared the reform in RE proactively.	It is enacted by the D&G team of the EMB; every school should try to introduce a total of 72 lessons a year.

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
Management	The same as other subjects with textbooks and formal evaluations.	No textbooks and formal evaluations, in the form of informal and hidden curriculum, all school-based.	The same as other subjects with textbooks and formal evaluations introduced by the sponsoring bodies.	Limited textbooks and no formal evaluations, in the form of informal and hidden curriculum, all school-based.
Manpower	A subject team to work on all related issues. A team of GS teachers, usually supported by a CC	A coordinator is assigned to organise all kinds of activities, some with a team, some led by SGT, deputy principal or DM.	There is a team of RS teachers who are all Catholics or Christians. In recent years, a post of Religious Assistant has been added for school-based support.	SGT is the key person for PGE development; a team should be set up to help, depending on the priority of the school.
Resources (Time, and teaching materials)	Plenty and provided by the publishers. With definite lesson times for GS but is claimed not enough.	Mostly the teachings kits are produced by different organisations or the internet sources or the school visits of NGOs. Most of the schools have MCE lessons in different modes.	At least 1-2 lessons at every Catholic school; the teaching materials are all provided by the sponsoring bodies in books, VCDs or some internet resources.	Vague framework, some teachings kits available, internet resources are limited. Different schools have different attitudes towards the PGE, in independent or integrated modes with different content.
Approach	Formal curriculum (in full menu)	So-called whole school-approach, formal,	Present in timetable and in form of “pseudo” curriculum to meet the	Class teachers to handle.

	GS / PSHE	MCE	RS (in terms of Christianity)	PGE
		informal or as hidden curriculum.	request of CDHK.	
Teacher training	EMB provides plenty of relevant training.	EMB provides relevant training.	Sponsoring body provides plenty of relevant training for the catholic teachers.	EMB provides limited training.
Assessment for students	Formative and Summary Assessment, project learning	Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) and worksheet if possible	Formative and Summary Assessment	Assessment of the Performance in Affective and Social Outcomes (APASO) and family worksheets, student profiles
Further development	There will be plenty of room to further develop GS in the form of a school-based curriculum as Liberal Studies in senior secondary school. Moreover, GS may gradually take up the role of MCE in the future with a multi-disciplinary approach.	More and more resources are produced as school-based development is ongoing. It depends on the further development of GS; it may be integrated with GS someday later.	Like the CDHK, they are undergoing an intensive reform about their obsolete curriculum and to link with the affective or life education being launched in school. There may be a trend for it to be combined with the PGE or in further steps, MCE.	It is predicted from the ongoing development that it could be school-based, changed to textbooks, linked up with parental education, integrated with other subjects or deleted, depending on the perseverance of guidance teachers, power of the D&G team in schools and the consensus of teachers.

Table 7.1 Comparison of MCE, PGE, GS, RS and values education

	School A	School B	SGTs	EMB
Reasons of Support	To lessen the workload of teachers and to reduce the overlapping.	To save time and to reduce the overlapping part	From the questionnaires, 36% of respondents show there is integration of the PGE with other subjects	They did not obviously support the idea and query its effectiveness.
Reasons of objection	It may reduce the communication time between the class teacher and the students. Integration may let PGE disappear gradually.	No obvious opposing ideas.	67% of respondents show there is no integration of the PGE in their schools	They did not obviously oppose the idea or query about the effectiveness.
Real Situations	Large part of the PGE had been “integrated” into RE lessons; however, both teachers and students were confused if it was integration. Overall, there was no monitoring about.	Integration was tried and failed. It finds that teachers and panel heads had no idea about integration. No monitoring and follow up. In fact, there was no collaboration foundation for integration.	From the questionnaires, indeed about 14% with the 36% is done in class as “integrated” lessons; the rest (22%) is done in large classes. The subjects for integration are mostly GS and MCE, RE or library lessons. From the in-depth interview, there was successful integration with the PGE and GS through demonstration or integration with MCE, life education those have similar nature with PGE.	Their figures shows 35% of the PGE done is integrated with other subjects, 68% is integrated with MCE activities and 77% integrated into other activities. ¹⁹

Table 7.2 Conclusion for the comment and actual situation about integration of PGE

¹⁹ http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/TC/Content_5884/csgs%20review%2014.2.07%20wong1.pdf
「全方位學生輔導服務-校長領導的角色」研討會全方位學生輔導服務—範疇發展與鞏固

Wallace et al. (2001:13) reports that the gains of curriculum integration are in terms of “developing viable and interesting integrated programs but are offset by the time required to do so, the energy inverted in forming new relationships, and the frustration experienced by the each of curriculum support”. Without adequate preparation there is only lip service. Atkinson (1985, 132-33) cited in Power (1996, p. 113) argues “Real integration is problematic..... Integration is, of course, always relative” because during integration, there is selection and weighing up of all kinds of information for a new integrated curriculum.

Morris (1998) has studied the difficulties of an integrated curriculum in Hong Kong and finds that the provision of integrated curricular is administratively very difficult as it requires inputs from a range of teachers (in both Schools A and B). Teachers are educated and trained in academic disciplines, but they are not comfortable to teach topics outside their expertise. (In Schools A and B, teachers ignored the integration unless they had a demonstration or collaboration, so they had no idea about “integration”.)

Hence, in School A, the shortsighted integration initiative brought nothing new between RE and the PGE, except “replacing”. The panel heads had no knowledge, skills or awareness to reach a compromise on integrating the values, concepts, disciplines, implications and pedagogies of the two subjects. Lam (2001) concludes that an unlimited integration may create a curriculum in which teachers have no confidence. In spite of some seminars about integration of the PGE with other subjects were launched by the EMB in piecemeal, the authenticity and applicability of the suggestions was questioned. For instance, if the element of “fairness” in fraction teaching of mathematics was input into the PGE lesson plan, is it “integrating” or “mentioning”?

7.5.5. Is integration a feasible approach?

Morris suggests that “the central issue is not whether we should integrate or not but to determine the balance we want to achieve within a curriculum so that pupils are exposed to both the discipline and their integration” (1998, p. 79).

Thus, it is not the matter of integration, but the priority and proportion of knowledge we give to children. The emphasis on generic skills (such as communication, collaboration and problem solving skills) renders the PGE salient. The PGE could disappear if all subjects absorbed these elements and if teachers could convey the messages and encourage their students to practise the skills acquired daily.

This study shows that integration was immature; in Schools A and B, teachers lacked ideas of curriculum integration and modifications. Hence, “false” integrations were done with administrative moves; the worst cases of integration were deletions and swallowing of PGE in the regular curriculum. In fact, subject teaching and curriculum integration are two strands of thought: vertical versus multi-dimensional or horizontal thinking. Inevitably, curriculum integration is demanding for both teachers. The actual integration of subjects should consider the common values, similarities and difference in knowledge and skills of the subjects to produce an integrated version by restructuring the values, knowledge and skills of both. Hence, input of time, resources, experience and leadership for integration are essential. This raises the following questions:

- Why integration? What are the targets for integration?
- How can students benefit from the integrated curriculum?
- Is it a permanent arrangement, a policy or just an annual program?

- How many subjects should be involved? To what extent?
- Who can design, sustain, organise and refine the integrated curriculum continuously?
- Are the school's culture, management and leadership ready for curriculum integration?

7.5.5.1. Is integration possible for PGE and Moral and Civic Education (MCE)?

By comparing the Guidelines about Civic Education before and after 1997 (CDC-ED, 1985, ED, 1996), it is found that the syllabus, strategies and structure for MCE development before the handover were clear. The elements of personal growth were stressed in the MCE guideline in 2002 (CDC-ED, 2002e) with the suggestions of life events education. Obviously, those related to nationality are highlighted. Luk-Fong (2005b, p. 86) points out the overlapping areas of MCE and the PGE. Both curricula focus on the whole person development of students and aim at helping students to develop positive values and attitudes, and self-and-other relationships and advocate a life-event approach, so they have the same themes of personal development and healthy living, family life, school life and social life.

From the cases of SGTs, MCE was found to be the easiest entry point for the PGE, overlapping topics between MCE and the PGE can be restructured or the PGE (class lessons) are used as an extension of the MCE activities like mass lessons or assemblies. It depends on the collaboration between the panel heads and the SGTs or the absolute dedication of SGTs for the integration issue. EMB people suggested that a "Student Growth" team be organised for the cross-disciplinary issues about student growth.

I suggest there should be a team to organise all activities like MCE,

extra-curricular activities or the PGE, so a team could be set up to organise all activities about learning experience with regard to the generic skills and attitudes. I think schools could set up a team called “Student Growth” or “Student Development” to organise all sorts of things related to students’ growth with clear objectives. I think this could save time and manpower, and also the administrative procedures to deal with the overlapping activities. I cooperate with mainly MCE for sharing the successful experience. (EDX)

School A

Before 2004, SGT and the MCE coordinator did not cooperate on integration. But the new SGP (social worker) planned to continue the MCE mass lessons with in-depth discussions and activities in the classroom in form of PGE lessons for consolidation. (Refer to Verbatim 7.5.5.1)

Overlapping of the PGE, morning assembly and MCE lessons may overlap each other. To save time, review of the overlapping topics is one way. All kinds of these share the common goal, to equip students more for the future, learn to be a person, a citizen and villagers in the “earth” village, with proper values. (A-T2)

School B

MCE was one of the duties of D&G team with DM as the coordinator. The MCE and PGE curriculum was organised and restructured by the researcher in mixed mode (both mass lessons in school hall and lessons in the classrooms). The curriculum structure was inconsistent with the PGE requirements stated in EMBSDD (2004) with addition of certain MCE topics to meet the students’ needs of School B in that academic year. In addition, a team of MCE ambassadors had students convey the MCE messages on campus. Most of the teachers were satisfied with the progress and

arrangement of MCE.

Indeed, I appreciate so much the changes in the recent years, but it is not easy to do it. You work so hard. I think the continuous modifications are necessary every year in terms of the objectives, the content, the quality.... (B-T4)

I preferred a more systematic approach, like moral talks and inclusion, and it should be the teachers' duty: we should point out the important values where necessary.... (B-T9)

Some SGTs developed the whole curriculum of MCE by including the PGE. They had continuous discussions with DMs and the panel heads of RE and GS. They found it difficult to integrate the two. In some cases, PGE was diffused into the original framework of MCE as a kind of supplementary materials. Although some SGTs worked hard to construct the whole curriculum of MCE and PGE, this induced jealousy. Besides, the superficial success might not be retained when the coordinators left the schools unless a smart team and system had been developed as in Schools C1 and C2. School D, J and H also integrated PGE examples with MCE.

Schools C1 and C2

Regarding the effectiveness, I found it difficult to evaluate the impact of the PGE in School C1 because it is already their tradition to have the MCE programme. MCE has developed maturely; all things are ready in the summer holidays. They are more traditional, with less electronic resources. (SG-C)

School D

After the focus inspection, we set up the MCE team, which is also led by me. As suggested by the inspectors, moral lessons were found and taught by the class teachers, once a week, which is the trend for the whole territory. I try to

design the whole curriculum for MCE in my school.....I made an MCE curriculum of 90 lessons. It should not have been designed by me, but the panel head left school for further study at that time. I could not wait to try to do it. I completed the whole curriculum in the summer holiday and then let all staff review the curriculum at each level. Then MCE was formally started at school. I was so happy to know I was a superwoman! At the same time, I followed another great project....., it is a grand engineering project! I was so proud of my ability..... I must fully prepare everything for all forms. (SG-D)

There is no conflict between GS and the moral lessons on Saturdays. Every month, we have a moral theme; then I will link up the moral lessons and the theme together monthly. We have a lot of topics, like “trust”, “confidence” and “fidelity” - everything is designed and planned by me: after the planning, I will further discuss it with the DM and RE panel head. (SG-D)

School J

I did it myself at the very beginning to explore myself. Gradually, I found that a lot of projects are dealing with the elements in the PGE, like life education, MCE.... I found it so fragmented. Recently, I try to integrate the curriculum with the colleagues in charge of MCE and DM.... After integration, there was no overlapping at all. Now, there is one period per week and the PGE is taught by the class teachers. We have the year plan. (SG-J)

School H

At the beginning, the PGE could be linked up with emotional education, so I was happy to introduce it into school to solve the emotional problems of students. (SG-H)

The students in the focus group wanted to see the strong linkage between MCE activity and the PGE. They liked both the mass lessons (mainly MCE) and the class lessons (PGE).

Interestingly, some topics appearing in the guidelines of 1985 and 1996 about Civic education appear in the syllabus of Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE). It shows that Civic Education or MCE could be the “buffer curriculum” (a bridge between the daily life and curriculum) for the regular curriculum like GS or PSHE. Novel knowledge appears as irregular curriculum and transforms into regular curriculum after a period of time. Hence, it could be the same for PGE.

To sum up, the MCE curriculum available in a school can directly provide the platform for PGE development, all depends the collaboration of MCE and the PGE coordinators. However, quite a number of cases show that integration is possible unless it is all done by SGT or there was already an open-minded and well-established team for school-based MCE development.

7.5.5.2. Is the integration possible for PGE and General Studies (GS)?

Integration with GS and the PGE in the case studies was found to be possible but difficult because of rich syllabus and tight schedule of GS, PGE had no room to jam it though the topics match each other. In School A, time was not allowed to include similar topics of the PGE into GS because there was only one period of GS per week. In School B, GS teachers were busy due to other issues like project learning.

I think we must match everything carefully, now that one period must change to two periods of GS. I cannot tell the possibility because of the time allocation. I support the idea for integration; however, in GS, there are a lot of

things to teach in one period too, so I worried whether time is adequate for more sharing and in-depth activity. (A-T6)

GS is a regular lesson, but the PGE is not, so there is no pressure for students. The syllabus in P5 may not be possible for all topics, as you need to work it out specifically and intentionally. (B-T3)

For GS, teachers are too busy in project learning and the packed curriculum. It is so difficult. (B-T1)

One of the successful cases is SG-D; she initiated PGE integration by considering issues like time-saving and overlapping. She invited social workers to help and began the integration lessons with demonstrations in the GS lessons. The ideas were quickly accepted by the GS teachers. (The GS panel head was on study leave at the time.)

I included the PGE in GS as a theme-based activity. I also invited social workers to come to share a talk, borrowing lessons from GS. Why I can do that, was because at the very beginning, I tried to link up the PGE with GS strongly, so the PGE was included in GS. Obviously, the curriculums are overlapping, so my request for lesson integration was alright and accepted by GS teachers. (SG-D)

From the very beginning, I tried to implement it in the lower forms. I made use of all chances. Mostly, I dared to do it before I told my principal; because I could not lose the chance I met. I tried when there was a small chance for me. I was quite brave at that time to start the curriculum in J4 because I found that in the GS textbook of J4, a lot of topics are suitable for the PGE. I tried to persuade all J4 GS teachers, that I would like to inject the PGE into their curriculum and I planned to teach the related modules myself with support and assistance in the classroom. Then I entered the classroom, directly to

demonstrate the lesson for the teachers. The feedback from students was wonderful. I got a great sense of achievement. It was the first time for this school to implement such co-teaching. After that, teachers were very appreciative of the plan: they thought that if the lessons could be arranged early in the academic year, it would be better. (SG-D)

Students also perceived the problem of overlapping topics between GS and the PGE. They liked the new GS textbooks and the changes.

Nowadays, in GS lessons, we have VCDs to watch, which is better than before with the electronic textbooks. so we could have games and the lesson is more scheduled with the CD-Rom. (A-4-S)

In view of integration between GS and the PGE and their similarities in syllabus, there are two points to note. First, GS is a subject in the regular curriculum which has its own syllabus, its own assessment system and is also the key subject for project learning. Thus, GS and the PGE could be integrated through project-based or theme-based teaching in the long run. Second, the PGE provides an alternative way of teaching in terms of personal growth and counseling skills. SGTs can help GS teachers to clarify some concepts and provide constructive opinions if co-planning meetings are allowed.

Future development of GS and PSHE, and integration possibility

The curriculum guideline (CDC-ED, 2002a) of Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE) for secondary school encourages schools to create their own integrated PSHE curriculum. The six strands of knowledge of PSHE are (1) Health and Living (2) People and the Environment (3) Science and Technology in Everyday Life (4) Community and Citizenship (5) National Identity and Chinese Culture and (6)

Global Understanding and the Information Era. In contrast, the focus of PSHE in primary schools is on GS; schools are encouraged to reform GS with the following key points which are stressed in the guideline:

1. textbook-free teaching
2. personal and social education with a life event approach
3. hands-on and minds-on activities
4. positive attitudes and value education
5. role of GS in moral and civic education
6. in-service teacher education programmes
7. research and development projects
8. development of student profiles
9. a culture of constant renewal of the school-based curriculum

These points are consistent with the aims of PGE development, but in view of the present situation and the textbook reform of the GS, it is quite difficult for the teachers to do more. It depends on the curriculum leaders like the Principals, CCs and panel heads.

7.5.5.3. Is the integration possible for PGE and Religious Education (RE)?

Teachers disagreed on the integration of RE and PGE: some were optimistic while some were confused, annoyed, or opposed. Few RE teachers objected to the PGE if it helped the students. RE and the PGE can co-exist. Some teachers thought that the PGE could be an extension of RE lessons or vice versa to compensate for the inadequacy of the present material, but it was not able to replace RE which has profound meaning from the Bible.

The basic values of Catholic Church consist of faith, truth, hope, forgiveness, love and so forth. Of course, there are overlapping between RE and PGE. Moreover, some teachers thought that the PGE might be helpful for non-Catholic students who reject the Bible. The non-religious teachers also agreed with the integration if there is careful coordination between PGE and the Bible. Here the views of some stakeholders about the integration of PGE with RE.

School A (Refer to Verbatim 7.5.5.3.)

It is not possible to include all of the PGE in RE, but some parts are similar to the topics in RE especially the topics dealing with moral values. I think the part of personal and social development is similar to that in RE, which could be combined together. (A-T5)

I don't agree that the PGE is an excessive thing. I think the integration of the PGE with the RE curriculum depends on the proportion and mode of combination. For instance, in P4 textbooks, the content is very good, so the games and activities of the PGE could play a supplementary role in the RE lessons. However, for those of P6, the content of textbooks is quite dull, so the PGE could be the core part of the lesson using the stories in the RE textbook for the conclusions. I do think that the PGE is very necessary to compensate the inadequacy of the present material we use unless we change the books we use. (A-T5)

I think this is possible but it needs them to explore the mode of integration. Because the leader of the PGE is not an RE teacher, and the concepts in RE are profound, it is not easy to do it. We want to teach both RE and the PGE well; however, if they do not match it, it will create a mess. If it is well matched, we can use the content of the PGE as an extension to consolidate

some concepts. If it is a bad match, it may go beyond the original learning outcome of RE and spoil the PGE lesson arrangement, and both lose. (A-T1)

I think there is no conflict between the two subjects. They have a close relationship in certain topics. But time is the main problem especially to carefully adjust the arrangement. We may consider rearranging the teaching schedule and cut some topics. So without adequate time, it is not possible. (A-T6)

I think from P1 to P5, it is OKHowever, up to P6, the content of the textbooks is not well written, so we find it difficult to teach. Besides, the content for P6 is not directly related to the Bible. It has a heavy sense of Personal Growth, so I would suggest that the PGE can help to make it interesting and interactive. (A-T5)

Some RE teachers in School A worried that integration of the PGE into RE might mask the real implications of RE, like the core message of RE: love from God or faith. They worried that bad integration might result in lose-lose scenarios. Without monitoring, the “integration” failed.

Integration into RE and GS is not good, difficult to control and the teachers can do nothing. (A-T2)

If there is integration between the PGE and RE, I think we must firstly understand the learning outcomes of RE and find the suitable PGE material to match it. For instance, if the material is about helping people and love, almost all bible messages are related to these, but it is too shallow and vague, and cannot reach the core concepts of the Bible.....Probably, the person in charge did not read the RE book thoroughly, so he or she may not know the underlying meaning of the content. Whenever you read the Bible, you may find different implications from it. It depends on the teaching experience.

More explorations are needed in the coming future.

School B (Refer to Verbatim 7.5.5.3.)

RE is another subject for personal growth in terms of the Bible. When we teach about the love of Jesus and Holy Mary, they think it is just a story. They may not believe in it. However, the PGE can guide them about the emotions and the social skills. In RE, we talk a lot about mutual help and caring for other empathy, without the learning skills. The PGE is focused on personal growth in the sense of counselling, so it is difficult to separate the two subjects. They are very similar. RE must link up to the Bible; without the Bible, it becomes a moral lesson. One important target is RE is a way to convey the message of god to the students.....RE is not able to replace the PGE at all because of the different framework like the learning skills section, which is not possible to teach in RE.....Integration may be a risk if teachers do not care about it. So a definite lesson for the PGE is necessary to cater for the social phenomenon.....I am hoping that RE and the PGE could be combined together. I do think it is possible if we could sit together and discuss it. However, how about class teachers? We may need to do both. (B-T6)

Integration of RE is being promoted by the Church; however, it will never succeed in Hong Kong's context.

Indeed, integration of RE into the whole curriculum is the ultimate goal of the church. I know in Australia, there is real integration of RE into every subject because all teachers in the schools are catholic and they have clear targets and direction in religious education, so they can make use of every chance to convey the messages of God, even in Mathematics. When such idea was brought back to Hong Kong, nobody cared because it was almost impossible

to realise in the Hong Kong context. (A-T5)

Students' and Parents' Views

Their feelings were strange and contradictory: they thought that the PGE and RE are similar, but the PGE is funnier than RE. In RE, there are a lot of Bible stories, some students wondered the substantiality. A catholic parent from School B pointed out that RE stresses the relationships with God, but the PGE is about the relationship between oneself and others.

I think the difference between the PGE and RE is that RE stresses our relationship with God, but the PGE is about the relationship between oneself and others. (B-6-P)

Some students thought that RE and the PGE can co-exist because RE is boring and some students did not believe in God. However, some students strongly opposed the integration because they thought that they are two different things. They thought such content is incompatible with PGE. They said the integration would create a mess.

Support

Sometimes, PGE is similar to RE, like finding out our merits.

PGE looks similar to RE, but it is much funnier than RE. RE is dull because it always tells us the stories of Jesus and God. I wonder if they are true or not; I don't believe them and they are boring.

I think it is possible because some topics are similar and related.

It could be, but RE is mainly about Bible stories.

It could be, but RE is not only Bible stories; they teach us the views of God like to treasure life.

For P3 to P5, it may not be possible because of the topics we learn are not consistent with the PGE.

Objections

No, RE is the old history; I don't agree to put them together. They could not be mixed together.

RE and the PGE cannot be mixed together, just like mixing oil and water together; Don't do that!

I don't agree because the PGE is about how to handle things. RE is about Jesus and the Good Sentences. If we combine them together, I will be in a mess to separate them from Jesus and from the PGE?

I don't want the funny thing and boring thing together. Don't mix them together. They should not be mixed together. Sometimes, Jesus' story is so sad, so if it is added to PGE lessons, I will suffer from schizophrenia!!

Is it necessary for religious schools to develop the PGE if they have already a set of similar materials? What should be done next in the religious schools for growth education?

A set of conventional RE textbooks *The Happy Road 幸福的道路* (DCCC, 1996) had been used for years; it failed to stimulate the interests of students, hence, reform of RE was ongoing in the Catholic schools as of this writing. The biggest difference between PGE and RE is the emphasis on counselling skills and the moral concepts, it is about "how" and "what" to do. Many topics in "*The Happy Road 幸福的道路*" (DCCC, 1996) (except those on religion) are repeated in the PGE, MCE and GS. Surprisingly, the curriculum is also found within the framework of the four learning areas of the PGE. For instance, there is a lesson on "Silent Night" in P4 (about cooperation). A similar topic is found in the PGE, GS and MCE but in different presentations. Usually there are games, discussions, role plays and debriefing in PGE lesson plans to illustrate the implications of cooperation; for GS, cooperation is

described in the text with examples of practical situations; for MCE, this topic may be taught in mass lessons or seminars with dramas or storytelling. Compared to RE lessons, PGE lessons provide students with more practical micro-skills and an authentic learning platform. Nevertheless, one common problem of RE and PGE is the diffusion of concepts (guidance and faith/belief) in schools. There are same difficulties with the diffusion of faith because of a lack of cooperation between schools and churches. (Section 2.6, CCE, 1988)

Hence, some experienced RE teachers supported co-existence rather than integration. Some teachers worried that the integrated version may not convey the message of God if the teacher cannot deal with the content, the badly merged version may lead to lose-lose results. Moreover, the integration may let RE lessons become a general moral lesson which is incompatible with the aim of RE. Besides, some teachers questioned their colleagues' ability to handle the integrated matter in their classrooms and the additional workload for the RE team if the duty is shifted to them from class teachers. The partial integration of the PGE and RE was accepted for similar areas and it is not suitable for the syllabus related to history or theology. Consensus among RE teachers must be addressed in the process.

In an article about the practice of Christian counsellors, Alexander²⁰ (p.1) explains the implications of integration, especially of Christianity and counselling: "Integration itself refers to the process whereby two different disciplines or foci are brought together" and

true integration involves an examination of underlying philosophical beliefs,
an investigation of theoretical understanding, a careful exploration of scripture,

²⁰ <http://www.ccaa.net.au/documents/CCAACounsellingIntegration.pdf> (Alexander, I. *Integration in the practice of Christian counsellors* - Applicants for Member of the Christian Counsellors Association of Australia)

and a thorough reflection on practices to clarify a conceptual position which is not implicitly contradictory, but also holds the paradoxes of the real life.

7.5.6. Section summary

This study shows that the teachers and panel heads in the case schools were unprepared for and misunderstood integration and its implications. Integration could have been done if the teams had been able to collaborate and commit to it. Additional resources should have been provided for design, monitoring and evaluation. Integration cannot solve the problem of overlapping, but it is a cost-effective way to merge curricula to provide better learning and experience for students. In fact, integration is a step forward for a paradigm shift in curriculum development, so teaching training in curriculum integration should be provided prior to actions. Owing to the independent working culture in school, integration of PGE initially succeeded with MCE, and integration with GS and RE needs further study. Meanwhile, PGE is found to be a “buffer” curriculum before its contents are subsumed into the regular curriculum.

With respect to the development of the PGE, MCE, RE and GS in primary schools, there are different expectations from different parties: MCE and D&G sections of EMB expected the integration of MCE and the PGE with the school-based approach with new elements and new pedagogy; some religious organisations expect the integration of MCE and RE to emerge from a new package of RE curriculum consisting of the MCE and religious elements. One parent in School B pointed out that RE stresses relationships with God, but the PGE stresses one’s relationship with others. The CDC expects the integration of GS and MCE, the holistic and comprehensive development of PSHE and a school-based GS curriculum in the future.

Referring to the curriculum guidelines of PSHE (CDC-ED, 2002a), GS or PSHE is prone to include MCE and RE in the future. Hence, the final version could be the combination of MCE, PGE, RE and GS to produce a new school-based GS curriculum. (MCE + PGE + RE + GS = New GS) in the form of a holistic, comprehensive, school-based cross-disciplinary mode. Students are expected to explore their knowledge, values and micro-skills through interactive, experiential, discovery, enquiry and project learning activities. SGTs may help the integration and provide their professional opinions in the sections about personal and social education. If this is the case, the PGE could be immersed in the new curriculum.

The case of integration shows that all boundaries could be constructed and dismantled and depends on teachers' willingness, insight and vision. The processes are painstaking but we must learn to give up the outdated and bulkiness of the past. Lee (1990, p.53-57) says no education is value-free. However, it can be value-rich and value-weak. Value-rich subjects could be MCE, religion, social studies, history, arts, while value-weak subjects include languages, information technology, mathematics or science. In other words, the value-weak subjects could be termed as "skill-training education". Value-rich education affects of the development of the whole person. Nowadays, there is an obvious bias towards value-weak subjects. It then creates an opportunity for PGE.

7.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the practical situations of teaching, learning and effectiveness of PGE. The first section shows the improvement in students and teachers. There is a debate over the trade off between school-based design and textbooks. It raises the

issue of the subjectisation of PGE and the trade off of the fixed or flexible mode that could meet changing needs. Finally, the chapter investigates the feasibility of integration between PGE and other subjects. A new integrated GE curriculum is suggested to include the PGE and MCE.

In respond to Research Question One (Is PGE development a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?), this chapter about management of curriculum development makes the following conclusions.

There is different feedback on the necessity and positive expectations of PGE. Teachers' feedback ranged from acceptance to ignorance. However, PGE is regarded as a meaningful program.

With respect to teaching and learning, PGE can be implemented if teachers have backup, training, guidance, and resources. In this study, co-planning, co-teaching, and demonstration are tried. Students' changes are noticed after the program concludes and it takes longer time to observe. Students' positive changes occur in their attitudes, collaboration, communication, and improved relationships with teachers.

Regarding PGE's modes of delivery, school-based design is an ideal choice. However, it is labour intensive and time consuming. All depends on the resources (e.g., time and manpower) that are available and the culture and readiness of the schools. MCE is found to be the best entry point for PGE. There is no clear preference for school-based design or textbooks. Reported by SGTs, a combined format is used by including the school-based design and the available materials.

Superficial integration could be done easily but real integration must take account of

the school culture. Management, leadership, and committed teachers can produce a cost-effective curriculum. It finds that PGE can be integrated with other subjects. Committed coordinator(s) and a well-established team are necessary (e.g. MCE and PGE); project-based or theme-based teaching could be tried (e.g. GS and PGE) if SGTs can contribute their opinions to co-planning and co-teaching; and partial integration (e.g. PGE and RE) could be attempted if there is consensus among (RE) teachers. A holistic, comprehensive, cross-disciplinary school-based GS curriculum may be produced with the combination of MCE, PGE, RE and GS. SGTs can help with the integration and the sections on personal and social education.

Some successful examples show that curriculum development is important to increase teachers' participation and interest. The selection of an anchor point for PGE and a pilot scheme with right targets in a stepwise approach are as important as hand-on assistance for teachers. A longer exploration period for teachers should be allowed. The autonomy given to teachers, the integration of PGE and the form of evaluation should be considered, planned and reviewed to ensure that targets have been met.

In respond to Research Question Two (What are the significances of developing PGE as the first formal guidance curriculum in Hong Kong primary schools?), this chapter shows the changes happened in teachers and students and some findings emerged about the perceptions about curriculum development from the stakeholders.

In the curriculum development process, teachers had their own ways to deal with the new school policy. Most of the teachers become positive about their growth and their teaching skills, their roles as teachers and their relationships with students. They found what they missed (the part of guidance as a teacher) after PGE teaching. However, some wanted miracles from PGE, and some opposed PGE because of the sense that

PGE duplicated other subjects or their misunderstandings, laissez-faire attitude, personality, adaptability and even their passion in education. Most of the students enjoyed the PGE lessons, they were able to identify the teaching style and hoped teachers' presentation could be interactive and stimulating. Teachers' enthusiasm and commitment are the basis of a successful PGE lessons, and PGE provides a backstage and the platform for students and teachers to express themselves without the masks of "obedience" and "control".

No matter what strategies (evaluation meetings, focus groups, co-planning, co-teaching, and demonstration) are applied, direct dialogue with teachers and students is the key to success. PGE indeed provides a brand-new training process for teachers. The prerequisites to success are the open-mindedness of the curriculum leaders (SGT) and the participants (teachers). Students like the interactive lessons, debriefing, sharing and self-disclosure of teachers because all make them feel their virtual self, their "real" teachers and their "real" classmates. It is the most valuable things in PGE and may not present in other subjects.

Many SGTs aim at producing a curriculum that can meet students' needs. The attractiveness and cohesiveness of the lesson plans are their key points. Teachers prefer lesson plans those are convenient, time-saving, rich in moral values, or discipline-based. Students prefer those that are relevant to their daily life and funny. Some teachers suggested that content and pedagogy not interfere with the caring nature of PGE. The family worksheet showed that some teachers and parents kept their former. Nonetheless, PGE has drawn teachers and parents' attention and directed students' concern to their personal growth.

About the modes of delivery, teachers' perception of "subject" is fixed with the

knowledge in a formulated manner; they want to preserve PGE in a subject-free status to retain its flexibility and the caring, open and counselling features. “Subject” is other than counselling and guidance. Integration shows the two strands of thinking in curriculum development: vertical versus multi-dimensional or horizontal thinking. According to Brown (2002), true integration involves investigation of philosophical beliefs, theoretical understanding, exploration of scripture, and a thorough reflection on practices to clarify a conceptual position. In fact, integration is possible, with creation after destruction. Values are the foundation of education. PGE began in primary schools partially because of the long-term bias toward skill- or knowledge-based subjects in Hong Kong.

CHAPTER EIGHT CONCLUSION

8.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer two research questions by integrating the findings in the previous chapters on PGE development:

Research Question One: Is PGE development a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?

Research Question Two: What are the significances of developing PGE for the education system as the first formal guidance curriculum in Hong Kong primary schools?

The implementation of PGE implies “change” that brings both negative and positive impacts to the system. The positive findings include the rewards and motivations for the innovation; while the negative findings represent the deficiencies, handicaps, and the conflicts that are embedded in the policy and the system, as well as the negative emotions and perceptions of the stakeholders. The following section summarises the gains and losses (i.e., the positive and negative findings) from this study of PGE development.

8.2. Summary of the Findings in This Study

8.2.1. The positive findings from this study

In terms of positive findings, there were mixed feelings (hate and gratitude) towards the EMB: some principals provided support for the time allocation and gave autonomy

and trust for PGE curriculum development; some senior teachers and level coordinators worked together toward the same targets. This study finds that teachers had the capability to assist in PGE development. Some proactive teachers helped with the modifications to the lesson plan. Students expected their teachers to be friendly, smiling, relaxed, and open-minded, with good time management and classroom management skills.

At the beginning, all stakeholders had mixed feelings and perceptions towards PGE. During the implementation period, the feedback from teachers, students, and parents was positive. It aroused their interest in personal growth. Teachers performed differently according to their confidence, skills, perceptions, and passion. Some teachers reflected on their teaching skills, roles, and relationships with students; they found what they had been lacking as teachers (the element of guidance among the three basic duties of teachers- teaching, discipline and guidance) and grew with their children during the PGE lessons. PGE is known to provide a backstage for students and teachers to express themselves without the masks of “obedience” and “control”. Students experienced the care and love from the committed teachers after PGE lessons. In the meantime, teachers gained happiness, insight, and knowledge from the PGE lessons and perceived the power and necessity of counselling. Peer appreciation and learning among teachers occurred during co-teaching and co-planning. Some teachers also expressed appreciation for the hard work and the persistence of the guidance teachers regarding PGE development.

8.2.2. The negative findings from this study

On the negative side of PGE development, this study finds that most of the “obedient” schools encountered the policies with a “wait and see” attitude and superficial

conformity, but executed their school-based development plans, hidden agendas, and prioritized targets simultaneously. Not all principals performed supportive roles, and just a few deputy principals demonstrated their roles as mediators or facilitators. Veto points (Dyer, 2000) were created gradually. The study also finds some contradictory situations: with more policies from EMB, schools tended to be more likely to “wait and see”, but dared not say “No!”; with more plans for holistic development with stringent monitoring, the more schools tended to conform superficially to it with their hidden agendas, and the more claims in school, based upon decentralization, the more ambiguity and chaos in power distribution in schools arose.

The middle managers believed that “principals do right” and actually worked within their isolated working culture (including loose coupling among colleagues, contrived collegiality, and bounded collaboration), lacking of quality time, mutual respect, trust, and open-mindedness. They were frustrated with the “do not know how to do” period and power struggles (comprising hate, jealousy, suspicion, and aggression). They were also inexperienced in cross-disciplinary management and chaotic with regard to the internal differentiation about the paradigm shift. Superficial (fake) harmony was maintained through the “tolerance” strategy; negative feelings; and struggles with self-defence, passiveness, isolation, and refusal (Huang, 2006). In fact, all programme organisers need to be realistic and aware of the dark side (jealousy, selfishness, calculation, the presence of prisoners’ dilemmas, crisis of losing “face,” promotion battle) of an organisation which is manipulated by people. The case studies conclude that the D&G teams were normally underdeveloped, with weak manpower, limited willingness, insufficient training, and undefined vision; this affected the job satisfaction, confidence, and self-efficacy of teachers to handle the discipline and guidance work. Support from the discipline master was necessary to make the change.

“Words speak louder than actions”; teachers were hesitant to devote time and effort to PGE development or avoided the guidance work because of: (1) the deprived and strange image of SGT as a manager and counsellor is not powerful in administrative sense; (2) contextual and cultural limitations: teachers were twisted by the vertical push from subject teaching, the horizontal pull from whole-school demands, and the “new professionalism”, which accelerates the fragmentation among teachers; (3) teachers’ motivation (affected by their preferences, self-determination, autonomy, capacity, job control, self-efficacy, commitment, workload, perceptions of fairness, and career perspective); (4) individual capacity of teachers (consists of the education / training background, skills, and knowledge about guidance and curriculum design), and (5) insufficient cold support (clear administration guidelines, procedures, monitoring processes) and warm support (the hands-on help through meetings, training, or informal sharing). Some opponents complained that PGE yielded no immediate miracles following lessons and found that its content overlapped with other subjects. Moreover, failure in obtaining the appropriate time allocation and time length meant a failure in winning formal status for development in the school.

Regarding the modes of delivery, the study finds that teachers preferred PGE in a “subject-free” status to retain “flexibility,” and the family worksheet reveals that some teachers and parents still pursued standard answers.

SGTs were basically trained in counselling skills and leadership skills. However, the transition from a counsellor to a manager is difficult, because of the contextual unprivileged premise; it includes the unstable status of SGTs, the complex job demands, and the unfair and deprived situations for SGTs in primary schools. Inadequate trust, ignorance, and lack of empowerment place SGTs in a very difficult situation to initiate reform and balance their dual, conflicting roles as counsellors and

managers. The statistics indicate that PGE is most likely a “one-man” curriculum, prepared by SGTs who claim to suffer the conflict of the dual roles of manager and counsellor in the war of resource fighting, at the expense of building a harmonious relationship. To adapt to the changing student guidance policy and the all-in-one job duties, it was especially difficult for the “hired” and “inserted” SGTs who were in the deprived situation, compared to posts of similar rank and those in secondary schools. SGTs’ experiences (See Verbatim 6.4.4 and Appendices C2 and C3) indicate that they suffered tiredness, loneliness, burnout, stress, and broken relationships with their colleagues in due course; however, they felt that they had grown and were proud of the curriculum they had produced. The underestimation and the uncertainty of the PGE policy had trapped SGTs in a feeling of unilateral contribution. Their status as the “outsider(s)” rendered SGTs insufficient power, time, and resources to complete the task. The transition from counsellor to manager caused them to lose their way without in-depth analysis.

8.2.3. Change for the next equilibrium

PGE is proposed as one of the mitigation measures to solve the current adolescent problems. However, has it induced other problems to be solved simultaneously? If the deeper issues are not tackled, the problem-solving cycles created can only erode the resources in a system with limited capacity. Yeung (Senge et al., 2000, introduction to the translated version) points out that school should be a lively and organic place; however, we all try to control it as though it is an inorganic machine, and problems arise. Improvement may bring out even more problems. Moreover, the negative findings in this study further prove the presence of the three important elements (artefacts, espoused values, and hidden proposals) (Schein, 1985, p. 14) that govern the operation of an organisation.

The findings above are attributed to the differences in expectations, beliefs, values, and the solid culture of the whole system. Achinstein (2002, p. 2-3) concludes that conflict actually offers a context for inquiry, organisational learning, and change; it can be constructive for the community and a school when colleagues air their differences, build understanding, and seek changes.

Change is not always successful. Circular No. 21/1998 (Operation of Whole-day Primary Schools: HKEMB, 24 June 1998) states that the whole-day school policy aims to relieve students' and schools' pressures and provides individual care for less capable students; however, the outcome is disappointing. HKIED's (2003, V) report illustrates the constraints, including the insensitivity of school heads to change requirements, low competence of school heads to monitor changes, improper utilization and allocation of available resources, discrepancies between teachers' perceived and actual workloads, teachers' anxieties about "benefit loss", and the undesirable attitudes of some teachers towards full-day primary schooling. Sometimes, the actual outcome of a change is unexpected (See Verbatim 8.2.3).

The following figure (Owen, 1995) illustrates how an organisation reaches its next equilibrium after change. The period of organisational change, as shown, is the critical moment for an organisation to self-adjust using internal and external resources and to adapt to the new territory.

The three-step process of organisational change in force field analysis

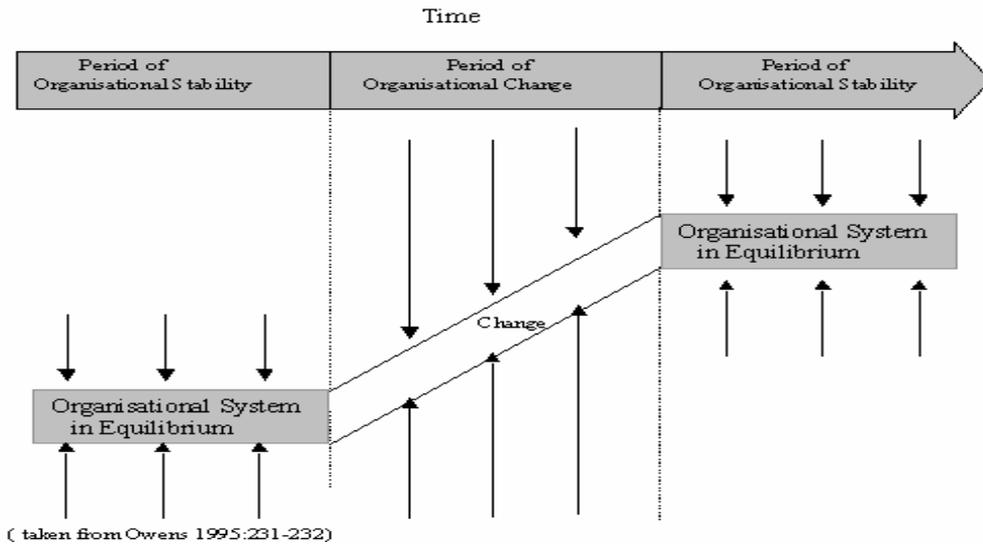


Figure 8.1 The three-step process of organisational change in force field analysis (adapted from Owen, 1995).

The PGE is a kind of intervention or intrusion in our education in recent years. It is like a water drop dripping into the sea which disappears in vain, but its introduction reflects the need to change and to compensate for what has been missing in the past.

Morris, Lo, and Adamson (2000) conclude that

“The introduction of any innovations to a school upsets the state of equilibrium and causes changes, some of which are unpredictable. As reforms are complex and fluid, schools need to know which stage of implementation they have reached and to understand the changes that are occurring in the school and its culture” (p. 260).

In other words, change pays; gains and losses happen simultaneously to disrupt the initial equilibrium for the new one. This study of PGE development is about change. The previous chapters show that a successful change requires a paradigm shift of all stakeholders. The paradigm shift implies changes in values, attitudes, skills, and

knowledge, which subsequently facilitate changes in beliefs, mindsets, culture, priorities, and resource allocation. However, what kind of paradigm shift is being requested? Is it for the government's will or for the sustainable development of schools? Is paradigm shift a risky choice for schools? Can paradigm shift ultimately produce a constructive benefit to our next generations or merely for some stakeholders?

Paradigm shift is frequently described as a transition period from the traditional environment to "effective school" or "Learning Organisation". Duttweiler (1990) defines effective schools as those which are student-centred, have a positive school climate, practice shared leadership, foster collegial interaction, and encourage creative problem solving. "Learning Organisation" implies an ever-learning institution which allows the organisation to grow and change for the sustainable development of schools.

Senge points out

the basic meaning of "learning organisation" – an organisation that is continuously expanding its capacity to create its future. For such an organisation, it is enough merely to survive, "survival learning" or what is more often termed "adaptive learning" is important – indeed, it is necessary. But for a learning organisation, "adaptive learning" must be joined by "generative learning" to enhance the capacity to create" (Senge, 1990, p. 14). "The basic rationale for such organisations is that in situations of rapid change only those that are flexible, adaptive, and productive will excel. For this to happen, it is argued, organisations need to discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels." (1990, p. 4).

8.3. The Limitations to Change

The above findings reflect how the education system and different stakeholders responded to the new policy. What actually happened in our system? What are the embedded constraints? The following tries to illustrate some embedded difficulties in culture change and conflicts in the system.

School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols, and stories that make up the “personality” of the school. These unwritten expectations build up over time as teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together, solve problems, deal with challenges, and, at times, cope with failure (Deal & Peterson, 1999). A school's culture is always at work, either helping or hindering adult learning (Deal & Peterson, 2002).²¹ Regarding the paradigm shift of the school culture, Schein says, “Culture is so stable and difficult to change because it represents the accumulated learning of a group, the way of thinking, feeling, and perceiving the world that make the group successful.”

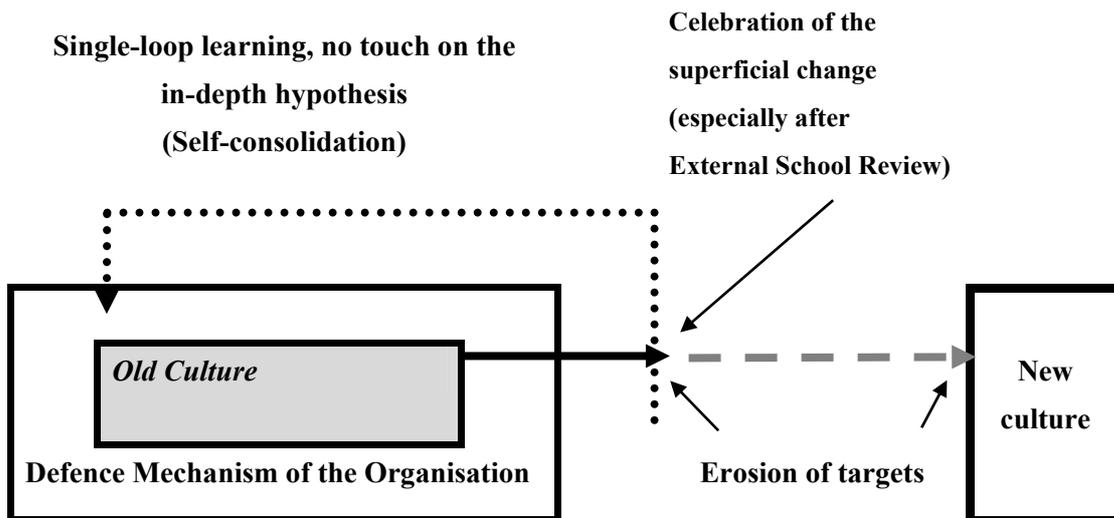


Figure 8.2 Single-loop learning of organisation makes no transition to the new culture.

²¹ <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/peterson233.cfm>

Argyris²² also points out that (Figure 8.2), if the organisation just stays in single-loop learning with superficial modification, then it is more difficult to change the in-depth mindset of the organisation. Worse still, the habitual defence and learnt helplessness help the organisation to consolidate its old culture and erode any new changes. The organisation may then celebrate superficial change or attribute the failure externally, only to repeat the failure once again. Finally, the organisation becomes stubborn, passive, and indifferent towards any change and survives by doing its existing job only. Therefore, teachers respond to the instructions of schools by superficial conformity and continuing to finish the jobs on their desks. This behaviour is found in this study, which also parallels the seven obstacles of learning organisations listed by Senge (2000):

1. Members in the organisation just concentrate on their own work, without a vision for the whole organisation.
2. Members do reflect on themselves and their work, but difficulties and mistakes are explained by other external causes, not themselves.
3. There is a lack of proactive and holistic thinking: leaders always supply the solutions to all kinds of problems and forget to solve them with their colleagues.
4. There is a lack of creativity and a concentration on individual events: members get used to solving problems, but forget how to create; no creative methods are discovered to solve the problems.
5. Members do not notice that some problems are being formed gradually.
6. The lack of reflection in daily work allows problems to grow up continuously.
7. To maintain the integrity of the organisation, opposing opinions, which may affect the “integrity,” are banned from time to time. Finally, the organisation loses the ability to learn.

²² Chris Argyris, *Theories of Action, Double-loop Learning and Organisational Learning*
<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/argyris.htm> (website)

Senge et al. (2000, translated by Yeung, 2002) describe some behaviours that indeed inhibit an organisation in learning and reforming: when people want to maintain a one-sided control of power, expand “winning” and narrow down “losing,” or suppress negative feelings. A conservative attitude indeed inhibits the development of schools toward any reforms. When the majority wants or enjoys the hierarchical relationships and high power distance, it may hinder the paradigm shift in schools from conservative to openness with more democracy, autonomy, and equality. This reminds schools to be sensitive, honest, humble, reflective, and serious. Alertness and sensitivity to change are essential to let the organisation go forward and keep pace with worldwide development.

To solve the conflicts and push the whole system process from the traditional setting to a Learning Organisation, the paradigm shift should happen for all stakeholders. If the transition only happens for some stakeholders, stress and conflicts accumulate, and burnout or ignorance results and dissipates the internal energy. The following table temporarily summarises the paradigm shift expected in this study from a traditional setting to a new equilibrium that facilitates learning and communication for curriculum development.

Equilibrium I		Equilibrium II
<p>←.....</p> <p>This study shows that some schools are still in the traditional setting, with single-loop learning and vertical thinking; this provides a comfort zone for conservative groups.</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>Paradigm Shift (changes of values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, and strategies)</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>.....→</p> <p>An advanced setting is expected to involve double-loop learning, holistic thinking, intimate collaboration, and communication for sustainable PGE development.</p>

Table 8.1 The paradigm shift expected in this study involves moving from a traditional setting to a new equilibrium that facilitates learning and communication for curriculum development

The total process of shifting from the old equilibrium to a new one requires time, courage, resources, and skills. There are tremendous conflicts and pressures to be faced. The underlying concepts are the notions of the Learning Organisation claimed by EMB: democracy, consultation, openness, seriousness, and empowerment. The Learning Organisation is a different strand of thought compared to the traditional approach, which emphasises power and control. It depends on the willingness, courage, insight, and vision of the leaders to lead the system process through the transition flexibly and wisely.

8.4. Paradigm Shift of Values and Attitudes

To reach the next equilibrium with the destination of Learning Organisation, paradigm shift for all is necessary. The paradigm shift of values and attitudes should be first considered for all stakeholders. The poem “*Knots*” (Laing, 1970, cited in Morris, 1992, p. 15), which describes the truth of how schools and teachers react to the innovation, partly reflects the perplexity to change:

There is something I don't know that I am supposed to know,
I don't know what it is I don't know, and yet I am supposed to know,
And I feel I look stupid if I seem not to know it and don't know what it is I
don't know.
Therefore, I pretend I know it.
That is nerve wracking since I don't know what I pretend to know.
Therefore I pretend I know everything.

Based on the findings, regardless of the urgency of any policies and the obedience of teachers, the EMB needs sensitivity (to evaluate the capacity of the school and the

teachers for the new policy); congruence, honesty, trust, and commitment (to ensure there are adequate resources and manpower input); respect, humbleness, and empathy (to facilitate two-way communication and understanding between EMB and other stakeholders); and the preparedness for contingency (full preparation and anticipation of the impacts with support ready). It also needs reflection to produce both growth and quality education.

School management requires alertness and sensitivity to the sustainable development of the organisation and evaluation of the readiness and the capacity of schools to cater to any new policies with respect and empathy, simultaneously. It needs congruence and honesty to balance the EMB's requests and the school's needs to give staff the clear working goals and to give students the best education. Schools should not try to please the EMB by saying 'Yes'; they may try to gain trust and understanding from EMB to secure congruence and ensure the optimum operation of schools where necessary. Hence, reflection is crucial to producing both growth and quality education in schools.

The principal should be at least open-minded, reflective, and proactive in directing changes, as he or she is the key person to give support and resources appropriately and lead the whole team in working through all kinds of ambiguity, ambivalence, and anxiety.

Middle managers need be open-minded, reflective, proactive, confident, and collaborative to facilitate change where necessary. They should have the courage, insistence, power, and compassion for open discussion and disputes to solve problems, as Cambron-McCabe and Kleiner (Senge et al., 2000) advise.

Wang and Wong (2001) remind the CC to ask “why?” before asking “how?” when implementing any action and policy. In the case of PGE development, SGTs learn survival attitudes and skills for their dual roles: open-mindedness, patience, positive thinking, healthy living, honesty, wisdom, and empathy to deal with the complexity of the development. In short, counselling concepts (genuineness, respect, congruence, and empathy) could be applied in resolving conflicts. Genuineness (open-mindedness) is necessary when presenting expectations to gain support or to facilitate open discussion to gain a consensus before implementation. Respect for the feelings, opinions, attitudes, and priorities of all stakeholders involved are required to sculpt an optimal implementation plan. In addition, congruence, passion, and persistency will help to develop the curriculum instead of muddling through. Empathy for the limitations and capacity of all stakeholders is also critical for continuous reflection and modifications in strategies.

Does the dual identity indeed matter, or is there a failure of the SGTs to swing themselves inside the counselling room and the staff room? Though collaboration is a difficult process, love, respect, trust, appreciation, fairness, empathy, genuineness, and a common experience can solve the problem. SGTs must be careful to deal with the school culture. As one of the managers, SGTs should handle the guidance development at a reasonable pace and adjust the duties shared by teachers to avoid over-reliance; they should also balance the autonomy given (school-based) with requests from the top. Practically, the focus of reform should be on the teachers and their interactions with students, the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and students’ growth. To conclude, all kinds of experiences in the PGE development process briefly sum up a survival guide for the SGTs’ (programme organisers’ values and attitudes) reference in dealing with complexity, by applying the following counselling concepts.

Positive Thinking with Genuineness:

1. Maintain positive thinking to lift up colleagues' working emotions. Ballast and Shoemaker (1978, p. 8-9) claimed that the personal qualities of a counsellor should include creativity, imagination, flexibility, courage, belief, and passion.
2. Be assertive, persistent, reasonable, conscientious, comprehensive, hopeful, and robust in the mission.
3. Ask whether the good working relationship has been built with our colleagues. Strong collaboration is based on love, respect, trust, appreciation, fairness, empathy, genuineness, and the sharing of common experience.
4. Maintain a high profile and professional image in school.

Respect with Open-Mindedness:

5. Be open-minded about the effectiveness of any programmes. The process and the reflection are more important than the results.
6. Ask whether we really listen to others' ideas or just persuade them to accept our own.
7. Ask whether we behave too stubbornly or with closed minds in certain ways.
8. Be aware that the whole school is responsible for the success and failure of any programme.
9. Celebrate success amongst ourselves or with our team, but accept failure if some factors are out of our control.

Empathy with Patience:

10. Ask whether we care only about our immediate tasks and the annual targets.
11. Be patient; wait and choose to decelerate the pace when the progress or the environment is undesirable.
12. Remember to treat school as one of our important clients--with patience and love.

Ask whether we really care about our colleagues' perceptions and their experiences.

13. Be considerate and give teachers alternatives.
14. Accept resistance, which may be a sign of fear, burnout, or that help is needed.

Honesty and Congruence:

15. Be honest when dealing with difficult situations.
16. Face the reality of the situation, beyond referring to books, theories, and the mandatory documents.
17. Avoid being the all-weather helper, overdoing it, or trying to prove oneself. Rather than pushing ourselves to burnout status, say "no" to the extra, nonsensical jobs whenever possible.

Wisdom:

18. Use a democratic approach or administrative approaches appropriately.
19. Try to shorten the physical distance between colleagues in school. For instance, move the working place to the staffroom to build close relationships with teachers.

Teachers need the passion, commitment, and enthusiasm towards education and PGE teaching; open-mindedness for team collaboration; a readiness for the paradigm shift and the combined roles of teachers (role models, facilitators, counsellors, curriculum designers, and researchers in schools). As the frontline teachers confronting the challenges and changes directly, they should be analytical, critical of the management of the school, and not always say "yes" to commands from the top (Goodlad, 1990).

Hence, in facing changes and ourselves, genuineness and congruence are important.

Of the aforementioned values and attitudes, Table 8.2 is a simple summary of the whole based on the values and attitudes highlighted in Roger's (1961) client-centred therapy: unconditional positive regard (Respect), genuineness and honesty (Congruence), and empathic understanding (Empathy).

Passion, Commitment, and Enthusiasm for Education are the basic prerequisites.

Values and attitudes	Respect	Empathy	Congruence
Values and attitudes	Open-mindedness Collaborative spirit Humbleness Trust Readiness for change	Sensitivity Alertness Patience	Honesty Genuineness Reflection Courage Critical in seeking the truth Persistency Confidence Compassion Power Proactive attitude
Outcomes	Two-way communication; Evaluation and assessment; Good conflict management; Autonomy given; Holistic outlook	Fairness Active listening Capacity assessment Readjustment of speed	Unique vision and mission Team spirit Positive thinking

Table 8.2 Conclusions regarding the positive values and attitudes necessary to overcome changes

These values and attitudes are critically important for all involved to be able to learn and equip and should be developed in advance of the strategies applied in any educational settings. From this study, the positive situations appear when the values and attitudes are executed, and, conversely, the negative situations appear when they are not. The outcome depends on people's understanding and interpretations about their rights, power, and status and whether a target-based approach or process-oriented

approach is employed. Most likely, the only group who performs most of the proactive and positive attitudes above is that of our powerless students, with their innocence and genuine observations. In contrast, the following table summarises the negative situations which occurred in this study as a reference.

Values and attitudes	Lack of respect	Indifference	Two-faced and contradictory
Values and attitudes	Emphasis on Power Closed-mindedness Arrogance and selfishness Not collaborative Suspicion Unwilling to change Jealousy Stubbornness Crisis of losing “face” Promotion battles	Ignorance of others’ needs, requests and difficulties. Sluggishness Selfishness Calculation Passiveness Refusal	Hypocritical Cowardly in negative and difficult situations. Surrender Lack of confidence Lack of compassion Lack of self-reflection
Outcomes	One-way communication, evaluation, and assessment. Conflicts accumulate. Centralization Top-down approach	Unfairness Overestimation or underestimation Veto points “Principals do right” Isolated working culture Failure in time allocation “One-man” curriculum “Wait and see” attitude	Superficial conformation Ambiguity Chaos in power distribution Fake harmony with loose coupling among colleagues, contrived collegiality, and bounded collaboration.

Table 8.3 Conclusions regarding the negative values and attitudes that inhibit change found in the study

8.5. Mission Possible?

This section attempts to answer Research Question One: Is PGE development an achievable mission in Hong Kong primary schools? Is there an optimum strategy for PGE development?

As a mandatory policy issued by EMB, PGE would be possible with administrative power and monitoring tools, such as External School Review from EMB. However, the discussions in the previous chapters and the findings above show that it is a complicated issue which includes both failure and success. Overall, PGE development is a possible mission in the Hong Kong primary schools; it primarily depends on how eagerly the programme organisers (the SGTs) strive to clear up any hindrances and resolve the problems of the difficult and deprived context. The returns are the positive changes in the stakeholders.

8.5.1. Summary of feasible strategies

Before summing up the feasible strategies from the previous chapters, there are two similar studies for reference. The first study was done by Chui (2002) on the development of the Life Skills curriculum in Catholic secondary schools. Several points warrant consideration: the provision of consultation services to principals and middle managers; helping teachers to determine the needs of students, offering schools the guidelines, and giving them a sense of ownership and empowerment for curriculum development; defining the collaborative roles with guidance teachers; and employing special teaching assistants. Another study (LUDCS, 2006) was conducted in 2006 about the implementation of the PSH curriculum in secondary schools. A “School Assets Maps” was created by the research team to judge the five capacities, including human capital (critical jobs, competency, knowledge and capability in teaching and learning, curriculum development and management, and human resource capacity); information capital (readiness of hardware and software); organisational capital (culture, leadership, alignment, and team spirit); financial capital; and attitudes and perceptions of all stakeholders. It was recommended that the EMB play a larger, more proactive role in guiding the development. The study finds that teachers lacked

such skills as meeting chairing, discussion leading, and decision making. In the process, the most important point discovered is communication among all stakeholders about the new curriculum. In terms of PGE, the five capitals (human capital, information capital, organisational capital, financial capital, and attitudes and perceptions of all stakeholders) are inadequate, particularly the organisational capital: only the perceptions of some stakeholders have changed positively after the introduction of the PGE.

Regarding successful curriculum development, Schaffarzick (1975) identifies the following as critical features of projects (as cited in Morris, 1992, p. 13):

1. The determination of a need;
2. The construction of theoretical foundations;
3. The use of goals and objectives;
4. Attention to developmental psychology and learning research;
5. The use of group collaboration;
6. Preparation of resources;
7. Planning for early dissemination;
8. The preparation of staff development training;
9. Testing and revision;
10. Continuous development.

In case of PGE development, the policy maker had completed features 1, 3, and 7, mainly for SGTs; SGTs, as the curriculum organisers, had primarily done points 6, 7, 8, and 9. Points 5 and 10 could not be accomplished without good support from the schools. However, points 2 and 4 are not within the capacity of SGTs and are not stressed by EMB.

In view of formation of a learning organisation, the following summarises the disciplines (Senge et al., 2000, the translated version by Yeung, 2002, p.520) which also give pragmatic suggestions for strategies about curriculum development (reform):

1. The reform must involve learning for sustainable development.
2. Begin change on a small scale with small steps and allow it expand gradually and naturally.
3. Let a small group of enthusiastic teachers begin the reform.
4. Next, the stakeholders will ask, “What are our targets?” and “Where should we go?” regarding the important reform proposal.
5. Successful reform depends on the leadership of the multi-strata.
6. Challenge must be a part of the reform of an organisation.

The following integrates all feasible strategies about PGE development found in the literature review, strategies shown in the previous chapters and Verbatim 6.1.3.

Stages	Steps	Key points
<p style="text-align: center;">A. Management of Political Issues (Chapter 5)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1. Introduction with patience, lobbying, and negotiations</p>	<p>a. Starting up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask “why” before “how” • The current status of the school • Guidance culture for PGE development • The hidden agenda of the school • Assessment of available school assets • Management of symbolic policy <p>b. Liaison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal is the key person to lobby • Gain internal support • Seek help from the discipline master • Identify the potential political obstacles <p>c. Kicking off</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early announcement • Selection of an appropriate anchor point • Selection of an appropriate pilot group

Stages	Steps	Key points
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepwise approach with pilot scheme • Longer exploration period for teachers • Patience and open-mindedness • External power and expertise
B. Resources Management (Chapter 6)	2. Resources allocation	a. Time allocation b. Finance allocation
	3. Personnel management	a. Manpower allocation b. Set up a smart team c. A structured network for communication d. Job allocation with thoughtful planning e. Teacher training for all
C. Curriculum Management (Chapter 7)	4. Curriculum design	a. Selection of textbooks b. Preparation for the school-based curriculum c. Design of the school-based curriculum d. External support for school-based design
	5. Implementation and monitoring	a. Demonstration b. Collaborative planning meeting c. Collaborative teaching d. Lesson observation e. Appreciation and encouragement f. Autonomy given to teachers g. Students' and parents' expectations
	6. Evaluation	a. Internal evaluation b. External evaluation c. Overall effectiveness
	7. Review and Reform	a. Continuous review and modification b. Parent education c. Explore the possibility of integration

Table 8.4 Summary of the possible strategies for PGE development in this study

A. Management of the Political Issues

1. Introduction

a. Starting up

- **Ask “why” before “how”:** Ask “why” before “how” to prevent anxiety and ambivalence towards the undefined issue and target; be especially critical in considering the “whole-school” or “school-based” approach unless the school is ready to invest manpower, time, and other resources for the programme or project intensively.
- **The current status of the school:** A healthy environment is the prerequisite for PGE to survive, which is affected by the school's stage of development. Especially in shrinking or dying schools, PGE could not exist with the weak team spirit and stagnant atmosphere unless it is employed as one of the selling points. Moreover, the current status also involves school politics, and an understanding and careful handling of the power structure (especially regarding those colleagues in the limelight and relationships with the working partners) can help to avoid unnecessary troubles.
- **Guidance Culture for PGE development:** A well-developed discipline and guidance culture is an important foundation for PGE development; it includes the readiness of the D&G team and the capacity for collaboration in the guidance domain.
- **The hidden agenda of the school:** SGTs should be alert to the priority of their schools at the moment and be cautious and patient if the policy introduced is not the immediate focus or even a hindrance to school development; change and adjust the strategy with regard to the actual situation of the school.

- **Assessment of available school assets:** At the beginning, SGTs should duly assess and consider the five capacities, including human capital, information capital, organisational capital, financial capital, and the attitudes and perceptions of all stakeholders (LUDCS, 2006). Distinguish the controllable and uncontrollable factors; evaluate the basic needs of the school for reasonable planning; investigate teachers' perceptions before and during the process as to whether the project is "mission impossible"; and ask whether we carefully strive for a balance of the whole. The expected difficulties of PGE development provide an essential reference for the implementation strategies and should help to reduce struggles.
- **Management of the symbolic policy:** According to the findings, "wait and see" is a possible strategy for responding to the new enacted policies without full guidelines and support. We can "wait and see" until there are good examples, enough resources, and adequate staff readiness (a period of "dissemination") before initiation.

b. Liaison: This is an important step for gaining internal support and consensus about PGE implementation.

- **The principal is the key person to lobby:** SGTs must first gain the principal's support before beginning. Otherwise, it is suggested that SGTs should stop and wait for better circumstances, because it will be risky to begin the project without a blessing from the top. Somehow, the "principals do right" will be the best excuse for answering the inspectors and External School Review auditor should they question why the project was stopped (Schools D and G).
- **To gain internal support:** A liaison may not be necessary for other policies, but it is important for SGTs if their status is low-profile and the

school guidance is underdeveloped. The relationship of the SGTs with teachers is important for success via informal and formal communication, intranet sharing, or inviting colleagues to attend the PGE seminars (School F). However, this study shows that the CC may not offer help as expected, and this is not unique to the PGE case.

- **Help from the discipline master:** The discipline masters are the most helpful, as they have a respected status in the schools that is important for change facilitation and coordination. This study does not find that integration of discipline and guidance in one team particularly helps PGE development. Instead, an intimate working relationship and mutual understanding between SGTs and DMs are important.
- **Identify the potential political obstacles:** The complicated relationships between managers should be noted to avoid any power traps; help from the top should be invited when necessary. SGTs should prepare different scenarios for the expected or unexpected challenges that may arise in due course, especially involving the staff in the limelight and those with special personalities and perceptions about guidance. Communication is the basic means to resolving misunderstandings before they come to a head.

c. **Kicking off: Selection of the best entry points**

- **Early announcement:** It is an important endorsement skill to draw the attention of the majority and let them prepare psychologically before the project starts over a long period of time.
- **Selection of an appropriate anchor point:** Marton (cited in Adamson, et al., 2000, p. 236-276) states, “No curriculum is introduced in a vacuum: it is introduced to an already existing system with all of its peculiar features. Most importantly, there is already a curriculum. So any curriculum reform

means not so much introducing a curriculum as changing the curriculum” (p. 292). Hence, it is important to search for the best anchor point for the new curriculum and to let it build on a foundation that will save resources if consensus is gained with the related parties. The appropriate anchor points for PGE are MCE or a developed curriculum of a similar nature, such as emotion education or life education.

- **Selection of an appropriate pilot group:** Many schools started the PGE in the lower levels (like P1) first. This is the safest way for monitoring and modifying because of the comparatively relaxed curriculum at the lower levels. Some started the PGE from the Learning Area of PGE (like the researcher). Both have their pros and cons.
- **Stepwise approach with pilot scheme:** Regardless of the timetable issued by the government, SGTs should duly assess the capacity of the school (especially the capability of the D&G team and the teachers) and try to adopt the stepwise approach with simplified procedures, to allow teachers to accept and understand the innovation first. Their perceptions and responses should be respected by adjusting the training, support, guidance, and empowerment in the process. A pilot scheme is strongly suggested. Failed cases resulted from a demanding, directive, idealistic, and ambitious approach.
- **Longer exploration period for teachers:** Some SGTs suggested that an exploration period for teachers should be allowed, with fewer demands and simple objectives for teachers. For instance, the objective should be focused on the interaction between students and teachers rather than the teaching skills. Then, the demands can be increased stepwise with the continuous reviews.
- **Patience and open-mindedness:** SGTs should have the patience and

open-mindedness to accept mistakes, chaos, and complaints from the frontlines. All teachers have the right to participate the new programme via open discussion, as they play the key roles in PGE teaching. Continuous consultation should be done with them.

- **External power and expertise:** For rigid conditions out of SGTs' control, SGTs could decide to wait or employ external resources to help with their power and expertise, instead of creating greater internal tensions. Hence, SGTs could adopt a "take-it-easy" attitude to wait for opportunities such as focus inspection, External School Review, support from a university, or collaborative projects provided by NGOs. To decide to let things happen naturally is also a solution (Schools B, D, E, and G).

B. Management of Resources

2. Resources Allocation

- a. **Time allocation:** A definite time slot with adequate time length for PGE lessons is extremely important to confirm its status as an informal curriculum. This study shows that it is gained through lobbying and negotiations with the middle managers. This is dependent on the final decision of the principal and the priorities of the school.
- b. **Finance allocation:** Finance allocation depends on the support of the principal to determine the investment in PGE of training or materials. Some SGTs applied for the external funding and gained the external resources by chance.

3. Personnel Management

- a. **Set up a smart team:** Ideally, a group of committed teachers is expected to help. Most of the SGTs were found to work alone for PGE; this depends on the

school's arrangement and culture. A smart team with a reasonable workload and adequate support can produce quality work, as in Schools C, D, and E. Some PGE teams were set up to design, teach, and revise the PGE curriculum professionally.

- b. **A structured network for communication:** If the PGE team is a team of level coordinators to deal with co-planning meetings or mid-term review meetings, it enhances the communication, consensus, and team spirit among teachers at all levels to give them a sense of autonomy and professional growth through sincere discussion. It also provides training for the PGE team.
- c. **Job allocation with thoughtful planning:** The workload for PGE should be carefully weighed for the D&G team and for all teachers based on the principles of fairness, capability, and their time and energy available to avoid over-allocation to some capable teachers. The DM, deputy principal or principal should be consulted to gain their support. To facilitate the bottom up participation, team leader (SGTs) should respect to the experiences and capability of the team, let all members involve in the overall planning at the very beginning to enhance their participation and readiness.
- d. **Teacher training for all:** Both soft and hard skills must be employed with clear administrative guidelines and procedures and monitoring processes. The common strategies are meetings, demonstration, co-planning, co-teaching, and different training workshops, focusing on the personal growth of teachers and pedagogy sharing. The training provided should be teacher-centred to cover the knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to PGE; in particular, the generic skills of teachers in personal growth education should be enhanced to cater to the new demands, especially in self-review, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Note that real Whole School Approach to guidance should be done via “teachers changing teachers”, to

accumulate and circulate successful experiences. High sensitivity, empathy, and critical thinking of the curriculum leaders are necessary to internalize and restructure the old mindset. No matter what types of strategies (evaluation meetings, focus groups, co-planning, co-teaching, and demonstration) are applied, the study finds that direct dialogue with teachers and students is the key to success. This is because all involve a one-to-one or one-to-several setting with democratic interactions, which lets teachers have a sense of support and security and allows them to observe, reflect, and grow together. Mentoring and training for debriefing and questioning skills are necessary in the future.

C. **Management of Curriculum**

5. **Curriculum Design**

- a. **Selection of textbooks:** The selection of textbooks depends on the resources of schools and the willingness of teachers. The selection of textbooks is a “quick fix” to save time, resources, and manpower with a fixed framework and ready materials. It is a shortcut, but a costly choice. Consensus should be made with all staff involved in discussion of the feasibility of the available materials.
- b. **Preparation for the school-based curriculum:** Frontline teachers should be involved in school-based PGE framework construction to determine the teaching elements, including the values, targets, and content of the lesson plans. Ideally, this set of materials could be prepared by a PGE team before the new academic year starts.
- c. **Design of the school-based curriculum:** As reported from different cases, the **school-based curriculum** is the combined format of the available reference materials and school based design. This study finds that funny, interesting, interactive, and attractive (with visual or audio aids) content can surely earn the

attention of children. The attractiveness, consistency, and continuity of the lesson plans are the key points. It finds that teachers prefer lesson plans that are handy (“buffet” and “fast food”), time-saving to prepare, and rich in moral values or discipline-based, while students like those related to their daily lives (family and friends), with funny content. Students’ opinions and perception must be considered for continuous review.

- d. **External support for school-based design:** Professional input from external resources like NGOs or educational psychologists provides a shortcut for PGE development. It saves time and manpower to keep the nature of the curriculum open and vivid.

6. Implementation and Monitoring

- a. **Demonstration:** Demonstration is crucial for successful implementation of the PGE. Some SGTs demonstrated all PGE lessons to the whole school. Some use videotapes or employ extra manpower, such as social workers.
- b. **Collaborative planning meeting:** This is a luxury arrangement and depends on the consent of the top management and the culture of school. The collaborative planning meeting provides a sharing platform for teachers to clarify their worries, but the pedagogy should neither be overemphasised nor the concern for individual differences ignored.
- c. **Collaborative teaching:** Co-teaching provides one-to-one support to teachers and realises the notions of the Whole School Approach to guidance in a down-to-earth way. It let teachers be open-minded, innovative, and cooperative on the matter of teaching; it enhances mutual learning among teachers and constructs a sharing platform for them.

- d. **Lesson observation:** Lesson observation can be done implicitly through co-teaching or openly by SGTs. However, the added pressure placed on teachers must be considered.
- e. **Appreciation and encouragement:** Instead of lesson observation (aimed at appraisal), sharing about their teaching in PGE level meetings and general staff meetings is a form of appreciation for teachers' hard work and involvement. Most of the teachers felt elated to be encouraged.
- f. **Autonomy given to teachers:** Overall, teachers are found to be the most important group in the entire process (See Verbatim 6.4.4). Some teachers requested more support and autonomy and did not wish to be confined within a planned schedule. This must be duly considered and handled with the failed example for integration. At writing time, some teachers in School B had shown interest in PGE lesson writing. Hopefully, “the collaborative reconstruction of the professional culture of teachers” (Elliott, 1998, p. 188) could be attained with increasing involvement of teachers in PGE development and design.
- g. **Students’ and parents’ expectations:** Students hope teachers’ presentations will be interactive, precise, accurate, and humorous, delivered with love and active listening to their sharing. They like the interactive lessons, sharing, and self-disclosure of teachers because these make them experience their real selves. Some parents reminded teachers that they should not be caring, friendly, or supportive in the PGE lessons alone.

7. Evaluation

- a. **Internal evaluation:** Internal evaluation involves different modes of evaluation; such as questionnaires, interviews, worksheets, checklists, family worksheets and student profiles. The most important thing is to evaluate how much they change in their beliefs and behaviour. The family worksheet is a way to facilitate parent

education.

- b. **External evaluation:** Either External School Review or focus inspection on guidance are the best tools to facilitate PGE development.
- c. **Overall effectiveness:** Effectiveness should be reviewed continuously, and the school should decide on the continuity of the policy by choosing the best alternative where necessary, such as the alternative of integration.

8. Review and Reform

- a. **Continuous review and modification:** There should be continuous review and modification of the PGE curriculum to cater to the change of students' needs and society; to improve and upgrade the content and design; to adjust the involvement and interactions among students, teachers, and parents; and to compare the changes after programme with reference to all kinds of evaluation results and observation. Positive changes will surely enhance teachers' involvement and interest in teaching and joining the work of curriculum design. The ultimate aim is to let PGE be an open curriculum to maintain its sustainable development with the collaboration of teachers.
- b. **Parent education:** Introduction of parent education into PGE was found to be desirable. It provides another potential development of PGE in the future, and different modes of parent education can be designed for the curriculum. Many educationalists emphasise that parents are a form of strong support for teachers (Galloway, 1990; Hamblin, 1993; Burden & Byrd, 1999).
- c. **Possibility of integration:** In terms of the D&G approach, the PGE is a period for large group counselling of a preventive nature and a means to fix D&G time in the school timetable, though some teachers object to formally "subjectising" PGE in a fixed status with the term subjects. Many SGTs adopted the formal curriculum development approach to prepare the "best" PGE curriculum for the

children, while some chose the textbooks only because they think PGE lessons are not for teaching--no need to invest energy in a school-based curriculum. Considering the overlapping features of PGE with other areas like GS, RE, and MCE, integration is a further step in developing PGE. PGE is, possibly, a “buffer” curriculum before it is totally immersed into the regular curriculum. Actual integration must take into account the reasons, targets, extent, and resources for integration; students’ needs; and the readiness of the school and teachers to produce a cost-effective curriculum. By referring to different opinions about the curriculum structure of the PGE, I suggest a hybrid/integrated mode of curriculum structure for PGE to cater to the basic requirement of the PGE, the annual targets of schools, and the changing environment, with the core curriculum in the largest proportion:

$$\text{PGE} = \boxed{\text{Core Curriculum}} + \boxed{\text{Lessons Cater to Annual Targets}} + \boxed{\text{Class-Based Lessons}}$$

Nature	Core Curriculum	Lessons Cater to Annual Targets (introduction and evaluation)	Class-Based Lessons (topics related to the controversial issues)
Conducting mode	The core curriculum is designed with the framework provided by EMB and child developmental psychology.	This could be in line with MCE or the annual targets in a series of lessons in integrated or independent modes.	Controversial issues are referred to design the class-based lesson plans.
Suggested people in charge	SGT and PGE team	PGE, MCE, or D&G team	Class teachers at the same level
Integration	Restructure the PGE as an extension of topics about personal growth in the core curriculum.	Integration could be done with related activities, like activity week, at different levels.	This could be done for different subjects accordingly.

Table 8.5 A proposal of an integrated mode of curriculum structure of PGE.

There are plenty of possibilities for integrating PGE with RE, GS, or life education to produce a new curriculum in the near future. Meanwhile, PGE is found to be a “buffer” curriculum like MCE to adopt new contents and then be diffused into the regular curriculum. Referring to the curriculum guidelines of PSHE (CDC-ED, 2002a), GS and PSHE are likely to include MCE and RE in the future. Hence, the final version could be a combination of MCE, PGE, RE, and GS to produce a new school-based GS curriculum (MCE + PGE + RE + GS = New GS) as a holistic, comprehensive, school-based cross-disciplinary mode. Ultimately, why has PGE emerged? Is there a deficiency and imbalance in the whole, especially in the weighting of education concerning values, morality, and personal growth? Is there any implication for our present system and curriculum, especially in the focus and direction of the prevalent curriculum?

8.5.2. More crucial points to note

This study of the PGE shows that it is important to construct sustainable education and institute a Learning Organisation or an effective school which is healthy, vivid, ever learning, and able to surmount challenges. The following briefing pinpoints some important issues which emerged.

1. **Values and Beliefs:** The morale, values, beliefs, modes of communication, and enthusiasm of everyone in school directly affects the operation and team spirit of a school. The best lubricant is a culture with encouragement, appreciation, and genuineness. Every problem is a chance for further progress in a school. Active listening is a powerful tool in communication and management. Indeed, the values emphasised by PGE are the uniqueness of mankind, respect,

self-reflection, self-regulation, love, care, and interdependency; the attitudes emphasised are optimism, appreciation, empathy, persistence, positiveness, confidence, cooperation, adaptability, diligence, and respect for all. This study strongly reflects the necessity of PGE for the entire education system.

2. **Clear Vision and Mission:** The vision and mission of a school are fundamentally important because they carry the values and direction of the school. Covey (1989) proposes, “Begin with the end in mind”. This vision should embody common beliefs and values which are crucial factors of successful curriculum innovations in all types of contexts (Marris, 1975). Otherwise, when ambivalence and misunderstanding have emerged from the stakeholders, it may result in psychological, emotional, ideological, or even physical imbalance that may make the school’s situation grave if the explicit and implicit crisis is overlooked. Vigorous implementations of clear vision and mission are based on a healthy school culture (Senge et al., 2000, “Chapter Ten: The Reality”, translated by Young 2002, p. 627-628). The characteristics of a healthy school culture are reflective, profound conversations; unique targets; a common focus for student learning; encouragement of collaboration and sharing; open-mindedness; open practice and review; trust and respect; celebration of adaptation; and lenient and understanding leadership.

3. **Time:** Time is a very important resource in school because schools require time to implement, verify, prove, and change. Time especially governs the interactions between teachers and students and, in particular, actions such discipline, guidance, management, communication, reflections, etc.; it actually controls both the quality and quantity of all measures. However, it is always ignored by the school authority and the EMB as well. Ignorance of time input is

regrettable, regardless of beautiful proposals or policy.

4. **Students and Teachers:** Students are the working targets of schools (their performance are the products of schools) with different needs, potential, and abilities that are affected by all kinds of external factors, such as families, communities, societies, and the mass media. Interactions between teachers and students produce energy for teachers and vivacity for schools. Schools should emphasise the feedback of students for the sustainable development of schools. Teachers are the main power source and energy source of a school; they contribute their expertise, enthusiasm, confidence, time, and energy at their particular age, maturity, personality, status, and experience in a school. All of these govern the quality of the “outcome”. School should be aware of the unique features of the teaching groups and balance all kinds of tensions with reasonable demands to lessen the risk of burnout. With the increasing professional requirements, the self-esteem of teachers is affected. Unless there is an increase in relationship orientation (Reddin, 1970) for highly committed jobs, greater care is needed to ensure the desirable effectiveness of outcomes. Sharing and reflection should be encouraged to attain the target of a learning organisation.

5. **Perceptions about Curriculum Development and “Subject”:** The conservative attitudes of teachers towards curriculum are found in this study, including their request for the ready-made, “fast-food”, and “buffet-like” curriculum and their perceptions about “subject”, “integration”, and collaboration in curriculum development. Further training and study are needed. Besides, further psychological study is necessary for PGE curriculum to better its design, content, pedagogy, and evaluation for the best outcomes.

6. **Wisdom of Policy Maker:** School itself is an organic body with complex interactions affecting its operations and output. The EMB plays the roles of facilitator, resources provider, and consultant. Democratic and open management are crucial to ensure a creative learning environment in the schools. With respect to the individual differences of schools, every school should have the autonomy to encounter the new policy in its own way, by considering teachers' capacity and students' growth. The EMB should proactively collect schools' comments and feedback for continuous improvement through two-way communications. In fact, EMB could consider assessing the carrying capacity of schools as the baseline data for any policies; duly address the complexity of the implementation process, including management, leadership, willingness, and workload; modify External School Review as a process to evaluate the appropriateness of the policies; and provide more training about collaboration, management, and leadership to teachers. Moreover, EMB should conduct the pilot test seriously through sharing and consultation instead of pushing forward rapidly.

7. **Reflections of Top Management:** Principals should continuously assess the feasibility of resources and manpower allocation and the compatibility of different projects to ensure that the development direction of schools is always congruent with the vision, mission, and needs. The deputy principals and senior managers should learn to resolve conflicts, regulate misunderstandings among teams or among the team members, and lead the development with innovations. They should assist the school development by providing the optimum arrangement, as well as training and the rooms for consensus making. In particular, the calibre of the D&G team should be sustained through internal and external training.

8. **Training for Middle Managers:** Collaboration occurs both formally and informally among school professionals and is a significant trend in schools (Friend & Cook, 2003). Better coordination, information, and services could be achieved through interdisciplinary working relationships, in which members communicate more regularly with a collective goal of service coordination (Carpenter et al., 1998; Friend & Cook, 2003). This study finds that the training given to middle managers is insufficient, particularly the training on cross-disciplinary management skills. I propose from observation and different cases that, nowadays, the current job nature of the middle manager includes eight stages as follows. However, some of the middle managers' mindsets are still between stages 4 and 5.

1. Creation and Design
2. System / Mechanism Formation
3. Training or Retraining
4. Manpower and Resources Allocation
5. Implementation and Monitoring
6. Evaluation
7. Review and Reform
8. Formation of New Model

In Schools A and B, the cross-disciplinary issues were shouldered only by one and two staff, and school heads were insensitive to developing the multidimensional management system. To address the increasing long-term cross-disciplinary issues (whole-school approach) in schools, I suggest setting up a special core team for all integrated, whole-school, or cross-disciplinary issues with a group of middle managers (the non-subject panel heads). This team

should be led by deputy principals to organise all relevant issues with appropriate workload and resources to avoid fragmented functions, unnecessary overlapping, power struggles, and administrative chaos. Without reform in management and leadership, schools will still be vulnerable or passive to such changes.

9. **Further suggestions about SGTs' career development:** Regarding the current situation of SGTs, I suggest that the present work of SGTs should be shared by at least two persons: one responsible for the internal affairs like administration, management, curriculum, screening of problem students, and the internal network for collaboration; and another one responsible for the external network, in-depth counselling (like family therapy), group counselling, and parent education. In the long run, the post of guidance teacher should be internal, with a promotion ladder similar to that in secondary schools. Professional supervision, collaboration, training (beyond counselling), sharing, and even licensing systems (Leung, 1996) should be considered to enhance the professional development of this career.

The following table attempts to summarise the values, attitudes, and strategies of change (paradigm shift) reflected in this study:

Equilibrium I	←.....→	Equilibrium II
This study shows that some schools are still in the traditional setting with single-loop learning and vertical thinking; it provides a comfort zone for conservative groups.	Paradigm Shift ←.....→ (changes of values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and	An advanced setting which is expected to involve double-loop learning, holistic thinking, intimate collaboration, and communication for sustainable PGE development (referring to the notions of Learning Organisation and effective schools).

Equilibrium I	←.....→	Equilibrium II
<p><u>Current Values and Attitudes</u></p> <p>Power, control, obedience, independence, stratification, mechanical, bureaucratic, rigid, close-mindedness, hypocritical, indifference, habitual defence, learnt helplessness, gossip and rumours for worries, angers, and refusals.</p>	<p>strategies)</p>	<p><u>Values and Attitudes Expected</u></p> <p>Open-mindedness, respect, empathy, honesty, democracy, humanistic, trust, holistic, sensitivity, humbleness and congruence, collaboration, creativity, flexibility, genuineness, communication, good and fair relationships, active listening.</p>
<p><u>Current Strategies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralization • Formalization • Stratification • Productivity and efficiency • Target-based approach with performance indicators • Power struggle to keep oneself in the comfort zone • Superficial conformity • Superficial (fake) harmony • Vertical push from subject teaching, the horizontal pull from whole-school demands, and the “new professionalism” accelerate fragmentation among teachers • Request for immediate miracles • Request for all ready materials (“fast-food” and “buffet-like” curriculum) • Delineation of duties: “one-man” curriculum • Unilateral contribution • Unfair job duties • Vertical management • Ignorance or bad integration 	<p>VS</p> <p>←.....→</p>	<p><u>Strategies for Change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask “why” before “how” • Alliance with vision and mission • Capital assessment • Assessment of available school assets • Process-oriented approach • Autonomy and trust given • Whole School Approach to guidance with teachers helping teachers • Identify the potential political obstacles • Consensus for symbolic policy • Adjustment of development pace • Selection of an appropriate anchor point • Stepwise approach with pilot scheme • Longer exploration period for teachers • Platform for open discussion • Review and strengthen the role of the deputy principal as the moderator for conflicts • More training on multidimensional management and collaboration skills • Input of external power and expertise • Fairness in job allocation • A network for communication • Integration with parent education • Continuous review • Proper consideration of time

Equilibrium I	←.....→	Equilibrium II
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers recognised as the main power source • Review the prospects of SGTs' careers • Encouragement and appreciation • Facilitate cross-disciplinary management • Appropriate integration for the best use of resources

Table 8.6 Summary of values, attitudes and strategies of change (paradigm shift) reflected from this study

8.5.3. Beyond paradigm shift

Can a paradigm shift of values, attitudes, and strategies in the system achieve the new equilibrium successfully? Sit (2006, p. 199-202) points out the illness of the present education system: the more the teachers work, the more the teachers attain the limits of growth; as a result, adaptability to new challenges is reduced. The competing environment let schools, teachers, and students play the game of “prisoners’ dilemma”, for lose-lose results. Why? Considering the sluggishness of the paradigm shift noted in the study, why do the new policies or the mitigation measures bring negative impacts to schools? Is it a result of the limits to growth?

Hage (1969, p. 65, cited in Ng, 1992) summarises the relationship between two groups of factors: they are complexity, centralization, formalization, and stratification in structure and the adaptability, productivity, efficiency, and job satisfaction of employees. With highly demanding school stress placed on productivity and efficiency, centralization, formalization, and stratification are all necessary; however, it lowers the adaptability and job satisfaction of teachers simultaneously. If complexity

is required, centralization, formalization, and stratification must be lowered accordingly. The adaptability and job satisfaction of teachers will increase, while lower productivity and efficiency have to be tolerated. The interesting point is that, in schools, there is now centralization (old-fashioned management), formalization, and stratification, but a request for complexity (school-based). Can schools still maintain their productivity and efficiency? The answer is contradictory!

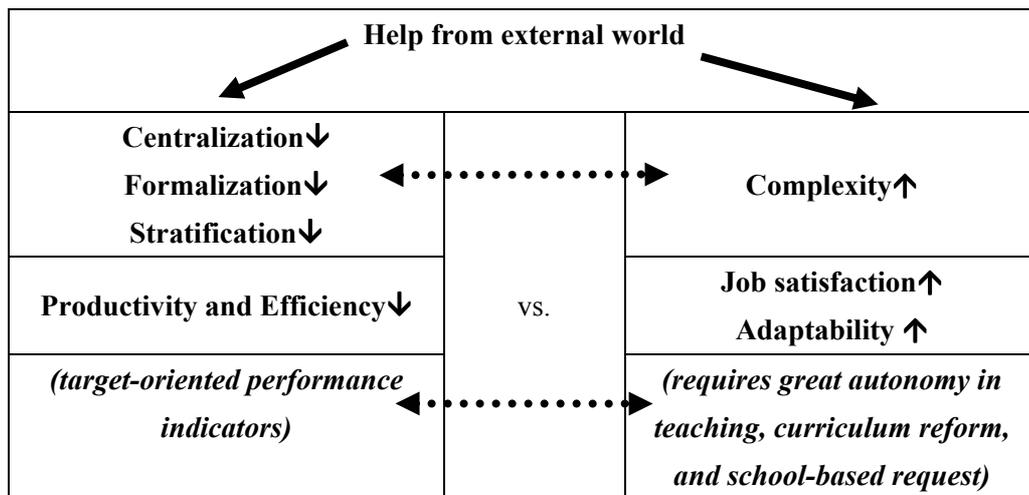


Figure 8.3 Summary of the conflicts of “productivity and efficiency” versus “adaptability and job satisfaction” of teachers (adapted from Ng, 1992).

PGE is an attempt that has shifted the current equilibrium of a system called school in order to solve some occurring problems. It finds that, for a system with limited capacity to process change, the addition at one point induces subtraction at another point, like the seesaw. Different forces counteract each other to attain the new balance (new equilibrium) which may not be exactly the expected one, unless the capacity of the system can be expanded further to incorporate the innovation with its elasticity. However, are schools ready for the non-stop addition of innovations without desertion? By referring to the Figure 1.2 on balanced consideration (extracted from CDC-ED, 2001b, p. 11) in Chapter One, the following figure shows part of the conflicts and tensions found in this study, all of which work antagonistically with each other.

Indeed, all stakeholders in the education system must face the reality of a “no all-win-win” world or an imperfect setting regarding the limited capacity of a system. We can only try hard to strike the best balance in status.

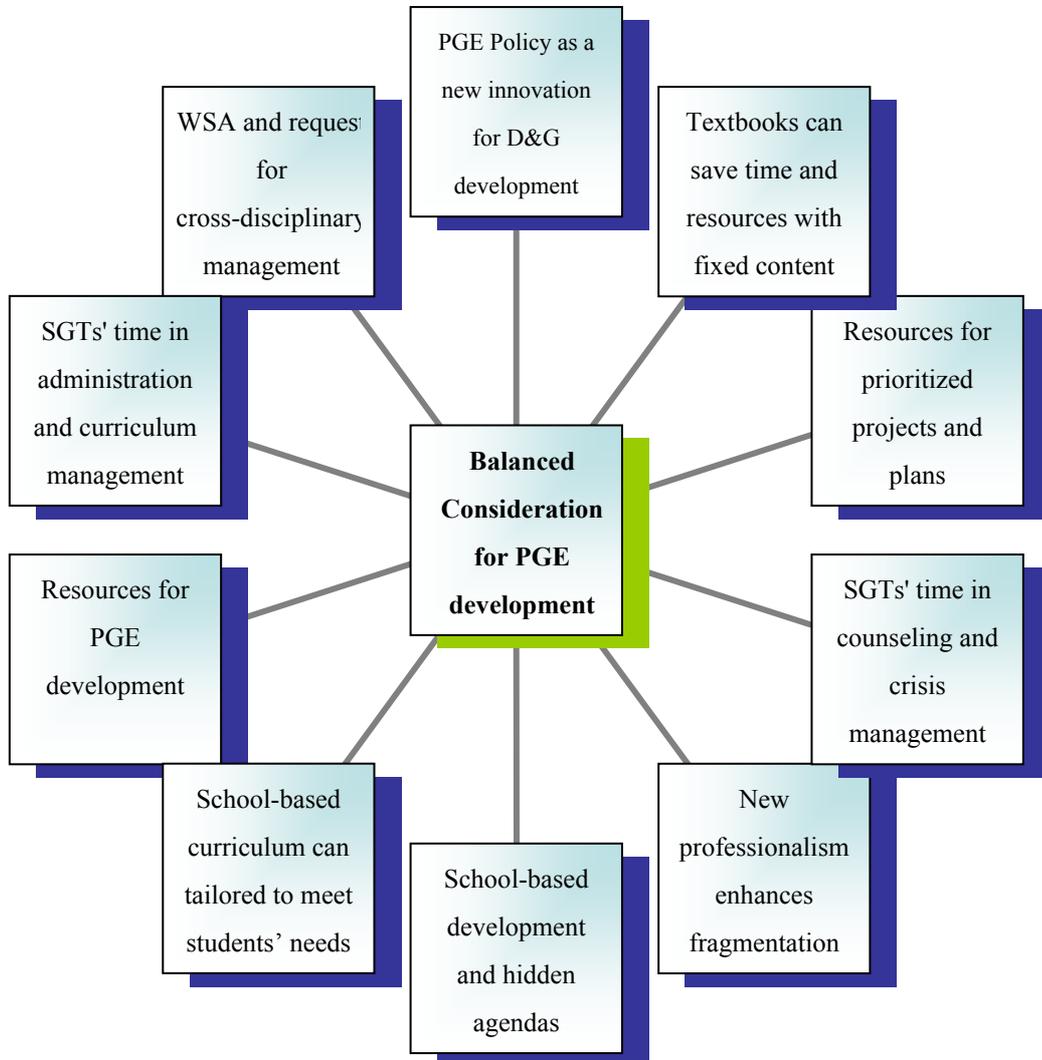


Figure 8.4 Balanced Consideration for PGE development.

Chinese Taoism emphasises “those that go to the extreme will rebound someday” or “as soon as a thing reaches its extremity, it reverses its course” (物極必反). Any interventions could accelerate or inhibit the cyclic movement. The cycles exist anyway and will bring things back to a balanced status. When is the balanced status attained? Overall, it is an art to achieve the new equilibrium. The effort made by any individuals

or the impacts produced by any interventions or innovations surely vibrate the balance. Whether the change succeeds or not, let all individuals involved reflect, grow and experience life from the process.

8.6. Conclusion

This chapter concludes the key findings from the previous chapters and answers the research questions. To answer Research Question One, PGE development is a possible mission in Hong Kong primary schools; there are mixed feelings on the part of the stakeholders, and their feelings change over the implementation period. Regardless of whether the feedback is positive or negative, this study shows that the effort, eagerness, and strategies used by the programme organiser are essential to facilitate change in the schools.

To answer Research Question Two, this study shows that to facilitate change, a paradigm shift in the values and attitudes of all stakeholders, accompanied with the appropriate strategies, is necessary. Notwithstanding this, the successful change also depends on the capacity of the whole system and the resource input; otherwise, we must be honest that there may be a seesaw effect. The perfect setting and completely win-win situations are difficult to realise with different tensions operating and counteracting in the equilibrium.

8.7. Further Suggestions

Education should be a collaborative, rather than top-down, business. To enhance the sustainable development of education for the target of the learning organisation, I would like to suggest frank, sincere, and close communication among the EMB,

schools, and teachers, in order to share the collective difficulties, limitations, and experiences. It is vital for policy makers and the frontline teachers to envision any changes with confidence by thorough communication and understanding and to eliminate stress, suspicions, and the challenges of over- or underestimation.

To aid the schools, I hope that a capacity assessment tool can be developed that will assist all of the schools and the leaders in assessing the capacity for change and to assist EDB in understanding the schools' limitations in rendering appropriate adjustment and flexibility for their policies, external evaluations, and the intensity of school-based support. Moreover, all principals, managers, and teachers require quality training on the skills of collaboration, mediation, guidance and leadership.

With respect to the curriculum development of PGE, I strongly recommend a holistic psychological study on its effectiveness and appropriateness (as well as that of other related subjects) by analysing the feedback and changes among students. Such a study should include a database about students' behaviours and family backgrounds in order to provide key reference points for the PGE curriculum. The research can invite professional input and collaboration with psychologists or counsellors. It can also provide a platform for lesson plan sharing and an evaluation design tool that contains automatic statistical analysis for school-based PGE curriculum. Integration of the curriculum, parent education, and the transition of PGE curriculum from primary to secondary schools are the next topics that merit exploration in this holistic study. Lastly, research to investigate the effectiveness of using textbooks and creating school-based curriculum should be conducted.