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Teacher Education and Development

Edited by

Amy B.M. Tsui & Ivor Johnson

Teacher Education and Development

Contents

Foreword

In this last decade of the twentieth century numerous countries are preoccupied with the quality of their education systems. As part of this preoccupation a great deal is said about the quality of teaching and teachers. There is little doubt that effective teaching is the most important factor in improving the quality of education and the learning that students achieve. Not surprisingly, efforts to strengthen teaching and teachers are at the centre of movements for educational reform and improvement.

But what does improving or strengthening the quality of teaching and teachers mean? Teaching in today's schools is complex and challenging. The knowledge, skills and personal qualities expected of successful teachers are multi-faceted. Teachers must be well educated and professionally trained; their terms and conditions of service and their career prospects should both support and reflect the significance and complexity of their roles and responsibilities; the attitudes and standards which teachers exhibit should be indicative of professionals. Measures to improve the quality of teachers and teaching must address these aspects at the very least.

For some years various countries have tackled these kinds of issues with a view to wide ranging, fundamental reform and improvement. In the case of Hong Kong, the Visiting Panel noted over a decade ago (1982) inadequacies in the initial preparation of teachers. The Education Commission in its first (1984) and second (1986) reports sought to address aspects needing improvement, though in a limited and piecemeal manner.

A more comprehensive review of problems and needs relating to teachers in Hong Kong was not attempted by the Commission until its

Report No.5 (1992). This report focuses on what the Commission describes as two strategic issues. The first concerns "the institutional framework for teacher education and professional development". The second has to do with "the need to provide our schools, in particular our primary schools, with the quality of human resources they will need to meet future challenges". The scope is wide and welcome. The report's recommendations, in common with those of major inquiries and reports in other countries on teaching, teachers and teacher education, may be regarded as encouraging steps. They will not, however, find universal support.

It would be generous to describe Education Commission Report No.5 as timely. Rather, it is well overdue. Yet the opportunity it provides for discussion of a wide variety of topics is accepted by the contributors to this Education Paper. They draw attention to merits of the Commission's arguments and recommendations; they also explore deficiencies or gaps in the Commission's thinking, orientation and suggestions.   Their purpose, above all, is to promote lively and informed discussion on issues crucial to the effectiveness of education in Hong Kong.

Brian Cooke

Introduction

The *Education Commission Report No. 5* is the first report released by the Education Commission which is entirely devoted to the teaching profession. Considering that "teachers are at the heart of the education system", to quote the Governor, Chris Patten (Patten, 1992, p.9), and that "the teacher is the engineer of the soul", to quote an old Chinese saying, this Report is much-needed and perhaps long overdue.

As *ECR5* points out, in order to improve the quality of education, the teaching profession must be able to attract and keep motivated and dedicated teachers. To achieve this, a supportive working environment in schools is essential (see p.4). One very important aspect of a supportive school environment is that teachers feel that they can achieve professional growth. Therefore teachers should be given support in their first year of teaching as well as throughout their teaching career.

Pang and Cooke welcome the inclusion of teacher induction in the Report and examine the importance of the induction of beginning teachers. They point out that it should be seen as an integral part of the professional development of teachers rather than an isolated process of helping beginning teachers to ease their way into the profession. And, in places like Hong Kong where untrained graduates enter the teaching profession, induction is particularly important and can serve the function of formal initial teacher education. **Pang and Cooke** spell out the components of an induction programme and suggest detailed arrangements for induction. The suggestions would be very useful for schools which are thinking of introducing induction programmes for their teachers.

Tsui examines the importance of providing continuous teacher education throughout a teacher's career. She reviews the social and educational changes in Hong Kong in the past decade, the corresponding problems that they pose for teachers, and what the Hong Kong Government has and has not done to help teachers cope with these changes. She points out that in order to be able to deal with the rapid social and educational changes, teachers must be adequately equipped, not only by initial teacher education but, more importantly, by continuous teacher development.

Another important aspect of a supportive school environment is co-operation between teachers and parents. Teachers need the help and support of parents to understand their students, and parents need the professional knowledge and advice of teachers to educate their children. This is particularly important when social problems such as broken families and unhappy parental relationships are increasingly creating stress and strain for students. One problem that is causing much anxiety for teachers, as well as for parents, is the soaring rate of student suicides, and the fact that students who commit suicide are getting younger and younger. **Hui** focuses on this issue of student suicide and makes a detailed analysis of its possible causes. She puts forward a series of suggestions for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention in schools. She further points out that closer co-operation between home and school is essential in preventing student suicide and fully supports the view of *ECR5* that the initiative for better home-school communication must come from the school.

A feeling of ownership and autonomy amongst teachers is another characteristic of a supportive school environment. The introduction of School Management Initiative in local schools in 1991 was an attempt to decentralize decision-making and devolve power to schools and teachers. **Wong** examines the concept of the School Management Initiative and suggests that it should be understood in a much wider sense than construed by the School Management Initiative documents and *ECR5*. He proposes that it should include staff development, school-based curricula, and teaching pedagogy as well as administrative support and deployment of resources.

One way of providing administrative support to teachers, which is proposed in the Report, is to strengthen computerization in schools so that teachers can be freed from clerical work and can devote more time to professional tasks. The Report further recommends the

establishment of a central curriculum database, which would be acessible to all schools through a computer network, as a way to help teachers to deliver quality education. In response to these proposals, **Day** laments the late and slow development of computer use in education. He points out the irony of the fact that there is so little application of computers in schools in Hong Kong, a place where computerization is so widespread in society. He outlines the potentials for computer use in education, both for teachers and students. He welcomes the Report's recommendation that hardware, software and training should be provided for schools but cautions that adequate technical support and backup equipment are essential to avoid frustrations created by system failures. He further points out that the estimated budget for computer provision falls far short of what would be necessary for proper computerization in schools.

Apart from a supportive working environment, another very important factor in attracting and retaining good teachers in the profession is whether there are good career opportunities for them, as *ECR5* rightly points out (see p.3). At present, the career opportunities for primary school teachers are not very attractive since all primary posts are non-graduate posts. This necessarily affects the quality of primary education. One of the major recommendations of this Report is to introduce graduate posts in primary schools in order to attract graduates. This can be seen as the first step towards an all-graduate profession. **Cheung** applauds the fact that primary education has been put on the agenda of educational reform. However, he expresses concern about whether the proposals made in the Report for establishing graduate posts in primary schools can contribute towards raising the quality of primary education.

Compared to the proposals for improving career opportunities for primary school teachers, those for improving the quality of kindergarten education look pale. **Opper** points out that the latter are not consonant with the Commission's general statement about improving the quality of education at all levels. She expresses disappointment over the lack of attention paid to the improvement of the status and working conditions of kindergarten teachers, the improvement of kindergarten teacher education, both initial and continuous teacher education, the lack of a unified training for all early childhood educators including kindergarten and child care workers, and the lack of parity between preschool and primary

teachers. According to her, kindergarten education has been, and will continue to be, the cinderella of the education system.

A similar concern is expressed by **Crawford and Yung** with regard to the minimal attention paid to special education teachers and the lack of a clearly articulated policy for the development of special education provision. They point out that no consideration has been given in the Report for ensuring that graduates join special schools. They further point out that there is a misconception held by the general public that special education is not only "special" but "separate" and that the Report reinforces this misconception. They argue that special-needs-education-should-be an integral part of all teacher education and development programmes. And additional training should be given to those teaching in special schools.

Physical education specialists are another group of teachers who have been largely neglected by the Report. **Speak** points out that physical and sport education has been undervalued in education in Hong Kong and calls for the introduction of degree programmes in physical education and sports sciences both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, the improvement of career opportunities for physical education teachers, and the provision of high quality facilities and laboratories.

In the Report, frequent reference has been made to the importance of acquiring professional skills and knowledge and professional qualification and accreditation as a means of enhancing the status of teaching as a profession. Both **Lee** and **Sze** point out that these are the terms in which teacher professionalism is discussed in the Report. They maintain that this reflects a very narrow and incomplete view of teacher professionalism. **Sze** proposes a model of teacher professionalism and discusses its dimensions and components. **Lee** makes a detailed analysis of the concept and suggests that it should embrace professional awareness of social needs, personal growth and personal development. They both criticize the establishment of the Council of Professional Conduct in Education in lieu of a General Teaching Council on the grounds that it would deny teachers the opportunity to set up their own professional council and would take away their professional autonomy. They point out that unless teachers are involved in the decision-making process, there can be no real professionalism.

To help us better understand the issue of a General Teaching

Council versus the Council of Professional Conduct in Education, **Cheng** gives a very detailed account of the historical background of the proposal for setting up the former, and offers his own perception of the possible reasons behind the Education Commission's proposal to replace it with the latter.

Apart from the above individual contributions from members of the Education Faculty of the University of Hong Kong, this volume also includes the Faculty's formal response to the Report. We hope that this volume will generate further discussions among teacher educators as well as non-teacher educators.

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Induction of Beginning Teachers: A Teacher Education Perspective

K.C. Pang and Brian Cooke

INTRODUCTION

An important area covered by *ECR5* which has not been examined in previous reports is the induction of new teachers. Organizing induction for beginning teachers is now regarded as a very important task in many countries like the U.K., U.S.A. and Australia. Often, this is supported by the establishment of relevant policies by the education authorities.

It is encouraging to note that the Commission has identified induction as an important task, and is making recommendations to facilitate its implementation in local schools. Indeed an increasing number of schools in Hong Kong are organizing induction programmes for their new teachers, and achieving useful outcomes.

This paper will explore the concept of induction, discuss its importance from a teacher education perspective, and provide examples of possible activities. Finally, proposals on induction in *ECR5* will be discussed.

THE CONCEPT OF INDUCTION

The first year or so of teaching, commonly referred to as the induction phase, is accepted as the most critical period in a teacher's career (Dillon-Peterson 1982). It is an important stage which strongly influences beginners' decisions to stay in or leave the profession, and

their effectiveness and attitudes in subsequent stages (NIE 1978). Successful and rewarding experiences during this period can capture and enhance the development of desirable affective attributes such as devotion, enthusiasm and positive ideals in teaching while the opposite may easily lead to detrimental consequences such as negativism in attitudes and withdrawal from the profession (Hoy 1968; Howey et al. 1978).

However, the induction phase is not an easy stage for teachers. On first entry into teaching, beginners may experience a very sudden change in role, from being students responsible only to themselves to teachers charged with important responsibilities for the education of classes of pupils. Although they are novices, they are generally expected to perform the same tasks as their more experienced colleagues. Furthermore, beginning teachers have to master the whole job immediately, from the first day because, unlike entrants to other professions such as accountancy and law, their tasks are not divisible into parts which can be mastered one at a time. All these aspects associated with the transition are not easily achieved and consequently may put a great strain on new teachers (Taylor and Dale 1971; Purkerson 1980; McMurray et al. 1987).

In addition, in coping with the demands of the school and tasks, beginning teachers may encounter a range of problems, such as handling class discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, or coping with high workload (Veenman 1984). This is in part due to the fact that schools and teaching are becoming more complex and demanding, and partly because of the nature of the teaching 'practice' which beginning teachers undergo in their training. Unlike professions such as law or medicine in which there is prolonged and extensive practice in situations that resemble reality, teaching practice in teacher training programmes is usually relatively short in one or two schools and therefore does not expose the trainees to as real and as wide a variety of situations as they are likely to encounter in the future. In particular, the length of teaching practice is usually not extensive enough to enable the trainees to master every skill to a level of competence equivalent to that of an experienced teacher.

Under these circumstances, the induction year may be a very difficult year for many teachers. Research has found that it is often associated with a range of reactions such as 'Reality Shock' (Muller-Fohrbrodt et al. 1978), predisposition to burnout (Hall et al. 1987), changes in behaviour (Moskowitz and Hayman 1974) and changes in attitudes (Muller-Fohrbrodt et al. 1978; Dann et al. 1978, 1981; Hoy

1968; McArthur 1978, 1981).

Research by Cooke and Pang (1991) shows that secondary school beginning teachers in Hong Kong also experience similiar difficulties. Many of them found the first year of teaching a tough experience, and many problems have been reported. Problems related to teaching and lesson preparation were most frequently cited. Prominent among the problems were those which involved dealing with different levels of motivation, interest and learning abilities of various students and classes. Individual differences, mixed-ability classes, slow learners, and non-academic students regularly constituted problems for these teachers. They found considerable difficulties in adjusting their teaching to students' abilities, especially with regard to the low English standard of their students and the fast pace required of examination classes. In addition, most untrained teachers reported numerous problems in the area of discipline. Other major problems cited by more than two-thirds of teachers in the study include lack of spare time and knowing whether or not their teaching was effective.

In view of the important yet difficult nature of beginning teaching, it is now widely recognized that teachers should not be left to pass through the initial stage unaided. Special concessions and support should be provided for novices to assist them to go through this critical stage smoothly (Ryan 1970; Bush 1977; Florio and Koff 1977; Leiter and Copper 1978; Ryan 1986). These concessions and planned professional support for beginning teachers are commonly referred to as induction.

Tisher (1980) broadly divides induction for beginning teachers into three categories:

(1) provision during the early phase of the novice's entry into the profession (such as provision of information, prior visits to schools, orientation programmes and reduced workload);

(2) school-based induction activities (such as meetings within the school, personal tutoring or consulting); and

(3) system-based induction activities (such as short conferences, regional conferences, half- or one-day meetings within local regions which may range from workshops to group discussions). Details of the range of induction provisions are provided in a later section.

Apart from assisting teachers to pass through the difficult transition smoothly, providing induction support for beginning teachers is also potentially very important in other ways. It compensates for the inadequacies of pre-service provision (Tisher 1979; Bush 1980; DES 1982). It assists beginners to master effective use of teaching

skills and to adapt to the social system of the school (MacDonald 1980). In addition, it enhances the socialization of the novices (Tisher 1980; Schlechty 1985) and fosters their creative and problem-solving potentials (Tisher 1980).

In countries like Hong Kong, where untrained graduates enter teaching, induction might also be seen as a substitution for formal initial teacher education (Cooke and Pang 1990).

INDUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In particular, induction plays a very important role in the professional growth and development of teachers. It is the first stage of a *professional support system* by which all new teachers, regardless of whether they find the first year problematic or not, can be helped to develop their potentials and abilities effectively, right from the earliest point of their careers. As many strategies and methods for facilitating growth and development used during induction such as partnership with colleagues are consistent with those used for professional development in later stages, induction should help to develop the habits of self-reflection, achieving growth and development in a collaborative way from the beginning of teachers' careers.

Thus, the induction stage is increasingly regarded as a major component in the continuing education and professional development of teachers which requires clear identification and treatment. It is now often considered as a *separate stage in the education of teachers*, serving as a bridge between the initial and in-service stages. The so-called *triple-i model of teacher education* (initial, induction and in-service) accepted by many teacher educators clearly reflects the great importance attached to this stage. The induction stage may be viewed both as the continuation of initial preparation, where the pre-service stage of general training becomes more sharply focussed on the circumstances of specific school contexts, and as *the first phase of in-service education*.

ORGANIZING INDUCTION FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

Organizing induction for beginning teachers is generally considered to be the joint responsibilities of many parties, including schools, teachers, the government, teacher education institutions, teacher

associations and centres, as well as the initiatives of the beginner
(Bush 1980; Ryan 1986). There is also increasing emphasis that
induction should not be merely seen as an isolated process of
providing assistance to the beginner in settling into the profession, but
rather, as an important, integral part of the wider process of a
teacher's continuing education and professional development.

In organizing induction, schools and education systems need to
consider how best to plan, organize and offer the kind of induction
most suitable for their own circumstances, and who should be
responsible for, and involved in it.

A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING INDUCTION

A sequential framework (Cooke and Pang 1990) could be adopted in
planning induction activities. This allows for the introduction of new
tasks to beginners, as well as their subsequent development within a
supportive context over the year. This framework consists of three
phases:

Orientation - This stage begins before the school year. It includes a
systematic introduction to the school and the tasks. This phase often
continues into the early part of the term, with the focus shifting more
towards the beginner's teaching duties and experiences.

Adaptation - This follows from the stage of orientation, during which
beginners "find their feet" and settle into teaching. It is of varying
duration, depending on the individual. In most cases this occupies the
first term. During this stage, beginning teachers move from a concern
for survival as their top priority to a feeling of growing confidence
regarding, for example, their understanding of pupils, familiarity with
syllabuses as well as the use of a variety of approaches.

Development - During this stage, beginners' knowledge, confidence
and adjustment will strengthen. For successful teachers, their personal
qualities and characters interrelate positively with the environment.
On the other hand, mismatch or dissonance between the teachers and
their environment may lead to negative results, including changing or
leaving school.

COMPONENTS OF INDUCTION

Research and experience suggest that effective induction programmes should consist of five components, interrelated variously with the three phases of the above framework. These components include:

Providing Information - The provision of relevant information about different aspects of the school, duties of the post, the educational system, etc.

Supervision - Close and regular supervision should be provided to help teachers in performing their tasks effectively. This includes observation of lessons and follow-up discussions offering feedback and advice, regular meetings discussing teaching issues, as well as meetings to enhance awareness of issues and problems and to help beginning teachers develop and try out alternative ideas.

Care and concern - Pastoral care and concern by the principal, senior teachers and colleagues are important forms of support that should be offered.

Concessions - Concessions to ensure reasonable duties and workloads, as well as time and opportunities for beginners to reflect on and enhance their knowledge and skills are important.

Developmental activities - Although in the first year beginners may not be expected to build a wide variety of skills and strategies, it is nevertheless important for them to have opportunities and support to extend their teaching repertoire. Regular meetings with experienced teachers to discuss, analyse and develop ideas, as well as involvement in collaborative staff development activities such as teacher appraisal and peer coaching, are good ways of supporting beginning teachers in their professional development in the induction stage.

MEASURES AND ARRANGEMENTS

Many measures and arrangements can be chosen by schools in organizing induction programmes. The resulting decisions on what to provide for each of the above components, and when they should be offered in the orientation-adaptation-development framework, will be

influenced by a variety of factors and will thus vary from school to school. Below is a list of possible induction measures and arrangements from overseas and local experiences which schools may find helpful in developing their induction programmes.

Concessions

A school should consider what concessions to provide for beginning teachers within their overall teaching duties for the year. Since the first year of teaching should be regarded as a transitional period, in common with situations in other professions, reduced workloads are relevant. Amongst the various possible concessions, beginners may be assigned
.   fewer lessons to teach
.   some parallel classes, e.g. two or three classes of the same year level
.   classes of higher academic ability
.   limited extra-curricular responsibilities
It may be advisable not to assign beginners
.   examination classes such as secondary 5 and 7
.   A-level classes
.   classes known to be very difficult and disruptive, e.g. discipline problems
.   form master/mistress duties
.   administrative duties
In addition to the above concessions, attempts are made in several countries to reduce the overall workload of beginners by perhaps 10% or even 20% of a full timetable. A school may be able, as a minimum, to provide one half day per week for beginning teachers to undertake induction activities within the school, or to attend relevant seminars or workshops provided for example by the Education Department or tertiary institutions.

Arrangements

Apart from the concessions indicated above, which concern the beginner's workload and timetable, there are numerous possible induction arrangements, some of which may apply at certain points of the year whilst others continue throughout the year. Examples of these are:
Before the start of the year beginning teachers are given

.   documents containing information about the school
.   a staff handbook describing rules, working procedures, schedules, etc.
.   information about facilities and resources available
.   teaching syllabuses, textbooks and other materials related to the subject(s) they will teach

They may also be invited to the school for orientation visit(s)

.   to tour the school
.   to meet staff
.   to meet students
.   to observe lessons
.   to undertake some teaching
.   to discuss with the principal school policies, procedures, rules, expectations of teachers etc.
.   to discuss with the panel chairperson teaching issues and procedures of the subject department
.   to discuss with responsible staff induction programmes, e.g. supervision of beginners, available help and support

During the first year, induction might include

.   help and guidance during the first week in particular
.   a programme of regular meetings/seminars for all beginners with various staff, to discuss school issues, teaching experiences, and problems (e.g. discipline)
.   being observed by colleagues, panel chairman, or the principal for comments and advice
.   opportunities to observe colleagues teach
.   opportunities to visit other schools
.   opportunities to meet beginners from other schools
.   social activities to help new teachers get to know their colleagues.

Various arrangements of the above can be selected. Aspects that may need particular thought and planning concern the role of experienced staff in induction. For example, some schools assign a teacher to each beginner, as a *mentor*, who may be a specialist in the same subject. Where a school has several beginners, a senior teacher may also be appointed to take overall responsibility for them. Such a senior teacher may be called a *professional tutor*. If there are several experienced teachers involved in induction, their respective roles should be identified clearly and understood by them as well as by beginners. It is particularly important to distinguish between induction supervision on the one hand, and assessment of beginners

for purposes of probation on the other.

Though providing the necessary information about the school, pupils, curricula, the system, etc., is important, such 'orientation' provisions are not sufficient. If induction is to be accepted as more than simply helping teachers to adapt and survive, that is, as part of the continuing education of teachers, relevant arrangements and activities must be provided on a *regular* basis throughout the induction period to support beginning teachers in their professional development. It should be regarded as a special form of in-service education for teachers in the early stage of their work. Thus, attention should be given to ensure that appropriate development activities are provided at different points of the induction year. Indeed, induction could be linked to some of the in-service activities inside the school, to be organized by the same team of staff, so that both induction and in-service activities are organized in the context of the provision of a professional support system for teachers in school.

ECR5 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is encouraging to note that the Education Commission has now given emphasis to this important aspect of teacher education, since little attention has been paid to it in the past at the system level, and no formal policies have been drawn up.

In *ECR5*, induction is considered as an attempt to improve the retention rates of teachers, and to lay the foundation for a satisfying and productive teaching career (p.10). The major components of induction programmes as described in earlier parts of this paper are recommended, and schools are encouraged to organize induction programmes with the support of external bodies.

Though the specific recommendations on induction programmes in *ECR5* are well made, it should be noted that a narrow view of the role of induction has been taken. From the concerns about the wastage problem and the inadequate attractiveness of the workplace in initiating the induction proposals, it is obvious that the reasons behind introducing induction are restricted, primarily for the benefits of the profession rather than for teachers. Though induction may enhance retention rates and lay the foundation for a satisfying and productive teaching career, it can play a much wider role, especially as the first stage of a *professional support system* in the professional growth and development of teachers as discussed earlier.

Given the importance of induction, re-examining it from a teacher education perspective is therefore needed. In this connection, attention should also be paid to its linkages with initial as well as in-service teacher education to ensure that a coordinated approach to teacher education and development is adopted.

> *We must take every possible step to ensure that new teachers are successful right from the beginning of their careers. To cope is not enough. Poor attitudes and questionable practices acquired during the first years are habits that are difficult to break. To discourage potentially gifted teachers because they are unprepared and unsupported during their initial year is a grave loss to our schools. British anthropologist Ashley Montague wrote in The Cultured Man, "The deepest personal sorrow suffered by human beings consists of the difference of what was capable to becoming and what one has, in fact, become." The sorrow is particularly bitter when there is so much we can do to help new teachers be what they can and should be* (Ryan 1986).

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Challenges in Education and Continuous Teacher Development

Amy B.M. Tsui

ECR5 has been considered by many people in Hong Kong the most generous of the Reports put forward by the Education Commission so far, and one which promises a rose garden for the teaching profession in Hong Kong. The focus of public concern has been on the 23.5 billion dollars that the full implementation of this Report entails. The question that this paper raises is if all the recommendations were implemented, would we have a rose garden in 15 years' time or would we merely have cleared up a terribly overgrown garden? If we listen to teachers talk about the disciplinary problems that they face everyday in the school, the pressure of workload that they are under, their feeling of inadequacy to cope with social problems which have now become part of their responsibilities, and their inability to cope with the rapid top-down changes in educational policies, we can see that the garden is in such an overgrown state that it would indeed be remarkable if the implementation of the recommendations could even clear up the garden, let alone create a rose garden.

Way back in 1982, a report by an overseas visiting panel (commonly referred to as the *Llewellyn Report*) making a comprehensive review of education in Hong Kong already drew attention to the importance of teacher quality, and not just teacher quantity, when introducing mass education (see Llewellyn et al. 1982, p.87). It pointed out that there was a need for a systematically phased-in plan for better professional preparation for teachers and that "...there is also the need to upgrade the quality of many long-serving but inadequately prepared teachers." (ibid., p.88). That there was an

urgent need for dealing with both quantity and quality of teachers was
clearly stated as follows:

> The quality and quantity issues surrounding the teaching
> service are so large and multi-dimensional that *bold and
> urgent policy responses are required* (ibid., p.88, my
> emphasis).

However, the question of teacher education and development has not
been fully addressed until now, fourteen years after the introduction
of nine-year compulsory education in 1978. In these fourteen years,
a lot of changes have taken place in the educational scene, as *ECR5*
well recognizes.   Some of these changes have resulted from the
introduction of nine years compulsory education and some from rapid
social changes. Considering what these changes demand of our
teachers, the help which has been given to our teachers to cope with
these changes is far from adequate. It is not surprising, therefore, that
there is a widespread feeling of inadequacy and frustration among
teachers, and that the teaching profession is becoming less and less
attractive to school leavers and university graduates.

This paper examines the educational and social changes which
have taken place in the past decade, the corresponding problems that
they pose for teachers, and what has been done, or indeed what has
not been done, to help teachers deal with these changes. It argues that
in view of the rapid social and educational changes, it is essential that
teachers are adequately equipped, not only in initial teacher education
but more importantly in continuous teacher development.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGES

The introduction of compulsory education in 1978 brought about a
radical change in the educational scene in Hong Kong in that
education was no longer for the elite but for the masses. Nowadays,
teachers are dealing with children of a much wider range of abilities
and family backgrounds than before. Those children who in the past
would have been excluded from the school system are now in schools.
This means that an education system which previously catered for the
elite has to change and there are several important aspects of the
system that have to alter.

THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

First of all, the ·medium of instruction has to change. When the education system was still for the elite, using a second language as the medium of instruction, though not unproblematic, was not a great problem to learning because students who are bright academically usually have high linguistic ability. Indeed, Cummins et al. (1984) argue that there is a common underlying proficiency governing academic and linguistic proficiencies. However, when the education system no longer caters only for the elite, it becomes more and more obvious that the continued use of a second language as the medium is jeopardizing the cognitive development of students. Students are unreasonably required to grapple with concepts in a language that they are not proficient in. As a result, they spend most of their time trying to master the target language at the expense of a balanced curriculum. In fact, the *Llewellyn Report* (1982) has already pointed out that it is impossible to use a second language successfully as the vehicle for providing universal (compulsory) education in a largely monolingual society (see p.26), and that if we wish to provide a meaningful education for every child, mother tongue education must be introduced in schools.

Let us consider what has been done in the past decade to deal with this very important issue of language in education. *ECR1*, released in 1984, decided against the *Llewellyn Report's* recommendation that Chinese should be mandated as a medium of instruction on the grounds that doing so would deprive students who can benefit from English medium education of a chance to learn through English. It proposed that the medium of instruction be left to the choice of individual schools, and recommended, instead, that positive discrimination be given to schools which adopted mother tongue education by giving them additional resources to strengthen the teaching of English and by removing the labels of Anglo-Chinese and Chinese medium schools and the language medium indicator in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCE). The Report stated that such measures "would help to assure parents of children studying in schools which teach in Chinese that their child would not be placed at a disadvantage." (*ECR1*, p.46).

These positive discrimination measures did encourage some schools to use Chinese as the medium of instruction for certain subjects[1]. However, these schools were, and still are, the minority and very few schools actually opted for total Chinese medium. This

is hardly surprising for these measures did not get at the heart of the problem, which is, whether Chinese medium education is a truly viable alternative in the entire education system. Unless Chinese medium graduates are on an equal footing with their English medium counterparts in terms of obtaining higher education and career development, Chinese medium education is no alternative. In this respect, the Government has done little, if anything. Given that the Chinese University, which was originally set up for Chinese medium school leavers, has been admitting more and more English medium school leavers in the past decade, that its Medical Faculty is actually using English as the medium of instruction, that recently some tertiary institutions have set down a minimum of Grade D for Use of English examination, which is not easily attainable by Chinese medium graduates, and finally that civil service and business recruitment place a strong emphasis on the ability to communicate in English, Chinese medium education is not really a viable alternative form of education. It is therefore not surprising that schools refused to be lured by the positive discrimination measures and that parents refused to be convinced that putting their children in Chinese medium schools would not disadvantage them. The frustrating and sad experience of Carmel Secondary School having to switch back to English medium after three years of adopting Chinese medium is a perfect example of how educationally sound practices will not work if there are no corresponding changes in the system itself. In fact, in recent years, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of students opting to study in "offically" English medium schools. According to recent statistics provided by the Hong Kong Government Education Department, almost 92% of secondary school students are now studying in schools which are "officially" English medium schools (Education Department 1991).

Faced with the problem of teaching students whose English is far from proficient and, in some cases, coupled with the problem of teachers themselves not being proficient enough in English to make instructions and explanations clear to students, teachers have come up with their own solution to deal with these problems, that is, to use mix-code in the classroom. This solution is an example of how teachers themselves try to cope with educational changes when the education system itself fails to do so.

The increased use of mixed-code in classrooms and its undesirable effect on both first and second language learning led to a general discontent in society about the quality of language teaching. In response to widespread criticisms from the business sector that

schools were not producing graduates with the language competence that business needs, a working group was set up to re-examine the issue and a number of recommendations were put forward, most of which were included in *ECR4* (1990). One of the most important recommendations was the phasing out of mixed-code teaching by requiring schools to adopt a clear-cut policy on the medium of instruction. Schools and parents would be presented with the students' test results to convince them that the guidance on medium of instruction provided by the Education Department was educationally the best for the students.

The difference between *ECR4* and *ECR1* is that instead of a laissez-faire policy on the medium of instruction, the Education Department will be tightening its control over the choice of the medium. A rough division of seventy percent of schools will be "firmly guided" (*ECR4*, p.110) to adopt Chinese medium by 1998-9 whereas thirty percent will be allowed to adopt English medium.

While this is an improvement on previous *ECR*s in that the Government is not shifting the entire responsibility to schools, the question of whether Chinese medium education is a viable alternative is still left unaddressed. The question of whether teachers have the language competence to teach either through the medium of English or the medium of Chinese is also not addressed. It is simply assumed that all teachers are truly bilinguals who can switch back and forth between Chinese and English. As has been widely predicted since *ECR4* came out, mixed-code is still being used and will continue to be used in most schools, and most students and teachers will continue to learn and teach in a language that they are not proficient in. By 1998-9, when schools are no longer allowed to procrastinate in their choice of the medium of instruction, it would not be surprising if schools and teachers again came up with their own solution to deal with the pressures coming from both parents and the Education Department.

THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The second aspect in the education system that has to change in response to educational and social changes is the school curriculum. Firstly, the curriculum must cater for a much wider range of ability. In the past, the curriculum was designed for the elite on the assumption of comparable academic ability across the board. With the introduction of compulsory education, students are of a much wider

range of ability than before and this kind of assumption is no longer valid. What we have at present is a highly unreasonable situation in which on the one hand there is an explicit acknowledgement of a range of academic ability among students by classifying schools into five bands, while on the other hand, there is only one set of teaching and examination syllabuses for all schools. Some band five schools are using the same set of textbooks as band one schools. Sometimes the teaching materials are so much beyond the students' level of ability that there is hardly any learning taking place in the classroom.

Secondly, as Morris points out, "The academic emphasis of the curriculum designed for an elitist school system is no longer adequate for pupils whose aspirations and abilities are not academic." (Morris 1990, p.4). A curriculum which is largely examination driven and whose sole purpose is to prepare students for further education is uninteresting and irrelevant to students who are not academically oriented, and causes frustration and a sense of alienation in those who know that they will never be able to receive higher education. This not only contributes to the unruly behaviour in schools, but is also a waste of resources. In order to cater for a wider range of aptitude and ability, the school curriculum must encompass a large variety of subjects, from academic to technical. There must be a shift towards a school-based curriculum, and there must be active participation by teachers in designing that curriculum.

Thirdly, with the rapid economic and technological advances nowadays, the school curriculum has to make corresponding changes. There is a need to introduce subjects which will enable students to cope with the demand that society will make on them. For example, computer literacy is becoming more and more a basic requirement for most jobs. There is a need to introduce cross-discinplinary subjects such as environmental studies and social studies. The traditional demarcation of subjects is no longer adequate and the need to shift the emphasis from product to process, from learning to learning how to learn, is becoming more and more pressing.

Let us then review what has been done in the past decade or so to help the teaching profession to deal with the above demands for curriculum changes.

In terms of catering for students of different academic abilities and aptitudes, the Education Department introduced, in 1982, remedial teaching and split classes in schools in the hope that students of lower academic ability would be brought up to the required standard with some extra teaching. In terms of changing the curriculum to suit the

needs of students with different aptitudes, it was not until *ECR2* (1986) that the Education Commission began to address the broadening of the curriculum. However, it did not examine the curriculum in its entirety, but only the sixth form curriculum. *ECR2* states that "the sixth form should provide a worthwhile course for students of a wider range of academic ability and aptitude than just those with a good chance of reaching higher studies." (p.73). The abolition of the one-year Higher Level curriculum and the introduction of the Intermediate Level (what is now the Advanced Supplementary Level) was an attempt to change the sixth form curriculum from a preparatory course for tertiary education to a self-contained curriculum with a larger variety of subjects, including less academic subjects such as Home Economics, Art and Design, Graphic Communication.

In 1987, the Board of Education proposed that the Curriculum Development Committee be restructured to form the Curriculum Development Council in order to co-ordinate curriculum development at all levels of education, that is, from kindergarten to sixth form. A Curriculum Project Grant was introduced in 1988 to encourage school-based curriculum development so that schools could design their own syllabuses to suit the special needs of their students.

However, the issue of the curriculum was not fully addressed until *ECR4* (1990). *ECR4* proposed the setting up of the Curriculum Development Institute consisting of professionals devoted full-time to curriculum planning, providing guidelines and syllabuses, developing resource materials and reviewing textbooks and liaising with the Examination Authority, the Advisory Inspectorate and teacher training institutes on curriculum development and evaluation.

We can see from the above that the Government did recognize the need and did make attempts to change the curriculum, to move away from centralized curriculum development and to make the curriculum more flexible and more suited to the needs of different students. But how far were these attempts successful? Firstly, the introduction of remedial teaching and services provided to schools with a large number of students of lower ability was unfavourably evaluated. These measures were largely ineffective in achieving the objective of getting lower ability students up to the "required" standard. As recognized in *ECR4*, the current remedial services are unable to meet fully the needs of these schools.

> Both teachers and students suffer a great deal of frustration. Students who cannot keep up with their peers academically are more likely to create disciplinary problems or to play

> truant. The teachers may be overwhelmed by the disruption
> they face in the classroom. Students without learning or
> behavioural problems may also suffer as their teachers have
> to spend more time dealing with those who do (p.44).

This is because what lower ability students need is not more of the
same, but different curricula which suit their needs and interests
(*ECR4*, p.42).

The school-based curriculum project did not meet with great
sucess either. As pointed out in *ECR3* (1988), despite the free hand
that schools were given to develop their own syllabuses, they tended
to follow the centrally designed syllabuses closely (see p.80). Even
those schools which participated in the scheme used the money to
produce teaching materials rather than to develop their own
curriculum. Moreover, due to the pressure of public examinations,
very few schools used the grant to work on academic subjects (*ECR4*,
p.12). As a result, no major innovation took place in schools. The
reason for the lack of success was that teachers were not given the
necessary training to develop their own syllabuses or even to produce
their own materials.   It is a misconception that teachers are
automatically material writers and syllabus designers. In fact, without
adequate training, the materials produced may do more harm than
good to students. We just have to look at the wide range of quality
of the supplementary materials that teachers produced themselves
which are currently in use in the classroom to see that school-based
curriculum innovations must be accompanied by adequate teacher
education.   In terms of broadening the curriculum and integrating
subjects, the present curriculum, particularly the secondary curriculum,
definitely includes a greater variety of subjects than before, and there
are clearly some attempts to integrate subjects. However, if we look
at what is actually offered in schools, we will find that most schools
are still following the common core curriculum which is very much
the same as the old curriculum.

The unsatisfactory results of past attempts to bring about
curriculum changes are largely due to two factors. Firstly, curriculum
changes cannot be made independent of the examination system.
Given the important role that examination plays in Hong Kong for
further education and job opportunities, it is unrealistic to expect
schools to teach subjects which will not be included in the public
examinations. For example, although 98% of schools offer Integrated
Science at Forms One and Two, 40% of these schools revert to
teaching Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects after

Form Two because they believe that this would be better for students who wish to study Science at senior secondary level. As for Social Studies, only 20% of schools offer the subject for fear of disadvantaging their students in the HKCE Examination (*ECR4*, p.10-11). A further example is the reluctance of the universities to require a passing grade in Liberal Studies, which has discouraged many schools from making it part of the Sixth Form curriculum.

Secondly, curriculum changes cannot be implemented without the help of teachers. Yet, as Morris points out, teachers are not given the necessary training to implement curriculum changes.

> They are expected to implement change without any guidance or training and they are also expected to produce their own resources. Given that teachers often do not understand what the innovation requires in practice and that they do not have the skills to use it, the absence of any systematic attempt to provide in-service training or resources is surprising. One cannot legitimately expect teachers who neither understand nor are able to use a different teaching approach to use it and produce appropriate resources (Morris 1990, p.19).

For example, because most teachers in Hong Kong were educated in separate disciplines, it is understandable that without adequate training, they are reluctant to take on the teaching of a cross-disciplinary subject. And if schools cannot find teachers who are willing to take on the responsibility, it is unreasonable to expect them to offer these subjects. It is therefore hardly surprising that there is only a small percentage of schools offering Social Studies and that schools are reluctant to offer Liberal Studies.

Finally, curriculum change in Hong Kong has always been top-down. Although teachers are asked for comments on the syllabuses, they usually have no influence over the final decision. As Morris points out, teacher participation is illusory (Morris 1990, p.5). When teachers do not feel that the changes are what they ask for, when there is no sense of ownership, they are much more resistant to changes, no matter how sound these changes may be.

THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The third aspect in the education system that has to change in response to educational and social changes is the assessment system. In the previous section, we have already seen how changes in the curriculum

must be accompanied by corresponding changes in the examination syllabuses. This is particularly so in places like Hong Kong where much importance is attached to examination both by schools and parents since it is the means by which further education options are opened or closed to students. The use of examination in one form or another for selection purposes can start as early as kindergarten. In all societies where the number of places available in the education system is much smaller than the number of candidates who are eligible, the selective role of examination is inevitable. However, when more and more educational opportunities are available, this role of assessment can be considerably delayed and minimized.

An assessment system which serves the purpose of selection and rank order is bound to create a lot of frustration among students who know that no matter how hard they try, they will never be able to do as well as their peers, and they will never be able to receive higher education.   To these students, examination results are a constant reminder that they are failures, that they are somehow deficient. This has a very negative effect on students' self-image and a dampening effect on their motivation to learn.   This problem was particularly acute after the introduction of compulsory education because of the increase in the number of students of lower academic ability. These students are bound to feel frustrated in a system which will always put them at the lower end of rank order even if they have tried hard and have made some progress.

Let us see what has been done to the assessment system in the past decade to cope with the changes. With the introduction of nine year compulsory education, the Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE) was replaced by the Secondary School Places Allocation System (SSPA) which is based on internal assessment. At the same time, the Junior Secondary Education Assessment was introduced in 1981 to determine which students could continue their education in senior forms. The abolition of SSEE took considerable pressure off primary school children and enabled schools to move away from a distorted curriculum which only concentrated on the examined subjects, English, Chinese and Mathematics. However, the new JSEA at Form Three together with the HKCEE at Form Five meant that secondary students had to cope with two public examinations during their secondary education. This not only put enormous pressure on them but also hindered school-based curriculum development in secondary schools since all schools had been teaching according to the examination syllabus. In 1982, the *Llewellyn Report*

called for the rapid abolition of JSEA and for admission to senior secondary schools to be based on internal assessment with external moderation (see p.38). It also suggested that subsidized post-compulsory education should be available to anyone who wanted it. Instead of streaming students after Form Three into grammar and pre-vocational schools, it proposed that comprehensive schooling should be offered up to Form Five in order to give every student a full range of options: whether to go for higher education, or specialized training or apprenticeship, or to go straight into the work market. This proposal, however, was rejected in *ECR1* for being undesirable and impractical. Instead, it recommended expansion of vocational education; in other words, the selective nature of JSEA was retained. It was not until *ECR2* (1986) that the phasing out of JSEA was reconsidered and it was recommended that this examination be phased out in 1991. Fortunately, schools did not have to wait till 1991, as the public examination format of JSEA was replaced by internal assessment in 1987.

Thus far, changes in the assessment system mainly pertained to turning public examinations into internal assessment in order to reduce the pressure on students. The entire issue of assessment, its nature and its operation, was not fully addressed until *ECR4* (1990). *ECR4* recognized that such an assessment system which was selective in nature "resulted in some students being continually discouraged by finding themselves towards the bottom of their class each year, even though they have made progress." (p.63). It pointed out the need to move away from the summative and selective purposes of assessment. "...(T)he time has come for the development of an assessment system that would serve a formative function and which would enable the performance of students to be measured against agreed targets." (p.63). It proposed that learning targets be set down for both primary and junior secondary levels and that assessments be made at four key stages at primary three and six, and secondary three and five, and that students be assessed in terms of how well they had done in relation to the targets rather than their peers. The advantages of this form of assessment, according to *ECR4*, were that both teachers and students would be able to know how much progress the latter had made and teachers would be able to plan their teaching with reference to the strengths and weaknesses of students.

The movement from norm-referenced principles to criterion-referenced principles, as conceived by *ECR4*, is to be applauded. For the latter "provides a means of assessment by which all students can

be more readily motivated to progress through the levels at their own best speed." (*ECR4*, p.67). However, the objective of enabling students to learn at their own pace can only be achieved if the learning targets are reflected in the curriculum and in the methods of learning and teaching, a point that *ECR4* well recognizes. This not only implies curriculum changes, but also "instructional methods radically different from the large-class expository methods currently prevailing in Hong Kong schools." (Biggs 1991, p.128). And in order to be able to bring about changes in the curriculum and instructional methods, we need the support of the entire teaching profession who must be given the necessary training to do so.

At present, the introduction of targets and target-related assessment to schools has met strong resistance from the teaching profession. Many teachers either feel that they fail to understand the rationale behind the whole exercise, or that they do not have the expertise to play a part in it. This is hardly surprising, given the amount of training that has been and will be given to teachers, given the short time-span in which they have to make the changes and given the lack of involvement they have in the decision-making process. Whether fundamental changes will take place in the assessment system in the next few years depends very much on whether this resistance will be overcome by providing teachers with adequate training and by working hand-in-hand with school teachers.

BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS

In the above discussion, we have looked at three aspects of the education system which needed to be changed with the introduction of compulsory education. We have also seen the demands that have been made on teachers in trying to cope with these changes.

Another change that has been brought about by compulsory education is that students now come from a much wider range of family backgrounds. Those who would have dropped out of schools because of their lack of interest and motivation, or because of family problems, are now in schools. Those who would have been excluded by the school system in the past because of behavioural problems are also now in schools. Once they are in schools, the problems that they bring with them, such as the infiltration of triad societies in schools, broken families and unhappy relationships, become the responsibility of teachers. An example of this responsibility is the tremendous

pressure put by the public on teachers and school administrators to address the problem of student suicide and to provide guidance and counselling.

But how much help has been given to teachers and schools to cope with the behavioural and emotional problems of students? In the seventies, school social work services were introduced in secondary schools and guidance services in primary schools. The provision of this kind of service did help teachers to deal with these problems, although, as Hui points out, the service is largely in the form of "external experts" sent to help schools to solve problems (1991, p.20). In 1986, in a document released by the Education Department, *Guidance Work in Secondary Schools - a Suggested Guideline for Principals and Teachers*, it is clearly stated that teachers are required to provide counselling and guidance in addition to subject teaching. In *ECR4*, a "Whole School Approach" was recommended in which guidance was seen as the responsibility of *all* teachers.   "...(A)ll teachers play a vital part in helping students to recognize 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 initial assistance." (p.28-9).   In order to implement this recommendation, *ECR4* proposed that student guidance teachers should be school-based, the training of secondary school guidance teachers should be strengthened, and local training facilities for educational psychologists should be increased. While all these measures are to be welcomed, they are not enough. Guidance should be provided to students from a developmental and not a remedial perspective, and should be provided before and not just after problems occur. In order to achieve this, guidance should be integrated into the whole school curriculum (Hui 1991, p.25). This requires changes in the curriculum and in instructional methods as well as the co-operation of all teachers in a school. Hence, training in guidance as well as values education should be provided for all teachers in a school rather than for just a few guidance teachers. This entails not only the incorporation of courses on guidance and values education in initial teacher education courses but also in in-service refresher courses.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

To sum up, in the past decade or so, rapid social changes as well as corresponding changes in the educational scene have posed a lot of problems for the teaching profession. Some of these problems are highly complex and have to do with the lack of commitment to education on the part of the government, the lack of vision and overall-planning, and the rapid changes in the socio-economic as well as political situation in Hong Kong. These problems do not have ready solutions and some of them cannot be solved by changes in educational policies alone. However, one thing that we can do is to improve the quality of the teaching profession. As the above discussion demonstrates, the quality of the teaching profession is crucial to the success of any educational changes. In order that teachers are able to make informed decisions about educational policies and participate actively in bringing about educational changes, they need not only adequate initial teacher education, but perhaps more importantly adequate *continuous* teacher development. Unfortunately, as the *Llewellyn Report* points out, continuous teacher development tends to get neglected when it comes to resource allocation. Past *ECRs* tended to focus on quantity and initial teacher education, while little was said about continuous teacher development as an important component in the teaching profession. It is therefore to be applauded that it is now on the government's agenda. *ECR5* recommends the development of a formal policy on professional training and development and also a more formal status for, as well as a comprehensive range of, in-service courses. However, it is disappointing that the policy is not spelled out in more definite terms than "encourag(ing) all teachers to enhance their professional competence systematically and progressively throughout their career", and "increas(ing) the importance of professional development as a factor in career progression" (p.62). The only in-service teacher development course to be given formal status and recognition that is spelled out in the Report is the Advance Teacher's Certificate which is a sub-degree qualification for non-graduates. The need for in-service teacher development courses applies to kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers, whether they are graduates or not. In order that our teachers are able to keep up with social and educational changes, and constantly update their knowledge in their area of expertise, in-service teacher development should be an essential

component built into their entire career structure. There should be a systematic range of courses which teachers are required to take and released from duty to attend. Attending these courses should be the prerequisites for promotion or for earning additional increments, as is the case of the recently approved in-service course for promotion to senior teacher and headship posts funded by the Education Department. Apart from in-service "refresher" courses, assistance should be given to schools to develop school-based teacher development programmes which run continuously through a teacher's entire teaching career.

As *ECR5* rightly points out, the quality of education depends greatly on educators themselves, particularly classroom teachers, and the most effective investments in education are those which help to improve the quality of the teaching profession. If we think of the number of teachers who are still non-graduates, the number of graduate teachers who have not even had initial teacher education, and the number of teachers who have not had any further in-service education since their initial teacher education, together with the increasing demand that is made on the teaching profession, we will see that the proposals in *ECR5* are merely attempts to clear up a terribly over-grown garden. We are still a long way from creating a rose garden.

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ENDNOTE

1.   Some of these schools have found the use of Chinese medium for some subjects and English medium for others workable, and students' academic achievement has improved. These schools are still continuing this practice.

Student Suicide and Home-School Co-operation

Eadaoin K.P. Hui

INTRODUCTION

During 1992, the whole of the Hong Kong community has suffered immensely, witnessing the tragic end of the lives of more than twenty young people. The educational community has suffered particularly, since the young people in question were all primary or secondary school students. The educational community has further suffered because of the inevitable aftermath: blame has been put on schools and criticism has been levelled at teachers. Their attitudes towards students have been singled out as one of the causes, even the principal cause, of student suicides.

A number of issues, which have been latent and have now begun to emerge as a result of this crisis, are worth considering: lack of knowledge on the part of teachers in identifying signals sent out by students at risk, their lack of adequate skills in guiding students with emotional problems, the reward and punishment systems within schools, the ways of handling pupils with unruly and delinquent behaviours. These issues will definitely need further reflection and deliberation by the educational community. But such reflection and deliberation should not be merely a reaction to the present crisis: it should be a proactive means to improve our educational practice.

Another issue which we must consider as equally important is the link and cooperation between school and home, both in the prevention of student suicides and in helping students with suicidal tendencies or who have in fact attempted suicide. In *ECR5*, the Education Commission has addressed the need for cooperation between school

and home for the benefit of the overall education of students. In this paper, I would like to examine the suggestions which the Commission has proposed in its Report and discuss ways which may enhance the collaboration of teachers and parents in the prevention of student suicides and in handling students at risk.

Suicide is a sensitive and stress-provoking issue. A lot of perhaps only half-formulated thinking about suicide is merely myth and fable. A primary current myth is encapsulated in the questions: Is suicide just an attention seeking behaviour? Is suicide epidemic? Would the incidence of student suicides increase if the school were to talk about it to the students?

Before talking about school-home cooperation in preventing and handling suicide, it would be necessary for both teachers and parents to get beyond the myths and acquire more accurate knowledge about suicide and its causes. In this context, I would support the view of the Report that the initiative for better communication between school and home must come from the schools (*ECR5*, p.16).

WHAT IS SUICIDE?

The answer to this question may seem too obvious for words. But the first step towards acquiring an accurate knowledge of the causes and sources of student suicide is to situate suicide within the complex of psychological states and attitudes which affect the behaviour of anyone with suicidal tendencies.

Suicide is an instance of self-destructive behaviour, and must be seen within the parameters of that phenomenon. While, on one level, suicide must obviously be considered as an attempt to destroy oneself, it is also, like other forms of self-destructive behaviour, to be seen as an act of aggression towards others. From yet another perspective, suicidal behaviour or a suicidal attempt is often a cry for help, an act of "brinkmanship", a way in which someone tries to draw attention to some distress he is suffering. Research has shown that, whenever children and adolescents engage in suicidal behaviour, they do so without having any intention to complete the act of suicide or to succeed in it (Patros & Shamoo 1989).

However, when the cry expressed in warning signs is not attended to or is overlooked, the young person then initiates the act of suicide. When the student adopts the most lethal way available to voice an urgent distress signal -- jumping from a high floor of a tall

building, for instance -- his action is no longer a mere signal. Whether he intends it or not, it is an act of no return. Hence, both teachers and parents need to understand the causes of suicide and be alert to the signs of emotional disturbance in young people if they are to offer timely intervention.

CAUSES OF STUDENT SUICIDE

Faced with a stress-provoking event such as the tragic death of a young person, it is rather too easy for any of us to use the parents or the school as a scapegoat, or even to blame the young suicide for his irresponsible act. It will be helpful to make some obvious but pertinent comments on this tendency.

First of all, it is entirely counter-productive to play the blame game.

Secondly, the causes of suicide are manifold and any particular cause may be multi-dimensional. Weiner (1982) has pointed out that youth suicide has complicated origins: it is not just a matter of a sudden or impulsive act of distress.

When we look at the causes of student suicide, it may be useful to adopt the point of view advocated by human ecologists. They see behavior as "a product of the interaction between internal forces and the circumstances of the environment" (Apter 1982). A young person functions as a unique system in his environment. He is, however, also affected both positively and adversely by the other systems within the environment: family, school, peers, and the community. Some may perceive a suicidal act as a young person's deficiency in coping with life, his "dysfunctional adjustment to psychological and environmental circumstances." (Wodarski and Harris 1987). It is, however, equally true that other systems can prove dysfunctional in providing care and rendering support to help the young person to cope.

One analysis (Weiner 1982) isolates four characteristics which mark young people with suicidal behaviour:
(1) Long standing family instability and discord.
(2) Escalating family problems.
(3) Dissolving a social relationship.
(4) Unsuccessful problem-solving efforts.
We may note that three of these four characteristics refer to the dysfunction of other systems in the support ecology of young people.

Therefore, both school and home have to be more aware of their negative influences, which may lead to emotional disturbance in young

people, and have to make use of their resources to strengthen the coping skills of their young people.

TROUBLED SYSTEMS

Family

Young people from an unstable family background are prone to stress. The loss of loved ones, the divorce or separation of parents are very stress-provoking events for young people. The death of father, mother or siblings, is among the most stressful events, while the divorce or separation of parents is ranked in the sixth position according to the Adolescent Life Change Event Scale (Rogan and Hussey 1977).

Two of the characteristics which we have noted as marking young people with a tendency to suicidal behaviour are related to the family system, namely (1) long-standing family instability and discord, and (2) escalating family problems. Young people from divorced families, or whose parents are separated or living in marital disharmony, are at a greater risk of emotional instability. A young person who has recently experienced the death of a parent or who is grieving the death of a sibling or a close friend is also more prone to emotional instability.

An examination of the recent incidents of student suicide in Hong Kong, which were reported extensively by the mass media, provides evidence that some of the students who took their life were from unstable family situations, with parents divorced, separated or dead, and had been taken care of by relatives or grandparents from early childhood. In other words, the family which is troubled with problems may not be able to offer sufficient emotional support to the young people, or may even add further to the stress they experience. Furthermore, according to the anecdotal accounts of teachers, the trend of students coming from single parent families is on the increase. That is something that calls for attention.

School

The classroom can be a very stressful and depressing place for young people. This is particularly true for students with learning difficulties: they are forced to stay at school as a result of our compulsory education policy. However, they are fed with a curriculum which is too demanding and beyond their ability to cope with, or they are

engaged in classroom activities which they find boring. Repeated failure at school often leads to low self-esteem, a sense of worthlessness as a person. Similar stress is also experienced by average students or students labelled as "high achievers" and streamed in the so-called "high achiever" class. In a society which places great emphasis on academic excellence, it is not sufficient (dare we even say "not acceptable"?) to be average. One has to be outstanding. This has turned the classroom into an arena for competition. Winning the academic race is the top priority. This may hamper the development of friendship among classmates. Difficulties in completing assignments, studying for tests and examinations, poor school results - these are perceived as among the top ten life stressors in Li and Ng's study (1992).

TROUBLED YOUNG PEOPLE

The Handling of Developmental Tasks

Adolescence is, understandably, a period when young people experience considerable physical, psychological and emotional changes. It is a time when they are confronted with the need to change roles and to establish their identity. Erikson (1968) suggests that adolescents confront an identity crisis, and must strive to find out who they are. Furthermore, they become more conscious of their physical appearance and the ways in which others see them. Adolescence is therefore often described as a period of stress and turmoil, a period of maladjustment. During this period, young people will need help and guidance from adults in coping with stress and in dealing with their physical, psychological and emotional problems.

It will be more difficult for young people to cope with their developmental concerns if the other people in their environment are not aware of their stress, not offering sufficient help, or are even adding to their stress.

Coping with Stress and Depression

A single source of stress may not always lead to a young person adopting a self-destructive behaviour. However, an event of acute stress such as punishment from teachers, a public examination, the divorce of one's parents, or the break-off of a relationship, in conjunction with chronic depression, may lead to despair in a young

person, and then to a suicide bid in an attempt to resolve the conflict. Both teachers and parents have to be alert to the signs of stress and depression in young people.

Depression is frequently expressed behaviourally. A depressed person begins to experience a loss of interest or pleasure in activities, changes in appetite and consequently in weight, alterations in sleeping pattern, withdrawal from friends. Alcohol and drug abuse, addiction to cough syrup -- these are felt to be some of the ways available to combat depression. However, depression can also be "masked" and expressed in a form of acting-out behaviour, restlessness, boredom in school work, problems with concentration and behaviour. While stress may not always lead to depression and suicidal behaviour, it is a major component in depression, and those who commit suicide are depressed (Patros & Shamoo 1989).

PREVENTING AND HANDLING STUDENT SUICIDE

Caplan (1964) distinguishes three levels of work in preventing mental health problems, designated as primary, secondary, tertiary prevention. Primary prevention strategies are concerned with reducing the causes of disturbance, and are intended to reach the entire population. Secondary prevention aims at identifying vulnerable groups, those at risk, offering intervention to prevent further and more serious disturbance. Tertiary prevention focuses on treatment and rehabilitation so that individuals with emotional disturbance will not become more severely disturbed.

Such a conceptual framework has also been adopted as a general model in organizing school guidance services (Shaw 1973). In the context of student suicide, we may adopt and adapt the same conceptual framework, and suggest that the three levels of prevention will take the form of:

(1) Prevention: strategies aiming at reducing the conditions which may lead to suicide.

(2) Intervention: treatment and care of students susceptible to suicidal risk or suicidal problems.

(3) Postvention: strategies to help survivors to deal with the trauma of attempted suicide, or to help friends and others in the case of completed suicide (Smith 1991).

Smith also argues that schools provide a logical forum for suicide prevention and that a comprehensive prevention programme should involve teachers, parents and students.

In a conference for school principals, on A School-Based Suicide Prevention Programme, held in Hong Kong in October 1992, Ryerson introduced the Adolescent Suicide Awareness Program (ASAP), which was implemented in schools in the United States in response to the increase in adolescent suicide in the late 70s. In her article describing ASAP, she has also pointed out that, in implementing suicide prevention programmes, not only the young people, but also their parents and teachers, need to be educated about the reality of suicide (Ryerson 1990).

Here I should like to discuss ways in which school and home can work on and collaborate in the process of prevention.

ECOLOGICAL PARAMETERS

Prevention strategies should aim at enhancing the mental health of students, improving their environment so that the risk of suicidal behaviour among them can be reduced. Such strategies may include the following:

(1) Enhancing the awareness of suicide warning signs among teachers, parents and students:

School administrators, teachers, supporting professionals such as school guidance officers and school social workers, as well as parents and students, should all be alert to suicide warning signs. Recognition of the signs or the cry for help will mean that intervention can be given more promptly and effectively.

The following are some significant warning signs:
* Withdrawal from social contacts.
* Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities.
* Drop in school performance.
* Sleeping problems (insomnia or sleeping too much).
* Sudden changes in physical appearance; for example, gloomy looks, untidiness.
* Loss of energy, fatigue.
* Lack of concentration, short attention span.
* Mood changes.
* Feelings of worthlessness, self-blame.
* Isolation from peers: breaking off a close relationship.
* Abusing drugs and alcohol.
* Giving away personal possessions.

* Self-injurious behaviour, such as wrist scarring.
* Previous suicidal attempts.

This kind of information could be provided in the form of seminars or workshops for teachers, parents and students (Ryerson 1990).

(2) ~ Improving Communication between Schools and Home:

There are already many existing forms of communication between school and home. Teachers and parents meet once or twice a year, on Parents' Day, Sports Day or School Open Day. They correspond through student handbooks, through interviews with parents initiated by the school upon the emergence of problems. But such forms of communication will not be sufficient in the context of preventing suicide.

ECR5 recommends that:

Communication should take place not just when problems arise, but as a matter of course.[...] Parents and teachers can learn to talk to each other about the child's progress in a positive atmosphere, which helps to prompt the child's education by enabling both home and school to play their part (p.16).

In the matter of student suicide, school and home need to be in closer contact, informing each other of changes of mood or behaviour on the part of the students, or changes in the family situation or in school performance. More importantly, a proper channel of communication should be created, giving teachers and parents the opportunity to share information about students before the occurrence of problems. Dialogue in a more positive atmosphere will help to establish rapport between school and home (Education Department 1988). Such rapport and mutual trust are essential if teachers and parents are to work in partnership.

Some schools already organize meetings and group sessions with parents. Some School Guidance teams also offer seminars and workshops for parents on such topics as skills in communicating with children, developmental concerns of adolescents, ways of handling stress. Guidance activities which aim at strengthening parenting skills also serve the purpose of Shaw's "primary prevention in guidance", in which the guidance

service is directed at improving part of the students' environment, namely the family system.

(3)   Enhancing Students' Problem-solving Skills:

We have already noted that students prone to suicidal behaviour are often under stress, depressed. They often lack an adequate social-support network, and are poorly equipped with problem-solving skills.

In many local schools, developmental and preventive programmes have already been undertaken by guidance teachers and moral education teachers. Form periods and class periods are often used for these purposes. I have argued elsewhere (Hui 1991) that the focus of guidance work in school should be more preventive in nature, and that services should be provided for all students before problems occur. The teaching of social skills, life skills, problem solving skills, has an important role to play in the prevention of further occurrences of student suicide. The existing guidance and moral education programmes should also include developmental programmes dealing with enhancing self-concept and self-awareness, facilitating decision making, management of stress, dealing with loss, communicating feelings and fear. Such prevention programmes, suitably adapted, should begin as early as primary school.

(4)   Utilizing Peers as Resources:

Peer support is an important factor in helping adolescents cope with stress, for they often turn to their peers for guidance when they encounter problems. Research into the help-seeking behaviour of adolescents indicates that, when confronted with problems, they would be inclined to consult their parents and friends (The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong 1992). Li and Ng's study (1992) also indicates that, when faced with severe stress, students mostly prefer parents and friends as helpers, but would first approach peers, namely friends and classmates.

When the family system is in trouble or fails to provide the needed help, peers serve a very important function as another help system.

There is already a trend in secondary schools to invite senior students to help juniors by tutoring (Peer Tutoring

Scheme), by supporting new students in adjusting to secondary schooling (Big Brother and Big Sister Scheme). Schools can further strengthen the peer-support network, not only in tutoring and mentoring, but also in rendering support to friends in need of help. Students, even senior students, may not be mature enough to give counselling. However, they may be made aware of, and alerted to, suicide warning signs, encouraged to listen and talk to a friend who may be depressed or under stress, and to encourage him to seek professional help. Peers should be included, at least to this extent, in the "primary prevention" of suicide.

HELPING STUDENTS WHO THREATEN OR ATTEMPT SUICIDE

When the school or the family observes any distress signal in the student, it is necessary to inform each other of the situation, and make plans for dealing with it. Further, both school and parents should carefully consider the following issues:

(1)   Assessing the risk of the suicidal threat:

The following questions may help to assess the risk implied in a suicidal threat
*   Is there a suicidal intent?
*   Does the youth have a specific suicidal plan?
*   Is the plan well thought out?
*   What means are available for the completion of the act?
*   Is there a time set for the suicidal attempt?
*   Is the plan to be carried out in isolation?
*   Is there any precaution to avoid discovery?
*   Is there any involvement in abuse of drugs and alcohol?
*   Does the youth have any previous record of suicidal attempts?
*   What kind of support system is available at school and at home for the youth?
*   Is the youth under severe stress or very depressed?
The young person who is under great stress and has little social support in the immediate environment is at risk. The risk is further increased if the youth has made a specific suicidal plan, set a time to carry out the act, using the most lethal means, with no possibility of intervention from outside to save him.

(2) Considering strategies for managing the crisis:

All suicidal threats or comments have to be taken seriously. Even if the risk of suicide is not high, any attempt at self-destructive behaviour is a cry for help. Both teachers and parents have to consider strategies in the face of such crisis.

A crisis management team should be set up in the school to offer the youth immediate support and counselling. Such a team should, as far as possible, consist of the principal, the guidance team co-ordinator and guidance teachers, a school social worker and an educational psychologist with professional training in counselling and crisis intervention. Even if the school does not engage a social worker or psychologist, or if neither is present in the school at the time, such professionals should be informed immediately whenever there is a suicidal threat of any kind on the part of any student, and a meeting arranged as soon as possible to consider strategies in dealing with the crisis. Similarly, if the intended act is not yet known to the parents, they should be informed immediately and should meet with the crisis management team.

Though teachers are not expected to render therapy and long term counselling for the suicidal youth, they are very often the first ones to pick up or to be informed of the warning signs. When faced with a crisis, the school should assign a teacher who is familiar with and has good rapport with the student concerned to make contact with him, show concern, offer encouragement, listen to his feelings and distress with empathy, and help him to ventilate his anger, frustration and fear. Since not all teachers are trained in crisis intervention and professional counselling, it will be necessary for the school to enlist professional help rather than to handle the crisis alone. Thus, it will also be important for the school and parents to prepare the suicidal youth to receive professional help from a psychologist or psychiatrist, and then to make the necessary referral for therapy and counselling. Further, parents and school should set up a network of social support both at home and at school for the student. It has to be ensured that there is someone to whom the student can turn for support and with whom he can share his feelings even after a referral. Follow-up contact for the youth in crisis also needs to be considered.

In cases where the distress of the student is due to stress from the family, it is important to understand the trauma which

the suicide threat means to the parents themselves. They may react with a denial of the problem, or project the blame onto others, or rationalize the behaviour. Parents do need emotional support and help in coping with the crisis. The crisis management team set up in the school should listen with empathy to the parents, convey to them the school's concern about the suicidal risk, and direct them to sources of professional help.

SUICIDAL POSTVENTION

(1) Helping suicidal survivors to adjust.

In the case of students who survive a suicidal attempt, it is important for both schools and parents to consider carefully the steps necessary for re-integrating the student into the school and home and to help facilitate his adjustment.

It is also essential not to glamourize or dramatize a suicide, for this may give the wrong message that suicide is a solution to a problem. Nor is it appropriate, on the other hand, to minimize the act, for this may add to the survivor's anger, anxiety and sense of guilt (Catone and Schatz 1991).

As suicidal survivors are at a greater risk of a second or further attempt, both parents and teachers have to be alert to the warning signs, monitor the mood and behaviour changes of the survivors, keep in close contact and inform each other in case of further signs of crisis.

Any suicidal attempt will obviously have a great psychological impact on the student concerned, and it will take him some time to get over the trauma. Steps need to be taken to help the survivor concerned to re-integrate into the school community in the aftermath of hospitalization, and to re-adjust to the routine at school. It will be helpful if a teacher or a school social worker is assigned to maintain follow-up contact. Arranging for the survivor to take part in a peer counselling scheme may also be helpful. Peers can play an important supportive role and serve as contact and outreach persons. However, it has to be stressed that the help given by a teacher or peer cannot be taken as a replacement for professional care.

Hence, if the survivor is receiving ongoing therapy or counselling from professionals, the crisis managment team should

hold case conferences in which school personnel and parents could further discuss with these professionals treatment plans and follow-up support at home and at school.

(2) Helping the school community to grieve for the death.

Whenever a student dies in a suicide attempt, the whole school community facing this death will enter into a bereavement process. There should be a determined school policy, with guidelines, for handling such an event, and it would be much better if this policy were formulated before the occurrence of suicide. Such guidelines should contain a concrete plan of action.

The American Association of Suicidology has proposed a list of suggestions for dealing with the aftermath of suicide (American Association of Suicidology 1992).

For example:

(1) Verifying the information about the death.
The principal must take care to have information about the time, method, location, witnesses if any, of the death. Close liaison with the police will be invaluable.

(2) Calling in the school crisis management team.
The team should consider ways to disseminate the news to the school community and the family, and to initiate postvention programmes.

(3) Notifying the teachers and classmates who are close to the deceased, the other students in the school and their parents.

(4) Making provisions for individual and group counselling for students, particularly those in close relationship with the deceased, to help them deal with their feelings of shock, fear, anger and guilt.

(5) Identifying high risk students who may be led to imitate the suicide of their peer.

(6) Arranging for the staff and students to attend the funeral and for a memorial service at school.

(7) Visiting the bereaved family to offer condolence and support.

(8) Meeting the parents of other students who may show concern about the impact of the death on their own children.

(9) Dealing with the mass media.
For example, media requests for information should not be refused. A school spokesperson should be designated, who

will be responsible for providing such information. The spokesperson should be ready to stress to the media the need to minimize the publicity of the event, the danger of glorification of the suicidal act, which may lead to copycat behaviour from other young people and to subsequent suicidal cluster.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of a student suicide prevention programme will require careful deliberation on the part of the school, and will entail the formulation of a school policy which of itself will be wider than the concrete programme.

Such a policy should include the following elements: a mental health curriculum for all students; a comprehensive education programme for staff, parents and students about the myth and the reality of suicide, and about the warning signs; guidelines and steps for action in crisis intervention; formation of a crisis management team; a set of procedures to deal with the tragic death of a student.

As student suicide is the concern of both teachers and parents, eliciting the views of the parents in the formulation of the school policy, seeking their endorsement of the policy, and enlisting their participation in the eventual student suicide prevention programme, will definitely add to the successful implementation of both the policy and the programme. A student suicide prevention programme could be an innovative project undertaken by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to foster home-school cooperation.

Further, I would suggest that the standing Committee on Home-School Co-operation, proposed in *ECR5*, actively encourage such an innovation in Hong Kong schools, both through financial subvention and the publication of information about such projects and their evaluation.

Lastly, professionals, such as educational psychologists, would have a great deal to contribute to such a project. Educational psychologists, for example, are trained to work in schools as consultants. They are experienced in crisis intervention, and skilled in conducting in-service training programmes for teachers. They have had experience of parental involvement work, cooperating with parents and involving them as partners. Their role, however, should be in areas of prevention rather than "fire fighting" (see also Hui, in press).

In the case of student suicide, educational psychologists will make a far greater contribution by helping and supporting schools in preventing suicides rather than by conducting a post-mortem or an autopsy to find out the causes (or to apportion blame?), a role which must be rejected, even if it is an order from a Coroner's Court!

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School-based Management, School Effectiveness and the School Management Initiative: Different? How Different?

Andrew K.C. Wong

INTRODUCTION

The Education Commission Report No. 5 (*ECR5*) suggests the implementation of the School Management Initiative (SMI) in local schools. The SMI is modelled on school-based management. Like school management theory, school-based management draws heavily on general management concepts which are derived from practices and experiences in commercial and industrial organizations. This paper examines some of these ideas and, the notion of school effectiveness. It advocates a wider concept of the SMI as a framework for improving the working environment of local schools.

DECENTRALIZATION IN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The counterpart in commercial and industrial organizations for school-based management is divisionalization. This is a response to both the market demand and the over growth of commercial and industrial organizations where problems of complexity and diversity have become overwhelming. The extent and pattern of this mode of decentralization depends on two basic conditions. (Decentralization is defined by Mintzberg (1979) as 'the extent to which power is dispersed among many individuals'. Brown (1990, p36) modified it

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to 'the extent to which authority to make decisions is distributed among the roles in an organization.') One is whether the locus of knowledge should be located in the organizational hierarchy; the other is the level of tolerance towards disorderliness (Brown 1990). These two conditions are inter-related.

Head offices of commercial and industrial organizations often hold the view that the structural apex has both the knowledge and information to see the whole picture and make strategic decisions. It is also in the interest of the structural apex to maintain control, otherwise, 'disorder' may prevail in the organization. After all, organization is order and organizing implies establishing order. There is always a tendency for an organization to remain centralized. However, when facing a crisis and coping with the problem of growth, organizations need to divisionalize.

Some have argued for the need for decentralization (Mintzberg 1979, 1983; Peters and Waterman 1983; Brooke 1984). They basically question the assumption that the organizational hierarchy holds the knowledge and information. They maintain that higher and lower level managers possess different kinds of knowledge and information about what the problems are and how to solve them. They criticize organizations which retain more power than is required in the organizational hierarchy, thus depriving the lower units of the ability to make informed and proper decisions. They further argue that when the lower units are entrusted with decision-making, some level of disorderliness is inevitable. Disorderliness promotes freedom. There is a tradeoff between order and freedom in order to create. Schumacher (quoted in Brown 1990, p.32) puts it as follows,

> ...any organization has to strive continuously for the
> orderliness of *order* and disorderliness of creative freedom,
> and the specific danger inherent in large-scale organizations
> is that its natural bias and tendency favour order, at the
> expense of creative freedom.

There are three distinct purposes to be achieved by decentralization, namely, flexibility, accountability and productivity (Mintzberg 1979; Brooke 1984; Brown 1990).

When a policy of decentralization is being implemented, the lower unit is given flexibility to respond to local conditions. It is argued that the unit could become more innovative. Even though to be innovative may not be the purpose of an organization, the level of innovation could be increased if sufficient flexibility in decision-making is provided.

If a unit is given greater freedom to make decisions, there is a need to hold it accountable for its decisions. This is the rationale for an accountability system. For private organizations where profit maximization is the ultimate goal, accountability is closely adhered to. This is not the case for public or service organizations like schools. Here a clear definition of mission and a realistic statement of goals are necessary. Often effectiveness and efficiency are used as criteria.

It is believed that decentralization will reduce cost, improve efficiency and outcomes. One reason is that the higher-level managers are costly, and if they do not delegate decisions, not only will they be overloaded, but their decisions will cost more. Theory aside, the fact that more and more private organizations are decentralized is evidence enough that decentralization increases productivity and profits. Otherwise organizations will not be interested in just greater flexibility or more appropriate coordination.

In actual organizational life, not all decisions are dispersed to the lower unit. Mintzberg (1979) referred to this as 'selective' decentralization. He commented that important decisions such as finance are often retained in the centre, while only certain decisions such as that regarding production are disseminated to the lower unit. It is not automatic that the staff of the lower unit will share in the decision-making. Brooke (1984) used the terms 'horizontal' and 'vertical' decentralization to describe the phenomenon. By 'horizontal' he meant participatory or political decentralization while by 'vertical' he meant hierarchical or organizational decentralizations. In private organizations, it is often the case that decisions are decentralized to a key role such as the unit manager but the unit itself remains highly centralized. These organizations will not be interested purely in democratic participation in decision-making.

However, in schools 'horizontal' decentralization is often sought for its own sake, at least in theory. This aspect makes educational institutions unique. Afterall, educational institutions are different from commercial or industrial organizations in many respects. In schools, the involvement of parents in school activities has long been a practice particularly in many industrialized countries. Teachers are often considered as professionals. Their participation is seem as a valuable contribution to the decision-making.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

In education, some form of decentralization has always been practised. In UK, before the 1988 Education Reform Act, the Department of Education and Science was responsible for policies, the Local Education Authorities for the provision of education and the school for the curriculum. In US and Canada, the provision of education has always been a provincial or state responsibility, with the school district being the unit for local policy-making and administration. In Hong Kong, the government has been responsible for the provision of education and has control of curriculum and finance, while the sponsoring bodies are invited to run schools with a certain administrative power including the recruitment of heads, teachers and supporting staff.

Since the 1970s, the development of a new pattern of management was seen which gave schools a larger say in the control of their own financial resources. Two early examples are illustrative. In Edmonton, Canada, where an example of a wider scope of decentralization was recorded (Sackney and Dibski 1989), the emphasis was on finance known as school-based budgeting. The school was allocated resources for teaching, equipment and services. District-wide tests in language, social studies, mathematics and science in Grades 3, 6 and 9 were created. In the UK, the pioneering work in Cambridgeshire was also in financial resources and was known as Local Financial Management (LFM). The later 1988 Education Reform Act included even more features than financial resources. Besides the usual delegation of financial power (up to 85% of the school budget) to the school governing bodies, the Act established the National Curriculum which was used for national testing and reporting. Another unusual feature was the right of parents, stipulated in the Act, to opt out of schools. This creation of an educational 'marketplace' is unique in UK.

Caldwell (1990) traced the development of this new pattern of school-based management in a number of industrialized countries. He attributed this development to the following factors.

First, the environment for education is rapidly changing from an industrial to an information society where pluralism, individuality, decline of family influence and many other factors have become prominent and have posed new challenges to schools. Decentralization was a government reaction, rather than an active or rational deliberation of policy, towards the rapidly changing complexity of society.

Second, there is a shift in the meaning of equity from access to a school for each child to access to a particular mix of resources in order to meet the needs and interests of a child. It was considered that this particular mix of resources is better made at the level of the school rather than in a central government office.

Third, studies of school effectiveness and improvement have shown that highly effective schools are schools which have been given a high level of responsibility and authority to make decisions about staff and allocation of resources.

Fourth, many have used successful examples from commercial and industrial organizations to show that a better pattern of management is for the centre to set up broad goals and purposes and to decentralize decision-making about the means for the achieving these goals and purposes.

Obviously, Hong Kong is subject to the influence of these factors and the introduction of the School Management Initiative (SMI) is a clear example. However, Hong Kong will be merged with China after 1997. There is a political dimension which is not found in other places. School-based management seems to fit the political agenda of the present government which has been in the past ten years or so pursuing a shift of sponsorship for some government departments. This process of 'privatization' will allow local schools a greater say in managing their own affairs and resources. The urgency in the introduction of the SMI to all schools may reflect this intention.

THE SMI AND SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

In Hong Kong, church bodies and voluntary agencies have played a major role in the development of education since the 1950s. This development has made the educational system quite decentralized. The schools run by these church and voluntary bodies are supported by government funding, and they are given authority to recruit heads, teachers and supporting staff. To apply the organizational structure of Mintzberg (1979), the system resembles the 'divisionalized' form of structure where limited decision-making is delegated from the Education Department to the schools.

However, since the 1970s when the government rapidly expanded secondary school education, the schools were not given more power to manage their affairs. On the contrary, when the number of aided schools grew, the Education Department responded by tightening administrative and financial control, resulting in more complicated

bureaucratic procedures. Gradually, this has stifled the initiative of schools and has made schools totally dependent on the Education Department for leadership. During this period, no formal accountability framework for performance has been developed. Public examinations are the only measurement available and passing public examinations has become the only goal for schools. In fact, many local schools excel in one thing, namely, in their emphasis on academic success.

In the document on SMI the above weaknesses of the local education system were attributed to (SMI, Section 2.1):

- inadequate management structures and processes;
- poorly defined roles and responsibilities;
- the absence or inadequacy of performance measures;
- an emphasis on detailed controls, rather than frameworks of responsibility and accountability; and
- an emphasis on cost control at the margins, rather than cost effectiveness and value for money.

The document SMI made a total of 18 recommendations to remedy the above deficiencies. Of the 18 recommendations, Recommendation 11 clearly gives the School Management Committee (SMC) a larger control of its financial resources. The Recommendation suggests the amalgamation of two recurrent School and Class Grant and Administration Grant with the non-recurrent Repair and Furniture Grant into a Block Grant which takes up about 15% of the school budget. At a result, in the SMI document the school is required to allow the participation of teachers and parents in the decision-making of the SMC - a 'horizontal' decentralization (Recommendation 10), and the establishment of an accountability framework (Recommendation 9).

It is clear that the SMI follows closely the pattern of school-based management in other places. However, there is one major difference. In the examples of the industrialized nations where school-based management is recommended, schools are often given the control of a much larger budget to work with, which gives them an incentive for effecting change. It is doubtful whether 15% of the budget in the local situation would be sufficient for schools to bring about innovations. An awareness of this is demonstrated in the SMI document which did suggest the merging of salary and non-salary grants (Recommendation 15) in the long term. The SMI attributed this moderate recommendation to the deficiency of the Hong Kong educational system in three areas, namely, weak management

capabilities, unclear information about school needs and poor feedback on school performance (SMI, Section 2.53). Perhaps the SMI is correct to make such a recommendation. In a recent survey of views of teachers on the SMI, the teachers expressed reservation about the merging of salary and non-salary grants (Cheng, 1992). They feared that the school management would misappropriate the funds to the disadvantage of teachers. On different occasions, they also objected to giving schools discretion to use savings of up to 5% of vacancies for any staff or non-staff purpose (Recommendation 12). This view of teachers clearly reveals their apprehension and lack of trust towards school management.

Whatever the reasons are, it is doubtful whether this relaxed use of limited funds could allow schools to generate enough initiative for school-based management changes. It may be necessary for the Education Department to allow some schools which are more ready to embrace school-based management concepts to try out changes with a much larger control of their school budget.

THE SMI AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

What is interesting is the fact that the SMI jumps on the bandwagon of school effectiveness and suggests that if the 'self-managing' school model is adhered to, the school can achieve a more effectivde status (SMI, Chapter 3). Perhaps the SMI share courses itself with school effectiveness. Afterall one of the purposes of school-based management is on school outcome. What is puzzling is the simple view held by the SMI on school effectiveness and its rationale for the local schools.

Achieving the status of an effective school, if one ever gets there, is a highly complicated issue, and the literature of effective schools does not support the logic of the SMI which can be represented as follows.

The logic of the SMI

Self-managing schools --will eliminate --> School problems --will lead to --> Effective schools

Moreover, in trying to compare the effective schools with the local schools, the SMI may have made some misjudgments.

First, the SMI criticized local schools for not having the characteristics of effective schools (SMI, Table 4). The SMI may not have realized that in terms of academic achievement, which is used by most of the studies in the US as the sole measure of effectiveness, many of the local schools may in fact be effective.

Second, the SMI blamed the dictatorial behaviour of a few heads for the poor performance of schools (SMI, Section 3). To criticize the dictatorial behaviour of heads is a normative judgement which is justified. But to associate it with ineffective schools in the Hong Kong context may not be accurate. Thus far, the literature on effective leadership has been ambivalence on whether a democratic leader is more effective than an autocratic one. Reynolds (1991), using research findings from different places, also called attention to the different day-to-day management of effective schools. The problem will be more complicated if school effectiveness studies are carried out in the developing world where different cultures may generate a different list of factors. As referred to in the first point, it may be possible that some autocratic heads in Hong Kong secondary schools are very successful in getting students to pass public examinations. Hence the crux of the issue lies in how effectiveness should be defined. Without defining what is meant by effectiveness and by failing to study local schools beforehand, the SMI has caused some confusion by making a wrong correlation.

It has been pointed out that school-based management alone would not automatically bring about effective schools (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991). There is a need to link up school management change with the process of learning and teaching in the classrooms. A collaborative culture must be created in schools for this change. This is an issue which has not been addressed in the document. An examination of the 18 Recommendations and the arguments present in the SMI report reveal this is indeed the case.

OTHER PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

It is necessary to point out that school-based management is based on the decentralized management control model which argues that decision-making is rational and can be carried out orderly. Such an

assumption may be problematic where goals are ambiguous, contested, or even conflicting, or where the relationship between means and ends is unclear, as in many educational organizations.

Weick (1976) describes educational organizations as loosely coupled systems where units are attached but have little sharing among themselves. Each unit has its own concern and is quite independent of each other. It is hard to achieve common goals in this situation.

Cohen and March (1986) regard educational institutions as typical of organizations where policy making is uncertain because members opt in or out of decision opportunities. They see educational organizations as marked by turbulence and unpredictability, where goals are unclear and the processes are not properly understood.

The subjective model (Greenfield 1974) argues that organizations are the creations of people and as such cannot have goals. It is people who formulate goals. Organizational life means different things to different people.

The Political Model (Baldridge 1971) believes that conflicts are part of organization life and argues that organizations are dominated by individual or group interests, and decisions are the results of negotiation and bargaining. Interest groups will form alliances in pursuit of particular policy objectives. It is difficult to predict the outcome of negotiation. Even when goals have been established, they are very unstable because new tensions, new vested interest and a new cycle of political conflict will emerge.

In practice, the SMI will be subjected to the political reality and constraints that are present in each school. If the above perspectives are indeed more appropriate descriptions of many schools in Hong Kong where leadership roles are ambiguous, structure is loosely coupled and conflict of interests is prominent, then these issues should be tackled at once. By advocating decentralization, the SMI provides a possibility to enable schools in finding ways to address their immediate problems.

THE SMI AND THE EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT NO. 5 (*ECR5*)

The focus of *ECR5* is on teachers. It points out that 'the success of an education system depends heavily on its ability to attract enough young people of good quality into the profession, encourage them to

make lifelong careers as educators, and enable them to develop their skills to the full' (*ECR5* Chapter 2, p.10). Two major issues are put forward by the Report for this purpose. One relates to the preparation and career development of the teacher and the other to the working environment of the school. It is most appropriate to use the SMI as the broad framework for the improvement of the working environment of schools.

Chapter 2 of the Report deals with the improvement of the working environment in schools which includes:
* Induction of new teachers
* Home-school cooperation
* Management in school (the School Management Initiative)
* The physical environment
* Administrative support
* Computerisation
* Non-salary grant
* Improving staffing levels
* Class sizes

Although these topics are all related to the working environment of the school, the Report is less specific on where the responsibility for the improvement lies, and does not set a priority. It may be better if the working environment can be divided into one which is influenced directly by the Government and another one which is more the responsiblity of the school (Mortimore et al (1988) used 'given' and 'policy' environments to refer to these two responsibilities respectively. These terms are borrowed here.) In the latter, the enlarged concept of the SMI can be used as the framework. The division of the environment is shown in Table 1 on the following page.

The division gives a better picture in terms of responsibility and priority. The 'given' environment clearly spells out the responsibility of the Government. The suggestions made by the Report are impressive. The school environment would be greatly improved if these suggestions were implemented. However, one is disappointed that the Report fails to include the improvement of the learning environment of the pupil. For example, it fails to include a library for all primary schools. A library in the primary school, if used resourcefully, will not only encourage independent reading among the pupils but will influence the pattern of learning and significantly improve the learning atmosphere of the school.

The 'Given' Environment
* the physical environment
* computerization
* staffing levels: clerical and teaching staff
* class size
* non-salary grant

The 'Policy' Environment
(using the concept of SMI)
* teacher development
  - induction of new teachers
  - staff development programmes
* teacher involvement
  - consensus of school aims
  - school plan and school activities
  - decision sharing and making in SMC & committees
* home-school cooperation
  - parent-teacher association
  - parent involvement in SMC
* accountability
  - staff appraisal
* school-based curriculum
  - curriculum to match students' ability
  - teaching pedagogy
* administration support
  - computerization
  - clerical support

Table 1   The 'Given' and 'Policy' Environments

The 'policy' environment is squarely the responsibility of the school. The Report has rightly pointed out the need to introduce the induction of new teachers, good school management and SMI. However they are put parallel with the SMI. It makes better sense if the induction of new teachers and parent-teacher cooperation are subsumed under the School Management Initiative framework. It will be up to the individual school to assess its own needs in order to

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The SMI, as introduced in March, 1991, has a few specific targets to achieve. These include drawing up a formal constitution for its school management committee; setting out procedures and practices for managing the school; providing clear definitions of the various management roles; setting up a school plan and profile and adopting a formal staff appraisal scheme. However, the ultimate purpose of the SMI exercise, though not explicitly stated, is to encourage student learning. Hence the SMI should embrace a wider concept than has been suggested in the SMI document. This should include staff development, school-based curriculum, teaching pedagogy, administrative support and other related issues. Such a concept would allow teachers to be involved in school administration in mobilizing resources in order to bring about better and more effective teaching and learning in the school.

If the SMI concept is accepted by *ECR5* as the necessary framework for the improvement of the 'policy' environment of the school, the next immediate target will be to create conditions to bring about this change. Since the publication of document in March, 1991, there have been misgivings from both and that teachers and administrators. They have expressed concern that they are unfamiliar with the concept and operation of the SMI after a school has joined exercise a) the workload of the teachers and administrators will be massively increased. These two issues are closely related. While it is inevitable that more work will be done when staff are involved in decision-making and planning new activities, this should be compensated for by a better and more satisfying working environment. Another way to alleviate part of the anxiety is by providing staff with adequate training. When teachers and administrators have come to grisp with the concept of the SMI, have acquired the necessary skills and are committed to implementing the changes, their confidence will be boosted and their assessment of their workload will become more

the present SMI scheme, will be needed and it will also be necessary to incorporate and coordinate the work of the teacher training institutions.

The Report has rightly stressed the importance of the working environment. However, suggestions for improvement have so far only been made for the 'given' environment. This is far from adequate. The improvement of the 'policy' environment is equally, if not more important. There is a need for the Report to recognize this and allocate resources for its support. The Education Department could reorganize its supporting services to schools under the framework of the SMI. In this way, other than fresh resources, the existing resources could also be channelled to serve this purpose.

ECR5 has made crucial recommendations affecting teacher education and careers in Hong Kong. These efforts will be thwarted if teachers are easily frustrated by the working environment of schools. Hence, mobilizing resources to support the improvement of the 'policy' environment is crucial.

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Through a Glass - Darkly! The Computer's Late Entry into Hong Kong's Teaching Profession.

Jeffrey Day

INTRODUCTION

On pages 24 and 25 of *ECR5* are discouragingly short references to "Computerisation" as part of a 12 page chapter on "The Working Environment in Schools".

In a territory whose prosperity depends day by day on the successful application of computerisation in every aspect from air-freight control to personal banking, such brevity does not bode well for Hong Kong when world trends for the development of computer use in education, both for administration and in teaching are accelerating. The section's very brevity reflects a lack of awareness of the in-depth penetration of computers to schools elsewhere, both in their offices and at the learning interface. This naivety may be because of the make-up of the commission, alternatively it may come from a lack of research into both developments overseas and the remarkable competence of school students despite the deplorable lack of formal education in computer literacy.

This paper will attempt to discuss some of the Commission's shortcomings in addressing the issue of computerisation. It offers readers insight into what is already available to those in higher education in Hong kong, and what is already commonplace in schools elsewhere but which has not been considered or in any way recommended by the Commission within a local system in many ways already ripe for its introduction.

EARLY DAYS

In the early 1980's, there was a recommendation that computer studies be introduced as a "subject" to Hong Kong's secondary schools. Facing up to world-wide moves, the Education Department developed and brought into play a syllabus and provisioned secondary schools with a computer "suite". Since that time there has been little progress in teaching provision for a world where computers are part of every citizen's daily life. The original concept was for the computers to be "networked" when suitable technology became available, yet, as far as is known, despite the current availability of the technology, there is little provision of local area networking in the schools and hence little opportunity for students to be taught of its value and significance.

THE PRESENT SCHOOL SITUATION

Whilst some schools and principals have clearly seen the potential for computers in word-processing and record keeping, there is a minority of schools who have incorporated them fully and systematically into their management systems in ways seen in almost every large commercial company with over 100 employees (teachers and ancillary staff) and 1000 consumers (the students). In 1988, a comprehensive exposition of the potential for such incorporation was given (Wong 1988), but such comprehensive application implies a level of understanding beyond most Principals unless they have the motivation to become involved or the technical support which allows them to adopt genuine end-user status.

As for computer use in the classroom, there is none at primary school level, and no provision is made for it. In contrast, every primary school classroom in Britain has a computer, and so does every English Schools' Foundation primary classroom in Hong Kong. The question might be asked, in a territory where the whole educational system is based upon the British system, why both government and educators have been so derelict in developing general computer literacy when such progress has occurred in the "mother" system.

At secondary level, the teaching of computer studies as the only source of computer literacy for a minority of students was considered outmoded in the West in the early 1980's, yet in Hong Kong, where the society in general is more widely exposed to computer applications

than overseas, the provision in schools is much weaker. Almost no science laboratories have computers for data analysis, for interfacing or for simulations. Only three local schools have developed any sort of formal links with the Territory's many bulletin board networks, yet considerable numbers of students in their homes have the facility to link with these systems! As for general student literacy, a syllabus (Hong Kong Education Department 1992), introduced originally in 1987 to forms 1-3, purporting to be a computer literacy syllabus is in fact no more than an anachronistic piece of didact which relegates interesting applications to the last page and is in fact no more than a preparation for the Forms 4-5 computer studies course that only a very small minority of students will take. No provision is made to teach genuine keyboarding skills to all in 'Form 1', and no concepts of the power of modern computer technology are offered. It has a heavy emphasis on business applications, tries to teach some programming and to introduce complex terminology before the students interest has been developed. As with so many syllabuses in Hong Kong, it emphasises the academic with no hint of the applications which make the academic worth studying until the end of the course, by which time students are bored and uncomprehending. An applications approach could be more valuable and an awareness that most students will need competence in end-use but no deep knowledge of construction or programming which can be left to tertiary level for those inspired with early enthusiasm.

Outside Hong Kong, educational television has produced hierarchies of instructional courses for successive age groups to develop interest and literacy. Here, knowledge of data-bases, CD-ROM, modems and data-logging are acquired by some students outside the curriculum, when by inclination such applications and knowledge would grip the interest of the more intelligent child far more firmly than the rote-learning of terms or the drudgery of mathematics examples within it. The applicability of the ideas related to modern computer applications in daily life, in television, sound reproduction or problem-solving simulations would hold the attention of the less-able where chalk and talk fail.

At the primary school level, the development of mystery games such as 'Granny's Garden'for younger children and 'L' for older able mathematics students are examples of valuable programmes for teaching problem solving skills to such age groups and are regular teaching partners in computerised classrooms, used as rewards for the able or help for the less able. The avid development of manipulative skills and perseverence when a youngster is given a 'Nintendo' outfit,

or a 'Game-boy' are proof enough of the addictiveness of these toys. If the psychology of their commercial success can be turned into valuable learning experiences, we as teachers have a right to demand the tools to aid our increasingly difficult profession in competing against television, video-game centres and other liesure activities for the attention of the young to develop their academic interests.

At the professional level also, few teachers seem aware of the potential for information exchange and curriculum development using information technology as a transfer tool. Furthermore, as yet, they receive no encouragement from the Education Department of government to develop such applications. At the University of Hong Kong, a bulletin board for teachers called "CATNET" has been operating for some five years, yet it has no official funding, and little participation from other than a few teachers who have vision for the future. A second board, NeXuS, aiming to link students directly with teachers in the tertiary institutes is under development but again attempts to obtain funding through U.P.G.C. for research into its potentiality has failed. The development will continue but with reduced pace and prospects because, without funding, personnel and provisioning will be reduced significantly. The funding of a single modem, so that each school could have access to this technology would cost only HK$2.1 million for 2,700 schools at current retail prices, assuming that there is at least one computer in every school already, which may not of course be the case!

There is a reference in *ECR5* to 'training' of personnel to use the systems to be provided. This doubtless refers to the clerical staff who will, it is to be hoped, operate the machines; whilst the training of teachers to diffuse computer literacy across the curriculum is left, as usual *ad hoc* and vague. Moreover, if teachers are placed in end-user positions with no understanding of the systems they are to use, whether for clerical or professional purposes, frustration of both clerical staff, because of inept input, and teachers who do not understand the reasons for input/output protocols, will doubtless add to the work stress of teachers.

THE WAY AHEAD

Teachers complain consistently about lack of resources for teaching new subjects, of their inability to talk to similarly beleaguered colleagues in other schools and of the need endlessly to produce 'hand-outs' for their students, yet they seem unaware that, in other

countries, massive resource data-bases (such as *NERIS* in Britain) exist and the potential for exchanging materials through electronic mail allows teachers to upload and download materials to brighten their teaching. They also complain of clerical overload and this is certainly a valid concern. However it is doubtful whether the mere provision of computers for office staff will reduce that, since students at present are dealt with by class and not as a body, thus throwing clerical responsibility onto teachers. The provision, alternatively, of a student *machine-readable identity card* and the placement of responsibility for clerical work onto students or parents in terms of feeding the information into bank auto-teller style terminals in each school to request concessionary fares, financial assistance and other items requiring clerking, would enable the school office, by means of such a card, to remove such a problem from the teachers' hands in short order. Such systems are at present being tried out in Britain at present with considerable success. In use for daily student registration, they are an effective check on truanting patterns which are not easily examined when manual registration is used. ('Tomorrow's World'[scientific developments report]; British Broadcasting Corporation World Television, January 1993.)

It is doubtful whether this is what the Education Department has in mind even though all such information is already entered in the Immigration Departments' data-base for children aged 11+. In Hong Kong's compact system, the efficiency pertaining from the maintenance of a central students' records database is self-evident especially since it already exists as noted above, so that no work is required to set it up. If birth records are now kept by the registrar of births on computer, then again, no need exists for set-up costs for a primary-age data-base. All that is required is a simple computer transfer of records, by electronic means from the Births Registry computer to that at the Education Department. Alternatively, both could access a population records stack in a large central registry.

The values to be gained from the addition of a teaching resource database, and the ability for teachers (and students) to contribute worthwhile material to it are also self-evident. Not only would such data-bases be of utilitarian value, they would also have educational value in encouraging academic interchange without the necessity to wait for long periods between submission of an article and its production in a journal or book.

At present, students have no access to publication of worthwhile contributions unless a sympathetic teacher agrees to help them publish in, perhaps, a curriculum journal such as that of the Science and

Mathematics Association. With the help of computer networking they would have immediate access to an area of the database reserved for them and controlled by the data-base editors to ensure consistent quality.

The provision, with each data-base computer node in a school, of a laser or 'bubble-jet' quality printer would ensure that users would receive consistently high quality resources from the data-base and would, themselves, be encouraged to produce and lay out work well. In the case of student work, such a provision would enhance communication skills.

Such an opportunity would, furthermore, be environmentally friendly as no use would be made of paper until an end-user at a computer terminal decided to use the resource for a class and downloaded it for photocopying.

THE DISMISSIVE STANCE OF *ECR5*

The Commission's note that government is to spend $28.9 million until 1995 on computer provision for administration seems to reflect a feeling that this is all that can be expected and no visionary development (for Hong Kong) is foreseen.

Information that every primary school, most colleges and of course all tertiary institutions in many nations are linked by information exchange networks seems to have been ignored or avoided by the Commission. Yet here in Hong Kong, some English Schools' Foundation primary schools are linking with each other and with schools in New Zealand, Britain, Europe and America to exchange creative writing, environmental data and other materials, while in the home of free local telephone calls, no such educational provisions have been made. Chincotta & Day (1992) have suggested the way forward in this respect, and Abbott & Jordan (1988) and Beddis & Mares (1988) have offered examples of good international progress in this area.

Some local students too are well ahead of their schools and teachers. A bulletin board dedicated to exchanges about environmental matters is popular in the local system Environmental Net (1992), whilst schools and the Education Department make no progress towards such goals.[1]

TECHNICAL SUPPORT ALONE IS INADEQUATE

Although the provision of hardware, software and training, as envisaged by the report, are worthwhile, computerisation of both administration and information exchange will not be effective until the need is met for a level of technical service to ensure that difficulties encountered with the system are met by trained technical support. There must also be a suitable level of backup equipment to ensure that a technical failure does not put the system out of action. If the $29 million is for a single piece of each item of support as costings below indicate, it will fail to achieve its aim and cause stress and frustration when problems do occur. If however the system were networked to a professionally maintained central system then such problems would be reduced. Modem links, rather than individual school-based systems are perhaps a more economical development for record keeping, since down-time caused by individual system failures can be reduced and central backup systems[2] may reduce the impact of occasional data-loss events.

However the government itself has inadequate computer support. Even its vaunted Central Registry of 40,000 heroin abusers, said to be the most accurate in the world, is inadequately supported by computing power, as evidenced by repeated requests, (and until this year, refusals) from the Narcotics Division to Finance Branch over recent years for its renewal because it had become obsolescent (1990). It may be that expertise to develop such a system as required by the much larger education service may be lacking. Consultancy from institutions with the most reliable systems, such as banking or foreign exchange dealers should be sought; perhaps also from academic systems such as the larger institution libraries in Hong Kong, while in-house development should be avoided.

Teachers have so much responsibility for so many people on a day to day basis (one teacher may see up to 300 students daily in classes, together with other duties) that they must be able to rely on an electronic system's almost faultless operation. It must not create more work by unreliability. For this reason, a 'quick-fix' computerisation solution must be discouraged.

Applications such as record-keeping, timetabling, examination data-processing and for resource storage are the usual purpose of large computer systems and it would be of unparalleled value. Teachers are employed to teach and they should not be further burdened by the introduction of computers into their already overburdened day. The personnel support to leave the teacher more free to do his job must be

given also. Any attempt to cause the teacher to become the end-user
in entering records and printing out data must be resisted by the
profession in the same way as a doctor would resist the personal
dispensing of medicines.

POTENTIALS FOR COMPUTERISATION

Resources and Teaching Opportunities

The discussion above outlines only some of the possibilities for more
routine developments in computerisation. There are many others,
perhaps of a wider and more exciting nature. Chincotta and Day
(1992) refer to the development of "View-data" made available to the
public in Hong Kong briefly in 1985-87, but discontinued on a general
basis because of lack of demand. Nevertheless in the financial sector,
View-data of a specialised form is made available through terminals
placed in banks and dealing houses. In other places, notably Britain
and Europe, such a facility is available to educational institutions
through a network originally developed by *The Times* newspaper and
called TTNS-*'Times Teaching Network Service'*. The service rapidly
outgrew its original intention and developed a wide range of services
from careers advice to health-related data, changing its name to
Campus 2000.

The annual hard-copy publication of the service, *Campus World*
(1991) now lists 154 data-bases within its system, with gateways to
other even larger systems such as British Telecom's 'Prestel' system.
The tertiary institutions in Hong Kong are linked through *Internet* to
world-wide communications, and trials are underway to link Internet
to *Campus 2000*. In the United States, systems to which Hong Kong's
academics can already link, such as *Dialog* and *Spacelink,* both of
which have classroom materials like those of *NERIS* within the
Campus network, are available, yet teachers in schools have as yet no
way of linking with these facilities! At present international telephone
dialling charges would make such access prohibitively expensive for
schools, but tertiary institutions have this access free of charge because
they operate mainframe computer links directly to satellites, by-passing
international telephone links. The offering of such expertise down the
academic pipeline to schools is surely a natural extension of this
opportunity.

Administration and Educational Opportunity

Software packages for record-keeping, timetabling and school administration are well developed. However a huge wastage of time and human resources will occur if trained personnel at a moderately high administrative level are not made available, perhaps on a peripatetic basis to schools who are operating the systems. It is not satisfactory to rely on the good will of an interested teacher to become involved in these activities. The experience of a wide range of experienced large system computer operators should be taken into account, as well as experiences of large businesses in considering the kinds of systems and staffing needs for such a development. The opportunities for educational development of such alternatives as the integrated or modular curriculum, now considered by most schools to offer too many administrative difficulties, are opened up by good use of computers.

The will so to innovate is surely lacking however, since other national systems have been developing such curricula and administering them by non-automated means for many years. It is normal outside Hong Kong for students to be able to build their own curriculum with advice from teachers, parents and career guidance staff, and also from computer programmes that match aptitudes, interests and further education entrance requirements with opportunities, through career data-bases. Here, almost universally, choice is limited to 'science','arts' and 'commerce' streams, real choice being made from student performance not preference, with prestige counting for more than interest. If schools were helped by computerisation to operate modular, or 'block' timetabling, relatively free student choice could be offered from Form 3 to allow students to develop their own choice of talents without being rail-roaded through an uninteresting regimen. Although operable without computers, (see English School's Foundation timetables for any year, including Form 1 where limited choice can be made) the use of a timetabling package to allocate subjects, students, rooms and staff would at least remove excuses of the 'too difficult' nature!

The figures quoted in *ECR5* for computer provision over the next three years equates to only HK$3,580 per year per school, or HK$10,740 over the whole period. *This amounts to less than the cost of a single computer with its peripherals per school* so that the Commission was either unaware of the inadequate nature of the provision in that it made no comment about its inadequacy or were quite aware of the situation but felt that any provision was a sop to

technological advance in the dinosaur age of schooling.

Envisaging that every staff-room would require one to five machines for routine work such as word-processing, every office a similar number for record processing, every library up to two for record keeping and student access, and every science subject at least one, together with geography, history and mathematics, the crass inadequacy of thinking behind the figures is clear, especially when no additional development beyond the "computer studies suite" has occurred since the early 1980's.

THE COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO ACT

Some of the ideas offered above are readily available in Hong Kong, including machine readable cards. Computers are already in use to reserve books amongst tertiary institutions' libraries. CD-ROMs are available which allow 1 million references to be searched for key words in a few hours. Yet every school has hectares of paper given over to record storage of populations which change completely every five years and the records are not passed on from primary to secondary school. Therefore not only are students' histories lost when they graduate, but the new school has to initiate the recording process with consequent waste of man-power. Furthermore, by refusing to introduce computer methods and skills adequately to all students, the schooling system is perpetuating such inefficiencies because the most intelligent students, when they leave school after Form 7 have received no computer literacy training. They go on to tertiary qualifications unaware of the real potential of modern electronic storage and communications.

The forests of paper issued annually to students would make the loaning of a notebook computer to each, ready programmed with all of the notes required by the students for their school career, an environmental saving of considerable worth. Perhaps then schools could become the venues for social intercourse of an academic kind that they might be, because teachers would no longer have to transmit information which would already be in the computer 'as issued'. New information could be issued at 1.44M bytes per disc to update or add to the information and homework could be handed-in on a 'floppy disc' for teacher correction, or more usefully, discussed through a modem between students, with the teacher joining in as necessary. Disinterested students would be penalised by having work erased and requirement made to repeat it, whereas students well ahead could be

offered additional challenges to access for themselves from the central data-base.

Each year of delay for fear of the expense actually puts Hong Kong further behind in the race to be South East Asia's leading "Little Dragon". Thus far, post secondary expertise and entrepreneurship have allowed the system to conceal its shortcomings, but for how much longer? When interactive compact disc systems appear initially from Europe, (Philips CD-I) and not from Japan, it begins to lead to anxiety that Asia may be losing its edge in production of computing superiority. A will to ensure that no further slippage occurs and an intention to go far beyond *ECR5*'s recommendations are needed very soon if Hong Kong is to hold up its head as a computer literate territory against countries such as Singapore.

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ENDNOTES

1. In fairness, certain senior Inspectors have personally communicated their wish to have such provision, but complain at all times that their hands are tied by Finance Branch of the government.
2. Tape or Write-Once Read Many (WORM) CD-ROM would be suitable systems.

ECR5 and Primary Education in Hong Kong

K.W. Cheung

INTRODUCTION

Primary education has long been a neglected area of educational concern. The Hong Kong Government, like other governments in the world, spends relatively little on primary education. In the case of Hong Kong, the unit cost for educating a pupil in an aided primary school is HK$ 8,974 whereas the unit cost for a secondary aided place is HK$ 13,610. Moreover, the Government is prepared to tolerate bi-sessional primary schools but not bi-sessional secondary schools. By browsing through the items of the Government budget, one could get an idea of the place of primary education on the agenda of educational finance. For example, the Government is prepared to spend HK$64,000 on the "building and furniture and equipment for primary schools", and the secondary sector will be expected to receive HK$321,000 for the same item (Hong Kong Government 1992, p.65). It is also important to point out that as primary school teachers are non-graduates, their status has always been low. They are trained in the Colleges of Education which are run by the Education Department whereas graduate teachers are trained by the two local Universities. There is a strong demarcation between the graduate and non-graduate sector of the educational community. This has implications not only for the funding of the different levels of education, but also for the ability of these sectors to influence the ways in which educational policies are formulated and implemented.

    Before the introduction of nine-year compulsory education in

1979, primary education was only an instrument and process through which about one third of primary school children were selected to go on to secondary schools. Not much attention was paid to the way in which school experience was structured and delivered in primary schools. The quality of primary schools was then measured by the number of students who managed to pass the selective examination and subsequently obtain places in secondary schools. Even after the introduction of compulsory education, attention focused on secondary rather than primary education. For example, discussions about the medium of instruction, curriculum reform or even methods of educational administration are concerned with reforms at the secondary school level.

It is against this background that the proposals in *ECR5* should be appreciated for their strategic consideration of the way in which the quality of education can be raised. The Education Commission has rightly put the issue of primary education on the agenda of educational reform. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the strategy which underlines the *ECR5* proposals in the current context of primary education. Specifically I would like to evaluate the extent to which the proposals for establishing graduate posts in primary schools can contribute towards raising the quality of primary education.

ECR5 PROPOSALS

In the report, the Education Commission states clearly that the two strategic issues which they are concerned with are "the institutional framework for teacher education" and "professional development and the need to provide our schools, in particular our primary schools, with the quality of human resources they will need to meet future challenges" (*ECR5*, p.4).

Basically *ECR5* proposes what I would call a "partial primary graduate teaching force" strategy to raise the quality of primary education. This strategy has the following components:

(1) 35% of the teaching posts in primary schools will become graduate teaching posts (*ECR5*, p.45).
(2) A [bachelor's] degree in primary education is recommended as the entry qualification for graduate posts in primary schools (*ECR5*, p.49).
(3) Local tertiary institutions [are to] be invited to develop ...

self-funding [in-service] degree courses in primary education which combine distance learning and face to face tuition (*ECR5*, p.53).

(4) The UPGC-funded institutions will be encouraged to offer pre-service B.Ed. courses while in the long run the courses will be offered by the upgraded Colleges of Education, which will then be renamed as the Institute of Education (*ECR5*, p.53).

(5) The ranks and scales for graduate teachers in secondary schools will not be applied in the newly created graduate posts in primary schools (*ECR5*, p.54).

Compared with the British effort to reform primary education in the mid 60's, that is, the publication of the Plowden Report, *ECR5* clearly did not take the redefinition of what constitutes good primary education as the starting point for launching reform programmes in primary education. In other words, unlike the British Plowden movement, primary education is not the subject of reform proposed in *ECR5*. In the British case, it was the redefinition of what good primary education was that led to the reconsideration of the relationship between nursery education and primary education, the curriculum and organization in primary schools as well as the training of teachers in primary schools. In the case of Hong Kong, it was the recognition by the Education Commission of the need for more attention to be given to primary education as the Government is implementing more and more programmes in primary schools and thus the teachers should be better trained and equipped to implement new policies (*ECR5*, p.5). I am not for one moment advocating any replication of the British exercise. I am simply drawing attention to the fact that primary education itself is not the focus of the reform proposed in *ECR5*. In the following, I shall assess the policy objectives propose in the Report.

ESTABLISHING MORE GRADUATE POSTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: THE MERITS

Firstly, in establishing graduate posts in primary schools, the links between tertiary education and primary education will be established. The involvement of tertiary institutions in the education of primary

school teachers will then become an incentive for more research on primary education.   This, I hope, would become the basis for discussion of innovations in primary schools.   Teachers would then have the chance to theorize their own teaching experience in in-service teacher training courses, while pre-service teacher training will be dealing with more research-informed discussions on various primary curriculum matters and other relevant issues.   With more research on primary education, informed decisions can be made about primary education policies.   In the past, on a number of occasions, issues of primary education were discussed by poorly informed policy makers. Suggestions were made without careful consideration of the situation in primary schools and their possible impact on primary schools. Consequently, either resources were not utilized fully, or good policy initiatives were abandoned, the best known example of which was the proposal for bringing back whole day primary school proposed in *ECR4.*

This then takes us to the second point.   As suggested above, being a relatively neglected area, primary education has become such an unknown factor to policy makers that it is difficult for them to "log into" this particular sector of education, which is mainly made up of non-graduate teachers.   When decisions are made, they are either irrelevant to the actual needs of primary schools, or difficult to implement.   In other words the homogeneity of the primary teaching force has actually made primary education almost inaccessible to outsiders and has become one of the problems itself when the issue of primary education is on the reform agenda.   One way is to change the composition of the teaching force in primary schools, which is exactly what *ECR5* is proposing.   To open up the posts to graduates means that graduates from other disciplines may join the primary teaching force so as to diversify the teaching force in primary schools.   This is actually good for primary education because the growing heterogeneity of the teaching force would then help to generate innovative ideas and practices from within.

Thirdly, the Education Commission is correct in pointing out that the growing complexity of primary education does require a more sophisticatedly trained teaching force.   It expects that such a change would help primary schools to satisfy new demands like TTRA and SMI which have been imposed on them by the authorities.

For many people in the education community, whether these new

demands can contribute to good primary education is still problematic. We are not concerned with this issue here. The concern here is whether or not as a result of the implementation of the Report, we will have a better primary teaching force. More importantly, whether the Report has provided us with the best way of recruiting the most appropriate graduate teachers into the primary teaching force.

WEAKNESSES OF THE "CONVERSION" PRINCIPLE

The operational principle adopted by the Education Commission for establishing the graduate stream is based on the concept of "conversion". According to this principle, non-graduate teachers can upgrade themselves through a self-funded B.Ed. course. This operational principle will actually limit the sources for recruiting graduate primary teachers. Although the Report does mention that "the first such posts should accommodate graduates from the existing degree course in primary education, and serving teachers with other qualifications which are acceptable as degrees or degree-equivalents, and which are considered relevant to the needs of primary schools"(*ECR5*, p.54-55), the mechanism for such a transfer is not mentioned. Rather, the Report spends the major part of its discussion elaborating the mechanism of "conversion".

The first issue in the "conversion" principle concerns the eligibility for joining the graduate stream. *ECR5* recommends that "a degree in primary education *should normally* be the required qualification" for a graduate post in a primary school (my emphasis). It is of course true that when non-graduate primary school teachers receive degree bearing in-service training, it should be directly related to the nature of their job. But clearly some important issues have not been taken into consideration. There are already a number of graduates working in primary schools, but they are on the non-graduate salary scale. According to statistics released by the Government (see Table 1), 212 primary school teachers are currently holding local degrees, and 229 are holding degrees from Commonwealth countries. Although there is no information about what they studied for their degree, it would not be at all surprising if the majority of them did nor specialize in primary education as the first local batch of B.Ed. students graduated from the Chinese

University of Hong Kong only in June, 1992. There are also 243 non-degree teachers who are graduates of the two Polytechnics and the Baptist College. These teachers, after finishing the conversion courses now being offered by relevant institutions, would be local degree holders. Again, they would not specialize in primary education since no such courses are or will be offered. The conversion principle proposed in *ECR5* has obviously overlooked this group of teachers.

Another group of teachers which *ECR5* fails to consider are the non-graduate teachers who go to Britain to study for B.Ed. degrees every year. To the best of my knowledge, there are at least one hundred teachers who either resign from their teaching posts or take no-pay leave to go to UK to further their studies every year. Although the content of most B.Ed. courses for serving teachers offered in Britain is not directly related to primary education, they should be eligible for the status of primary graduate teachers after completing those courses in Britain. Under the existing Education Ordinance, principals *can* always make a special application to obtain graduate status for these teachers, which will be dealt with by the Department of Education on a case by case basis. In fact, granting graduate status should be part of the whole process of upgrading the primary teaching force. The Education Commission, in focusing their attention on the conversion principle, has overlooked the fact that these teachers are already teaching in primary schools.

Table 1　*The Academic Qualifications of Permanent Teachers and Temporary/Supply Teachers in Primary Schools by Sector*

Academic Qualification	Types of Schools							
	Government		Aided		Private		All Sector	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Polytechnic & Baptist Non-Degree	7	0.6	190	1.2	46	3.0	243	1.3
Local Degree	0	0.0	202	1.3	10	0.6	212	1.1
Commonwealth Country Degree	23	2.0	174	1.1	32	2.1	229	1.2

Source:　(Teacher Survey, 1991 p. 61-62)

We can further identify a third source for future primary graduate teachers, which was neglected by the Education Commission. They are the fresh graduates from various faculties of local and overseas higher institutions. *ECR5* simply does not suggest any route whereby they can become graduate primary school teachers. The Education Commission does not even propose that the Faculties of Education in both Universities should include primary education in their post-graduate teacher education courses. In other words, graduates of these courses are denied the opportunity to serve in primary schools as graduate teachers.

The second issue in the conversion principle concerns the salary structure for graduate primary teachers. We shall first compare the existing salary structures of both the graduate and non-graduate teachers with that proposed by *ECR5* (Table 2).

Table 2   *Salary Structures of Graduate and Non-graduate Teachers*

Rank	Non-Graduate (primary schools) (existing) MPS	Graduate (primary school) (proposed) MPS	Graduate (secondary school) (existing) MPS
P I			
P II			45-49
PGM			40-44
SGM			38-41
GM			34-39
PAM			19-33 (cert. ed.
SAM	34-36	38-41	holder)
AM	30-33	34-39	
CM	25-29	30-33	
	14-24	19-29	

Source: adapted from the table in *ECR5* p.54

It is clear from this table that compared with their colleagues in secondary schools, the future graduate teachers in primary schools will suffer two disadvantages in their career advancement. Firstly, they will not have the opportunity to be promoted to the PI and PII grades. Secondly, to go from MPS 19 to MPS 38, which is the top grade, they

would have to be given three promotions, while their colleagues in secondary schools would only need two promotions to go to the equivalent grade. The first point can be easily defended on the basis of the complexity of running a secondary school. But the second point would be important for graduates to consider when they are choosing their career paths. It is obvious that the salary structure proposed here would make teaching in primary schools less attractive to graduates. The Education Commission does not seem to be worried about this, because they maintain the view that the two graduate streams should be separated. They argue that "the [primary graduate] stream should have a ranking structure and pay scales which are attractive enough to motivate teachers to undertake a demanding in-service degree course, but without creating too much overlap between a graduate rank and more senior non-graduate ranks"(*ECR5*, p.54). What *ECR5* has overlooked is that this strategy would undoubtedly create the impression that graduate teaching in primary schools would be regarded as inferior to graduate teaching in secondary schools. This would have the effect of making the upgrading of non-graduate teachers the major source of graduate teachers in the future.

CONCLUSION

We do not wish to speculate about the reasons why the Education Commission adopted the conversion principle to establish graduate posts in primary schools. There may be good reasons for discouraging graduates from other disciplines from becoming primary school teachers. But discouraging graduates from other disciplines from teaching in primary schools will also have the effect of preserving the homogeneity of the primary teaching force. There may also be good reasons for launching a B.Ed. course in a faster and cheaper way, but failing to make the proposed B.Ed. course a UPGC funded programme will discourage higher institutions from offering the course. Even if the latter are willing to offer this course, there is a danger that the course will be run on shoestring budgets which will affect their quality. All this lead to the question of whether a huge increase in salary grants in primary education, because of the creation of graduate posts, can be justified in terms of the limited impact that it will have on the quality of primary education. This does not mean that we are

raising any objections to the establishment of graduate posts in primary schools. The major worry here is that we might be spending a lot of money with little improvement in the quality of primary education.

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Kindergarten Education:
Cinderella of the Hong Kong Education System

Sylvia Opper

ECR5 sets out a number of general statements about education and presents various recommendations to improve the quality of the Hong Kong education system. Many of these reflect a commendable progressive approach towards education and teacher preparation. It is not clear, however, what and whom the Commission includes in their definitions of "education" and "teachers". Does education also include kindergarten education? Are kindergarten teachers also considered teachers? Answers to these questions would help to define the status of kindergarten teachers and the education they offer.

This paper, which examines the statements and recommendations of *ECR5* as they pertain to the kindergarten level, assumes that this level is in fact an integral part of the entire education system. Kindergarten education is regulated by the Education Department, it affects nearly all children aged 3 to 5 years, and it is recognized by parents as an essential part of their children's education.

The Report seeks to "improve the quality of kindergarten education" by increasing the proportion of trained teachers. This in turn is directly related to "salaries offered to trained teachers" (p.37). To this end, the Commission recommends two measures: the first is to increase the funding for fee remission for needy families, and the second is to recommend the adoption of legislation to ensure minimum proportions of trained teachers in each kindergarten.

FEE REMISSION

The Report recommends an increase in the funding for the fee remission scheme so that in five years the number of families benefitting from this scheme will have increased from the present 5% to 11%. This recommendation is an improvement but it is not sufficient. A 1987 survey found that 17% of the families of the approximately 3,000 sample children aged 3 to 5 years felt cost to be their major problem with early education (Opper 1992a). The problem was particularly acute in the New Territories where 20% of families reported difficulties meeting the cost of their children's pre-school education. An increase in the number of families enjoying fee remission to 11% over a period of five years would still not alleviate the financial problems for all those families who face economic hardship in sending their child to preschool.

Moreover, the prime consideration of the proposal to increase funding for the fee remission scheme seems to be to allow for the increase in kindergarten teacher salaries that will result from legislation on a minimum proportion of trained teachers in each kindergarten rather than helping needy families provide their children with preschool education. In other words the Commission views fee remission as a measure to enable kindergartens to increase their salaries for trained teachers without having to raise the fees which would deter some parents from sending their children to kindergartens because of the higher fees.

While increasing salaries for trained kindergarten teachers is a step that needs to be taken if teachers are to be encouraged to undergo training, it should not be linked to the fee remission scheme. Fee remission, a measure intended to help needy families pay their child's preschool fees, promotes social equity and the equal access to preschool programmes for all children regardless of their economic situation. Training teachers and increasing their salaries, on the other hand, is related to the issue of improving the quality of programmes for young children. Linking these measures confounds the two issues, and places the burden of improving the quality of programmes, by means of teacher training and increased salaries for trained teachers, entirely upon parents.

Any government concerned about the rights and needs of all its citizens should be directly involved in improving the quality of pre-school programmes. This is particularly relevant to Hong Kong, where the high proportion of young children attending preschools is almost unique in the world. Early education in Hong Kong is neither

the privilege of a minority of affluent families, nor a means for the social rehabilitation of a minority of under-privileged economically disadvantaged families. It is part and parcel of the educational life of nearly all children from the age of 3 years, and in some cases from 2 years, onwards. Early education is therefore an area where families and government should both make a contribution.

There are surely other more equitable and satisfactory ways of solving the problem of increased kindergarten teacher salaries than by means of fee remissions. One is for government to subsidize these salaries in non-profit-making kindergartens. In this way teachers would not be dependent upon the willingness of kindergarten principals to increase their salaries after training. It would ensure that teachers receive an appropriate salary and, following the principle that "professional training can make a difference to quality teaching" (p.60), would help improve the quality of early education. Kindergartens with salary subsidies could then use school fees to improve other aspects of their programme. It would also share the responsibility of providing quality kindergarten education between government and parents.

TRAINED TEACHERS

The second measure to improve the quality of kindergarten education proposed by the Report is the introduction of legislation to ensure minimum proportions of trained teachers in each kindergarten. According to the Report this "should stimulate higher salaries" (p.38). This measure, if adopted in isolation, presents problems. In particular, it will not stimulate higher salaries if the kindergarten teacher salary scale continues to be only recommended. Kindergarten teachers who "were not certain of receiving a salary increase after completing training" (p.37) in the past will continue to be uncertain about this in the future, since legislation for a minimum number of trained kindergarten staff does not necessarily include any obligation to pay them a suitable salary.

The enforcement of the recommended kindergarten salary scale is even more important than legislation on the minimum number of trained staff. Adequate salaries are a much greater incentive for teachers to undergo training than legislation requiring them to do so. Not enforcing the kindergarten salary scale means that kindergarten teachers with their low salaries will, in effect, continue to subsidize the education of young children.

Who should pay for the increased funding that full implementation of the kindergarten salary scale would entail? Parents should bear some of the cost, but it not fair that they should bear the entire burden. If the Commission truly views "education spending as an investment" and feels that "the most effective investments are those which help to attract, develop and motivate teachers, and which enable them to give of their best in a supportive school environment" (p.4), then Government should also pay part of the costs to improve the quality of early education, particularly since "quality [early education] depends first and foremost on the expertise of teachers and the extent to which good management in the school ensures that this expertise is deployed and developed to the best effect" (p.29).

Adopting legislation on the minimum number of trained kindergarten teachers could also have serious negative repercussions on kindergarten teacher training and the quality of kindergarten education. It would have disastrous effects on kindergarten teacher training because the short-term qualified assistant kindergarten teacher (QAKT) training may become the norm for the majority of future kindergarten teachers. Kindergarten teacher training would thus become petrified at the lowest level possible, the 12-week part-time course. This training, which professionals in the field find to be woefully inadequate, is one that the Education Commission itself in its second report proposed as an interim measure simply on the basis that some training is better than none (*ECR2*, 1986, p.44). In no way does it constitute a "comprehensive programme of teacher education and development" that will "prepare teachers for a career and help them to develop the professional skills which schools need" (*ECR5*, 1992, p.4), nor does it conform to the recommendation for the "development of a comprehensive policy on the professional training and development of teachers" (p.62). It is a piecemeal measure that risks making interim minimal standards both permanent and optimal.

Furthermore, kindergarten operators may use this minimum trained teacher legislation to justify the employment of only the minimum number of qualified kindergarten teachers (QKTs) sufficient to meet the requirements of the proposed legislation, and employ as the remainder of their staff either qualified assistant kindergarten teachers (QAKTs) or unqualified persons. If so, the majority of kindergarten children would be under the responsibility of untrained persons with only 12 weeks in-service training or with no training at all. Since training is the major vehicle in improving the quality of preschool programmes (Powell & Dunn 1990), legislation on the

minimum number of trained kindergarten teachers, of which only a few would be qualified kindergarten teachers (QKTs), cannot bring about "quality improvements which will meet the challenges of the 21st century" (p.2).

The whole question of the number of trained kindergarten teachers is beset with problems and the situation is improving at an unacceptably slow pace. In 1986 the Education Commission proposed measures intended to "bring the percentage of trained kindergarten teaching staff to 66% by 1990 and 84% by 1994" (*ECR2* 1986, p.44). At present only 42% of kindergarten teachers have received any training, 28% having followed the 12-week part-time course for qualified assistant kindergarten teachers (QAKTs) and only 14% the 2-year part-time programme for qualified kindergarten teachers (QKTs). The targets of the *ECR2* have clearly not been achieved. Now the Education Commission proposes that by 1993-94 the minimum proportion of trained teachers with at least QKT training be set at 40%, and that this minimum be raised to 60% by 1996-97. Each successive Education Commission Report that deals with kindergarten education reduces the requirements for qualified trained staff and extends the target deadlines. The extensive provision of qualified kindergarten teachers is yet another retreating mirage in the bleak landscape of official policy towards kindergarten education in Hong Kong.

Why is the situation of trained teachers improving far more slowly than envisaged in the 1981 White Paper (H.K. Govt.) and the 1986 *ECR2*? Using the results of a 1991 survey, *ECR5* gives two answers: a wastage rate equivalent to training output, and the slow takeup of training places.

The high wastage rate in kindergarten education is indeed a problem. The 1991 Teacher Survey published in 1992 (Hong Kong Education Department) found that wastage at the kindergarten level was 22.3%, compared with 9.4% at the primary and 11.8% at the secondary level. But while the wastage rate of untrained kindergarten teachers was 29.5%, that of QAKTs was 13.7% and of QKTs only 9.5%. Similar ratios to the QKTs were reported for primary and secondary levels. In other words, the better trained the teachers, the less likely they are to leave teaching. The implications are clear. If the proportion of trained kindergarten teachers is to improve, these teachers need more training, they need appropriate and longer training, and they need training as rapidly as possible. A blister training programme similar to that for secondary school teachers in the 1980s

teachers need more training, they need appropriate and longer training, and they need training as rapidly as possible. A blister training programme similar to that for secondary school teachers in the 1980s should be implemented for qualified kindergarten teachers, QKTs, in the 1990s. This may reduce the number of kindergarten teachers leaving the field and help improve the proportion of adequately trained teachers.

As for the slow takeup of existing kindergarten teacher training places, ECR5 gives three explanations: teachers' uncertainty about receiving a salary increase after training, operators' unwillingness to release teachers for training, and operators' reluctance to employ trained teachers. Another reason for the low attendance on training programmes may be that kindergarten teachers simply do not perceive these programmes as useful. A 1987 study of 281 early childhood educators found an extremely low level of satisfaction with existing preschool teacher training (Opper 1992b). Child development/child psychology, the area with which respondents were the most satisfied, was considered useful by only 28% of the sample. Twenty-five per cent found training in teaching methods useful and 20% also rated child care as useful. But most of the other topics were found useful by less than 10% of the sample. These results suggest that current early childhood training in Hong Kong is not providing early childhood educators with a satisfactory programme. We should evaluate overall preschool training with a view to setting up a unified, worthwhile preparation system for educators at the early education and care level.

The problem then is not just of increasing the number of trained kindergarten teachers or even of preventing them from leaving the field. It is also how to improve the present system of training for all early childhood educators including both kindergarten teachers and child care workers since kindergarten education should not be viewed in isolation from the education and care services provided by day nurseries.

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

One aspect of kindergarten teacher training that both Education Commission reports dealing with kindergarten education, *ECR2* and *ECR5*, fail to mention is that of continuing education. In *ECR5* the

Commission refers to the need for an overall policy to ensure that "initial teacher education and in-service professional development are provided in a coordinated and systematic way, with clearly set out routes for teachers to upgrade their qualifications to the next higher level" (p.4) This policy is, however, only intended for primary teachers. Katz (1984) points out that in the course of their career, preschool teachers pass through four stages of professional development: survival, consolidation, renewal and maturity. Each stage has specific training needs. Yet preschool teacher training in Hong Kong focusses almost exclusively on survival, with little provision for subsequent upgrading of knowledge and skills.

Training opportunities need to be provided for preschool teachers to continue their professional growth and development. This could be done by means of an articulated system starting with a certificate in early childhood teacher education for beginning educators, followed by diploma and advanced diploma levels for experienced and advanced educators, and capped by B.Ed. and M. Ed. degrees for key personnel (Opper 1992b).

The training of early childhood educators needs thorough, careful and systematic consideration. The recommendation for an advisory committee to "provide unified advice on the whole teacher education programme" (p.80) should not neglect the needs of this first level of education in Hong Kong. It should examine the whole issue of early childhood educator training with a view to developing "a comprehensive policy on the professional training and development of teachers [including kindergarten teachers]" (p.62). The result of decisions of this body should be that the "[kindergarten] teachers of the future are almost all professinally trained, or are undergoing initial professional training during the first few years of their career" (p.96).

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The emphasis that *ECR5* places on the need for parental involvement in education is particularly relevant to kindergartens. Research has shown that parental involvement at this level improves children's academic achievement, enhances their self-esteem and gives parents a better understanding of the schooling process (Brown 1989). Not only does a partnership between parents and teachers bring benefits to children, but it can serve as a model for later exchanges between the two parties. It is here that the blueprint for future school-home

relationships may be first established. The model should be a positive one of cooperation and working together for the benefits of the child, rather than one of indifference or of parents and teachers working in isolation from each other.

Parental involvement in schools results from effective teacher training. A well trained, confident teacher who has acquired the knowledge and skills of working with parents welcomes the challenge of a partnership with parents to further the growth and development of young children. An untrained or under-trained teacher may feel threatened by the demands of working with parents and avoid opportunities to do so. It is not sufficient to insist on a fruitful working relationship between the school staff and parents or to stress that it behoves the school to take the initiative in this respect (p.16). If teachers are to do this task they need the necessary skills and competencies. A person whose only training consists of a brief 12-week part-time course will be unable to acquire such skills and competencies. In other words, parental involvement also highlights the need for longer and more extensive training for kindergarten teachers.

NEW PROPOSED INSTITUTE

Chapters 6 and 7 of *ECR5* propose the establishment of a new Institute of Education but make no reference to kindergarten teacher education. Where will the kindergarten teacher courses be based when the existing Colleges of Education and the ILE are amalgamated into this new Institute? What will be the status of kindergarten teacher training within this new Institute? What will be the relationship between primary and kindergarten teacher training? None of these important questions are raised.

One important indicator of high quality, effective early education is the specialized education of the teaching staff (Ruopp et al., 1979; NAEYC 1984; Snider & Fu 1990). Early childhood education is neither an upward extension of the home, nor a downward extension of the primary school. It is an educational institution in its own right, and as such requires competent, well-trained educators with specialized knowledge and skills. The trend worldwide is for preschool teachers to have as much training as those at the primary level, although the content of the two programmes may differ. The new Institute of Education should also provide appropriate training for early childhood educators so that parity of training between preschool and primary school teachers becomes a foreseeable goal in Hong Kong's future education system.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the measures proposed for kindergarten teachers in the brief section on kindergarten education of *ECR5* are not consonant with the Commission's general statements on the quality of education in Hong Kong. They do not ensure a "coordinated development at all levels of education" (p.2) [including kindergartens], nor "maximize the proportion of trained teachers in schools" [and preschools] nor "ensure that all teachers [including kindergarten teachers] have an opportunity to complete initial professional training before they enter the profession or as soon as possible thereafter" (p.61).

The two specific measures proposed for the kindergarten level, increase in fee remission funding and legislation to increase the number of trained kindergarten teachers in each kindergarten, only address a small portion of the many problems facing the kindergarten teaching profession. The fee remission scheme is not only too little too late, but places the burden of improving the quality of early education solely on the shoulders of parents, while the proposed legislation could decrease rather than improve the quality of early education.

The most disappointing aspect of this report is not so much what is proposed, but what is left unsaid about kindergarten teachers and education. Nowhere is there any mention of a plan to improve the training currently offered at the kindergarten level. Nowhere is there any mention of an overall system to enhance the skills and knowledge of kindergarten teachers at various stages in their career. Nowhere is there any mention about the need to provide a unified training for all early childhood educators who work with young preschool children including both kindergarten teachers and child care workers. Nowhere is there any mention of a future goal of parity between preschool and primary teachers. Nowhere is there any mention of improving the status and working conditions of kindergarten teachers.

In brief, kindergarten education continues, as in the past, to be the Cinderella of the education system. As her two elder sisters, Primary and Secondary, prepare themselves for the ball organized by the Education Commission, she remains in the kitchen, neglected and despised, gleaning the meagre droppings that fall from the Education Department's table. When, oh when, will her fairy godmother arrive to wave a magic wand and change all this?

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Special Education and the Teaching Profession

Nick Crawford and K.K. Yung

Every school should help all its students, whatever their level of ability, and including those with special educational needs, to develop their potential as fully as possible in both academic and non-academic outcomes (Education Commission, 1992a, p.15).

INTRODUCTION

ECR5 discusses a number of issues related to the training of special education teachers (p.41) and briefly reviews the provisions for training. It outlines some of the difficulties experienced with the existing training course and recommends that a one year full-time course should be set up to replace the current initial training of special education teachers. The Report also refers to a "refresher" training course for teachers in special education which could be offered by the Education Department in 1993. Our response to these very brief proposals for the training of special education teachers focusses on a number of key issues:

* the confusion in the Commission's proposals regarding special education teachers
* the nature and purposes of the courses to be offered
* the manpower planning issues related to special school teachers (e.g. career paths, salary structure), particularly with regard to the recommendations made by the Commission on the need to improve qualifications of primary teachers

* the gap between this Report and *ECR4* in the provision of special education services and in the training of teachers for the service
* the absence of a clearly articulated policy within a cohesive framework for the development of special educational provision.

SPECIAL EDUCATION OR SPECIAL SCHOOLS?

In his address to the 1992-93 session of the Legislative Council, the Governor of Hong Kong claimed that "... teachers are at the heart of the education system..." (Patten 1992, p.9). Teacher education and development was on the agenda of several Education Commission Reports, and the sole agendum of the present Report. Yet, under the heading "Special education teachers", no more than four paragraphs are provided in a 110 page document, which describes its impact in terms of "education investment for the 21st century" (*ECR5*, p.95).

Under the subheading "Special education teachers", a one-year full time course to replace the existing part time in-service training programme is proposed. It is argued that the latter, with block release, is "too crowded and rushed" and that "schools found it hard to recruit replacement teachers for the short period of the course" (*ECR5*, p.41). At present, special schools and those schools with resource classes first appoint a teacher who is not specially qualified (i.e. has only basic teacher training), then the teacher leaves for block release training of 16 weeks and returns to the school to undergo further inservice training for the remainder of the two year programme)

This arrangement is unsatisfactory because it means that pupils are first taught by a non-specialist teacher, followed by a supply replacement who is also a non-specialist, then followed by the first teacher who returns for 18 months to complete training. It is easy to see why a one year course is preferable because it does not fragment teaching. However, where does this course fit into the overall planning for raising the quality of these teachers? How is this additional qualification linked with the need expressed in the Report to ensure that "a degree in primary education should normally be the required qualification" (*ECR5*, p.49). If, in the raising of quality, it is seen that teachers in ordinary primary schools need to be graduates, what consideration has been given to ensure that suitable graduates also find their way into special schools?

Of particular concern is that the training of special school teachers now occurs in a 'segregated' way alongside resource class teachers who need to collaborate with mainstream personnel, and that the term special schools and special education appear to be synonymous in the Report. Whilst special schools in Hong Kong are concerned with less than one per cent of the total school population in largely separate categorical provision, special education, defined as meeting special educational needs, is estimated to be required for 14 per cent of the school population (*ECR4*, p.25). The four paragraphs concerning special education in this Report recommend improvements to the existing pattern of training without considering the development of training in the context of the recommendations for graduate training contained within the rest of the Report.

The Report reinforces the general misconception held by the public and many teachers in ordinary schools that special education is something not only special but separate. In fact, special education is not an area confined to teachers working in special settings. A Committee reviewing provisions in the Inner London Education Authority to meet special educational needs underlined the following basic principles:

> The aims of education for children and young people with disabilities and significant difficulties are the same as those for all children and young people. They should have opportunities to achieve these aims, to associate with their contemporaries, whether similarly disabled or not, and have access to the whole range of opportunities in education, training leisure and community activities available to all. Disabilities and significant difficulties do not diminish the right to equal access to, and participation in, society (ILEA, 1985, p.4).

One could replace the word 'society' in the last sentence and substitute it with 'ordinary school'. Some writers have advocated the development of comprehensive schools in which all children should be educated regardless of capabilities, background, interests or handicap (see, for example, Barton and Tomlinson, 1984). Others (for example, Wade and Moore 1987) have also argued that wherever possible children's needs should be met by ordinary schools. The same principle is reinforced by the Green Paper (1992) on rehabilitation policies and services of the Hong Kong Government entitled "Equal Opportunities and Full Participation: A Better Tomorrow for All".

PREPARING SPECIAL EDUCATORS

Current Training:

At present, a two year in-service training course is being offered by the Sir Robert Black College of Education for teachers in special schools and resource classes of ordinary schools. Entry to the course is through nomination by heads of schools and is exclusively for teachers in resource classes or special schools. Teachers in ordinary classrooms are barred from joining the course even if they wish to do so. As mentioned above, there is a 16 week block release from school for teachers to attend the course at the College, followed by 18 months of supervised teaching. The school, whilst having a teacher on the course, may recruit a supply teacher (Education Department 1992, p.4). The teacher on the course is offered one salary increment during the course and one after successful completion.

The Proposed Training:

The proposal in *ECR5* is to convert the two year course into a one-year full time course so that teachers would receive more comprehensive training. Whilst we support this proposal, at present those who attend the existing course gain merely a certificate of attendance. No mention has been made in the Report of the possibility of up-grading the course to a Certificate or a Diploma course. Upgrading would provide a stronger incentive for teachers to attend, and may well assist in recruitment and retention.

The Report also refers to consultations with the Special Schools' Council to make arrangements for a 'refresher' course for teachers in 'special education' (p.41). However, no details are provided which would indicate the directions and purposes of this programme or the relationship of this programme to any recommendations in *ECR4*. If special education is defined as broader than simply special schools, then consultations, which must include special school personnel, should also be broader. Moreover, the repeated use of the word 'refresher' implies "maintenance" when the emphasis in in-service education of teachers should be "change".

The setting up of an autonomous statutory Council (*ECR5*, p.66) to run the proposed Institute of Education and dis-establish the Colleges of Education does provide an opportunity for a more objective review of the special education training programme. This is

a better arrangement than the current one in which the Education Department, as employer, recruiter and training authority, can adjust the standards to achieve recruitment targets. This new body might provide a more realistic needs assessment of both teachers and participants on the course.

WHERE ARE THE STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

In *ECR4* it was stated that:

> While most students may be grouped by age and taught in
> regular classes following a common curriculum, there is a
> proportion for whom the education provided for their peers
> is not wholly suitable.   They need special education
> provision to help them overcome any learning or
> behavioural problems they may have (ECR4, p.24).

This particular group of students, with special educational needs, was estimated to be one in seven of the total school population.

> We estimated that these students make up around 14% of
> the school population receiving compulsory education
> (ECR4, p.25).

> Broadly speaking, *ECR4* has described the students in need of
special educational provision as those with physical problems, visual and hearing difficulties, mental handicap, maladjustment, unmotivated attitude, severe learning difficulties, those who are academically less able and those who are gifted. At the same time, the Commission recognises that even students outside the 14% might also need other forms of services to meet transient difficulties.

> ... special educational provision in the form of support
> services is available to any student who has learning,
> emotional or behavioural problems, at some stage during
> his schooling (ECR4, p.25).

It is clear that the majority of the students who need special educational provision are in ordinary schools.   Since there is no streaming or banding for primary students, those with learning difficulties are fairly evenly distributed at the primary phase but because of the Secondary School Places Allocation banding system, those with learning difficulties will gravitate towards the lower band schools at the secondary phase. The distribution of students with learning difficulties is more uneven in the secondary sector and it is this sector which has witnessed the creation of a new category of

special pupil: the unmotivated pupil. It would be difficult to argue that this group, requiring special educational provision, is not the product of an elitist, inflexible and highly competitive schooling system.

In *ECR4*, it was recommended that teachers in all schools should be involved in helping students to overcome their problems:

> While the professional support provided by EPs, social
> welfare organisations, and relevant staff of ED are essential,
> we are mindful of the fact that all teachers play a vital part
> in helping students to recognise and overcome their
> problems (ECR4, p.28).

Since helping children to overcome their learning difficulties is the responsibility of all teachers and since all teachers, in the course of teaching, will face children with learning difficulties, there should be an effective special educational input in initial teacher training for all teachers. However, the Report states that "special education training" is to be confined to that group of teachers dealing specifically with children with special needs in special schools and resource classes (p.42). The Report seems not to have taken into consideration the recommendations made in *ECR4* regarding the need for a universal training in special needs education. It is as if what is required is merely the removal of operational difficulties for special school training offered by Sir Robert Black College rather than an overall review of existing provisions.

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS WORK

We would argue strongly that in both initial and subsequent training of teachers proper attention should be given to the educating of children with learning difficulties. We would also argue that initial specialist categorical training should not be segregated from other teacher preparation. Teachers in special and ordinary schools need to communicate professionally. It is no longer acceptable to take the view that there are two populations in our schools: the handicapped and the non-handicapped. This limited view has created the separate special school system and has maintained the present belief, still strongly held in Hong Kong, that special schools are not of significant concern to the rest of the education system.

The Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong, which introduced the first baccalaureate programme in special needs, invites

applications from teachers in primary and secondary schools and not just special schools, for a B.Ed. in learning difficulties which began in 1991. Moreover, the B.Eds. in Primary and Secondary and in Physical Education contain a module "Children with Learning Difficulties" as a core module across all the programmes. This demonstrates our belief in the need for all teachers to have a deeper knowledge regarding children with learning difficulties and is an indication of the importance of the subject to the teaching profession. This need has been reflected, too, by the large number of senior teachers opting for the course 'Understanding children with learning difficulties' in the one year Refresher Training Course for secondary teachers organised by the Faculty of Education and sponsored by the Education Department.

SPECIAL NEEDS TRAINING: HOW MUCH AND TO WHOM?

Another question that needs to be addressed is the depth and breadth of the training. Research into the effectiveness of these programmes suggests that unless the programmes are substantial, they may merely make teachers more apprehensive, more aware of the difficulties and less confident about their abilities to resolve them (Law 1985). Hence special needs programmes should not be appendages to existing initial training but should be an integral part of all teacher training and development programmes.

All teachers in ordinary schools should at least have a basic understanding of the identification of children with learning difficulties, the profiling of achievement, interests and ability, an understanding of the social and psychological construct of disability and a knowledge of the resources and mechanisms for support, both within the school and in Hong Kong. For those teaching in resource classes and in special schools there should be additional training which is concerned with specified competencies. These competencies are concerned with the skills required for the contexts in which teachers operate and for the roles which they are required to perform. Teachers working in special schools should have reached high levels of competence, not just in direct service provision, that is, assessing and teaching students, but also in indirect service, namely operating as an advisor or a consultant to others.

All teacher training institutions should provide training to facilitate a much more flexible approach to schooling with attention paid to meeting individual needs. This would not be just limited to a

specific group of 'special education' teachers. Such an approach would be more likely to facilitate the goal of integration and would help to achieve the whole school approach called for in the Commission's Fourth Report.

The move by the Education Department in the early 80's to subsume mildly mentally handicapped, maladjusted and slow learners under the category 'children with learning difficulties' points to the need to review categorical teacher preparation, at least for mildly handicapped children. However no change in teacher training in relation to this shift in policy has taken place. We need approaches which encourage flexibility of provision, approaches which would reduce stereotypes and stimulate a broadening of delivery services. We believe that there is also a need for specialist training for those teachers working with children who have more serious impairments, and that training should be competency based.

ENHANCEMENT OF CAREER PATHS AND SALARY STRUCTURE

> We hope that the improved training course will help to attract and retain teachers in special education, reducing the present wastage rate and so reducing the additional cost (ECR5, p.42).

There has been discussion by the government in recent years concerning the wastage of teachers in special schools. Although no government documents have been published in this respect, there is evidence that this wastage exists. For example, in a survey of special school teachers it was found that teachers in schools for mentally handicapped children were younger and less experienced than those in other schools and that almost 60 per cent had spent less than five years in their present posts (Crawford, Lau and Moynihan 1989). One in four teachers in these schools had no initial teacher training (Education Department 1989) and recruitment had presented so much difficulty that a number of teachers had been receiving 'crash' specialist and initial training simultaneously, which did not qualify candidates to teach in any school other than a special school.

If standards of special school teachers are to be raised, the problems of recruitment and retention must be addressed by government. In 1970 in U.K., when the Education Act brought the mentally handicapped for the first time into the field of education and out of the hands of social services, there was a similar problem of low

status and poor recruitment. The solution was to commission an initial B.Ed. degree which recruited highly motivated school leavers into a programme which prepared graduate teachers for work only in the field of mental handicap.   Now that the U.K. has solved its recruitment problem and raised the standard of work in the schools, it has reverted to the preferred pattern of general initial teacher training followed by specialism. This could be the right path for Hong Kong, too. Unfortunately the Commission, in presenting an improvement on the existing training, has not addressed these problems. The retention of special school personnel could also be made possible by a review of teachers' aspirations about their jobs. Such a survey could provide useful data for more effective long term planning and for a review of career paths for special school teachers.

Much has been said in the Report regarding the need for up-grading primary school teachers' knowledge for meeting future challenges, their career paths and salary structure. However the ways in which the recommendations for improvement in primary education could be applied to special schools has not been made explicit. It is vital that the career paths of special school and special education teachers are clearly thought out.   This is not merely to ensure recruitment and retention, but to ensure that the best candidates enter the profession and that appropriate skills and competencies are developed to ensure that quality is raised.

In discussions concerning the up-grading of training for special education teachers to a Certificate or a Diploma Level, the proposed course might become more attractive if the taught modules of the one-year full time course could contribute to a higher qualification. For example, if teachers are admitted to a degree programme, they might gain exemption from equivalent courses studied in the one-year full-time programme. Such an exemption would shorten the duration of a degree programme. This pattern would be appropriate, however only in the short term. Eventually, when the teaching profession achieves an all graduate status, the one year programme could contribute towards postgraduate work since all students would then be graduate teachers.

LINKING COMMISSION PROPOSALS

Whilst each report must inevitably have its own focus there is always a danger of a lack of continuity. Here we consider a number of points

raised in *ECR4* and highlight possible implications which link with the present Report.

Firstly, *ECR4* properly advocated the adoption of the "whole school approach" by all teachers in dealing with students' problems at school.

> We would like to encourage more schools to follow suit
> and therefore recommend the adoption in Hong Kong of the
> whole school approach whereby all teachers in a school
> actively participate in assisting students to resolve their
> developmental problems (ECR4, p.29).

This approach enables the sharing of skills and collaboration amongst professionals in order to facilitate both the identification of those children needing support and a more effective provision of appropriate support. However, there is no recommendation in the present Report as to how teachers can be helped to "participate in assisting students to resolve their developmental problems" (*ECR4*, p.29). Thus a major task of initial and inservice training is to help teachers to understand how these developmental or learning problems emerge, and how to respond appropriately and collaboratively to prevent and reduce them.

Secondly, one of the provisions referred to in *ECR4* is the allocation by the Education Department of additional teachers to all the primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong to provide remedial teaching. Since those children identified as in need of remedial help are not removed from their original schools or classes, not only the teachers providing the remedial teaching service need training but also the teachers in the ordinary classroom. In *ECR4*, the Commission did make a recommendation regarding courses for developing remedial teaching skills of teachers.

> We recommend that more specialist courses be provided for
> experienced teachers to develop further their skills in
> remedial teaching (ECR4, p.42).

The present Report, however, fails to follow up this recommendation or to relate remedial teaching to special education, apart from stating that the provision of school based remedial support will be extended to the bottom 10%.

If schools are to launch this type of school-based programme, what sort of assessment procedures and teaching materials should the teachers use? There is a lack of teaching material and general understanding of the diagnostic value of the existing methods for teachers to use in identifying and profiling students with learning

problems.   The Education Department has put much effort into devising and revising standardised attainment tests, but these tests are not widely used. The main reasons, perhaps, are that teachers do not possess the skills to interpret the test results and that schools only appear to use the tests for streaming or collecting data for the Educational Research Section of the Education Department. The collected data are not related back to the subject teachers or class teachers for profiling the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Assessment is seen for its classifying but not for its intervention value.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Special education training is dealt with very briefly in the Report and leaves a number of questions unanswered and some, indeed, unasked. It is not clear what direction special education and remedial education in the last two reports are taking. It would seem self evident that both remedial and special education are concerned with meeting the special needs of students. If the Commission argues that remedial education is different because it is concerned with needs in the mainstream, this is inconsistent with its use of the term, in *ECR4*, special educational provision, which was also concerned with needs in the ordinary class. If the argument is that remedial means remediating back to 'normal', presumably special educational provision is also attempting to place students into ordinary classrooms at the highest level of functioning possible. Perhaps it is time to stop using the term 'remedial' and start using the word 'support'. The acknowledged failure of the Intensive Remedial Service at secondary level argues for curriculum reform (not merely syllabus reform) and school reform. To use a well worn metaphor, we do not need any more ambulances for remedial casualties, but better road safety.

Worldwide, labelling of children in discrete categories of disability groups is being replaced by the concept of a continuum of special needs. Those with needs include not only those traditionally grouped in special schools but also those with both general and specific learning difficulties, including those who are gifted and the newly 'diagnosed' unmotivated pupils from the Fourth Report. The Commission, in creating a new category for 'special' schools, appears not to recognise that schools can, and do, create learning difficulties, that the removal of 'problem' pupils from the ordinary school not only removes resources, and therefore teaching expertise, from the

mainstream but reduces the expressed need for reform. Special education must be seen as a part of regular education, as a way of infusing expertise and diversity into the school system.

ECR4 argued, we believe correctly, for the retention of 'gifted' pupils in ordinary schools. Gifted pupils should "be treated like other children and yet have the chance to develop their potential" (*ECR4*, p.50). These arguments were not, however, applied to less able students. As Potts (1991) queries, "is it that only students with a high social value have a right to a curriculum that matches their interests and abilities?.... How can the focus on gifted children be justified, except in terms that reflect an inequality between students based on differences in ability."

The 1992 Green Paper on Equal Opportunities and Full Participation restates the need to encourage the education of disabled children in the ordinary school - a point made in the 1977 White Paper on Rehabilitation. Over this period the number of children in special schools has actually increased. Perhaps, therefore, it is time to take a different perspective and encourage ordinary schools to receive children with difficulties in learning.

It is an anomaly that whilst encouraging disabled children to attend ordinary schools, primary and secondary school buildings, even though they are public buildings, are exempted from regulations which would render them accessible to the physically disabled. The Green Paper acknowledges this anomaly and recommends that "all new schools must be made accessible, by eliminating all physical barriers ...." (The Working Party on Rehabilitation, 1992, para. 6.6). Apart from physical barriers, there are other barriers. Attitudes can be a more significant impediment to the creation of inclusive schools. In order to overcome these barriers, changes must take place "at the heart of the education system": the teachers. Changes in teacher development, such as those included in the UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack (Ainscow 1991), which bring about reflective professionalism and curriculum flexibility, signal the way forward to a more inclusive education system for Hong Kong. We need to be able to meet individual needs in our schools before we can successfully integrate those with special needs and this requires a policy for teacher training which encompasses generalist and specialist development.

In response to *ECR2*, one of the present authors was critical of the recommendations in special education, stating that the recommendations needed "to be part of a planned policy towards the

oft repeated goal of integration and to be set in the framework of a wider co-ordinated strategy for the development of staff training" (Crawford 1986). It appears that, six years later, this criticism still remains valid. Special education must be moved from its marginal position and put on the agenda for school reform.

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Teacher Education, Professional Development and Resources:
ECR5 and Considerations for the Field of Physical and Sport Education

M.A. Speak

INTRODUCTION

Since the Education Commission was established in 1984, a series of reports has sought to identify changing needs in the field of education and formulate policy proposals to meet those needs. Reports have addressed, variously, language in education, assessment, open education, research, finance, sixth form, pre-primary education, tertiary education, private schools, the curriculum and behavioural problems.

Attention was focused on teacher preparation in *ECR5*, the outcome of an 18 month study into the teaching profession. The Report at the outset stresses the value of a high-quality education for every child, the social and economic returns for both individuals and the community from a well-managed education system, and the need to underpin such an education by the production of effective classroom teachers. "We believe that the most effective investments are those which help to attract, develop and motivate teachers. The recommendations in this report all arise from this belief" (*ECR5*, p.4).

ECR5 addresses two fundamental issues emanating from this belief:
(a) The institutional framework for teacher education and professional development.

(b)   The need to provide schools with the quality of resources they need to meet future challenges.

The Report identifies some of the problems and challenges facing these fundamental issues:

(a)   The lack of a comprehensive programme of teacher development, well integrated and co-ordinated from initial to in-service stages.

(b)   The status of the colleges of education.

(c)   The lack of a source of authoritative advice on the needs of schools for professional skills.

(d)   The need for graduate teachers in the primary sector.

(e)   A range of support services which need to be improved, including the school environment, workloads, career paths, professionalism and financial resourcing.

This paper considers these and other issues which can adversely affect the profession, from the standpoint of a specialist subject area which appears to have been undervalued in the field of education in Hong Kong - physical and sport education. Attempts are made to clarify the value of a meaningful physical and sport education, the need for an enlightened and well-prepared cadre of specialist and non-specialist teachers, and the problems facing such teachers if appropriate support services are not made available.

THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL AND SPORTS EDUCATION

Specialists in, and analysts of, the field of physical and sports education, despite occasionally differing views on the rank ordering of aims, objectives and values of the field, can at least reach a consensus on the major aims and objectives of an enlightened and systematic physical education. Kane (1974) on the basis of regular mentions in over 200 publications from the UK and the USA, considered these to be motor skills development, self-realisation, preparation for leisure pursuits, the development of emotional stability, moral attitudes and social competence, organic development, cognitive skills and aesthetic appreciation. These major aims can be clustered largely into two fields - the development of health and fitness and enhancement of social skills.

Health and Fitness

Bloomfield (1991, p.6) on a recent visit to Hong Kong, spoke of the need for *conservation of humans* in our environment. Increased automation has led to a decline in the use of cardiovascular and locomotor systems, industrialisation and urbanisation have deprived citizens of space for recreation, and increased stress in many societies has had a marked effect on the physical and mental health of citizens.

    For our physiological and biochemical processes to function normally, we need a minimum level of physical activity. Cardiovascular disease is now one of the biggest killer in Hong Kong and the risk of coronary heart disease is twice as high for people with sedentary lifestyles compared with active citizens. Armstrong (1989) has identified fatty streaks in the arteries of children as young as five and increasingly low levels of activity in children, while Barnett (1992) is investigating this factor in Hong Kong. The cost of coronary disease and strokes in some societies accounts for 17% of the total health budget, and eleven studies in Europe and the USA have identified a range of increased productivity in business and industry up to 40% following enhanced fitness, with a mean of 18%. There are individual and collective benefits from physical education programmes which educate for and enhance health and fitness.

Social Considerations

Studies by Lau (1985), Lau and Kuan (1989) and Chow (1990) and surveys conducted by the Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) (1988, 1989) suggest that the Hong Kong Chinese in the late 1980's have a basically materialistic and utilitarian attitude towards life and are individualistic in the sense that their concerns centre around their personal well-being. The 1989 ICAC survey conducted among Form 5 and 7 school students further indicated that the students saw occupational work primarily as a means to earn their livelihood, and the attainment of wealth as one of their central objectives in life (see Choy 1991). If this is indeed the situation, and if educational aims in Hong Kong strive to achieve interpersonal skills, then the field of physical and sports education has much to offer.

    Sociologists have claimed substantial social benefits from

exercise and sport, such as their ability to unite families, communities and break down class, economic and racial barriers.

There is evidence amongst active children of an increase in self-esteem, particularly for girls, and a high-relationship in some societies between non-participation in recreation and delinquent behaviour. There are also substantial claims for character and personality development and social gains through co-operation and controlled competition. Leadership, initiative, achievement and self-confidence can be achieved, and in Hong Kong, research into levels of activity and student suicide patterns could reap interesting results.

In many Western societies, physical and sport education during curricular and extra-curricular time also prepares students for leisure beyond school. The acquisition of positive attitudes and skills allow students to select appropriate leisure time activities to enhance personal and family life. Dumazedier (1962) claimed that leisure time allows individuals to achieve three separate benefits: relaxation, entertainment and development of personality. The move towards leisure education in Western Europe and North America has benefits for their societies and there is no reason why, in an increasingly affluent Hong Kong, with a greater provision of recreation facilities and awareness of leisure opportunities, individuals and society should not benefit from a broader physical and sport education giving access to post-school opportunities.

THE NEED FOR ENLIGHTENED SPECIALISTS AND GENERALISTS

There have been significant changes in the curriculum in physical and sport education since 1945 in developed countries. The early 20th century emphasis on drill, gymnastics and rhythmic exercise was replaced or complemented to a large extent by educational gymnastics, a wide range of sports, outdoor pursuits, core and optional activities, and in recent years, moves toward activity- or health-related fitness, which incorporates both theoretical and practical components. In most societies, the subject has been accepted as an examinable subject at 'O' and 'A' level equivalent, leading to degree programmes in physical education, sports science and leisure and recreation studies.

This trend has involved considerable change in the curriculum for

teacher education and initial training, involving inter alia subject specialisms like anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, psychology, curriculum, sociological aspects, computer and research studies, statistics and a plethora of practical skills. These disciplines often need the support of specialised laboratories in physiology of exercise, psychology and biomechanics, and a range of appropriate facilities for practical work, including gymnasia, sports halls, swimming pools, athletics tracks, tennis courts and games fields.

In most developed societies, specialist teachers of physical education are prepared at the degree level in universities, polytechnics or specialist state institutes of physical culture. They are, perforce, critical thinkers and problem solvers, with a sound scientific training on which to base their programmes and decisions, professionals and not merely programmed technicians. They may wish, and be able to, continue studies at the post-graduate level in specialist fields within the discipline.

At the general level, and certainly at the primary level, there is a need for core courses for non-specialist teachers in the fields of physical and games education, dance and health-related fitness, and a need for a policy which recruits specialists as curriculum leaders wherever possible.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF *ECR5* TO AN IMPROVEMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS SCIENCE IN HONG KONG

The Focus of the Study

The preparation of teachers and school environment and human resources are the stated focus of the report. The Report provides evidence (p.3) that 60.4% of secondary school teachers are degree holders. This is certainly not the case in many specialist practical subjects, and the evidence suggests that for physical education, between 3% (*CRS*, 1988) and 14% (Speak 1991) of teachers hold first degrees. Attempts have been made to implement the proposals of the *ECR2* (1986) which recommended that: "... part-time in-service courses leading to B.Ed. qualifications ... in P.E.... should be developed in tertiary institutions" (VII.6.8). Part-time courses for

Bachelor of Education degrees are now available at the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The Report points out that 'there is no overall policy to ensure that initial teacher education and in-service professional development are provided in a co-ordinated and systemic way, with clearly set-out routes for teachers to upgrade their qualifications' (p.4). This is indeed the case in physical education and sports science, where until recently, no first degrees were available and higher degrees remained a figment of the imagination. The new modular Master Degree programme at the University of Hong Kong will remedy this to a certain extent, but the absence of specialist higher degrees at Master, M.Phil. and Ph.D. levels in Physical Education, Sports Science and Leisure and Recreation Management will continue to deprive Hong Kong of home-grown lecturing and research talent at the tertiary level.

The argument for an all-graduate profession (p.6) is supported as a desirable goal, but it may not be totally appropriate in some practical subjects. In some societies, education systems prepare teachers at the degree level who are intellectually capable of following highly demanding courses and will 'lead' the field. Within a parallel system are prepared those who have high levels of skill in the practical areas, high motivation to teach, and who become the technicians or instructors. This could apply equally in physical education, music, dance and drama - the creative arts, or in woodwork, metalwork and technical drawing. The recommendations of the Hong Kong Sports Development Board to the Education Commission included the target of a graduate PE teacher in each secondary school by the year 2000.

The focus also draws attention to the need to improve the physical environment of schools (p.6) but the vision statement is hopelessly inadequate for an enlightened system and wealthy society. This issue will be addressed in the following section.

The Working Environment in Schools

The proposal to provide a systematic induction programme for new teachers (p.13) is to be applauded. However, the report fails to recognise, a common problem in educational language, that 'classroom' teaching (2.3) is not applicable to several subjects. The PE teacher operates mainly in the gymnasium, sports hall, pool or games field, and dealing with large numbers of active children in

limited and unappealing surroundings can be far more stressful than 'controlled' classroom teaching.

The question of home-school co-operation needs to be addressed in the field of sport education. Parents with sport skills and interest in physically activity should be encouraged to support the extra-curricular programmes available in school, and assist in intra- and inter-school competitions. The Parent-Teacher Association is an excellent avenue for this development.

The School Management Initiative, which allows schools to define needs and deploy resources, under a sympathetic and enlightened leader, could prove a valuable development, but unless subject grants are earmarked, there could well be a threat to practical subjects in a hothouse intellectual environment.

The sections on the physical environment of schools are offensive to physical educationists. The fact that the report claims (p.19) that 'almost all public schooling now takes place in purpose-built premises', and that standard designs were introduced in 1983 and 1990 which made available an open playground, one or two basketball courts and a covered playground is an indictment of the planners, architects and educationists who made such absurd provision a reality. The report further indicates that schools have recently been offered the option of converting the covered playground into an additional classroom and two remedial teaching rooms.

College lecturers in physical and sport education point to the hopeless inadequacy of single basketball court provision, the lack of purpose built gymnasia or sports halls and the failure of open and even covered playgrounds to meet the needs of the programme, given climatic conditions.

Hong Kong's status as a dynamic, vibrant, visionary city is contradicted by its facility provision in schools. Hotels boast pools, tennis courts, gymnasia, fitness centres. Blocks of flats have similar amenities, and in the 1960's, Coventry in the UK, not a wealthy local authority, built 10 new comprehensive schools which each provided for its children a gymnasium, sports hall, swimming pool, athletics track, tennis courts, games fields and an evening youth centre. Where is the vision? How can physical educationists prepare young people for a healthy life of leisure in the 21st century with facilities out of the 19th century?

The reporting of 'a need for storage space for teaching kits, ...

for processing of documents and to store examination papers' (2.30 - 2.31) pales into insignificance beside the need to provide high quality space for physical education, recreation and sport. There are recommendations for a staff common room, a student activity centre and an interview room (2.45, p.23) but concern was expressed that those might have to be at the expense of open space and the $1.51m^2$ (primary) and $1.72m^2$ (secondary) of play space per child.

In the U.K. in the 1960's, local authorities embarked on two schemes which aimed to provide schools and communities with excellent leisure facilities. 'Joint Provision' is the co-operation between education and municipal authorities in the planning, resourcing and management of sports facilities (Jones 1988, p.42). It ensured that schools were built in close proximity to sports complexes and swimming pools. 'Dual Use' ensured that schools had access to these facilities *during* school hours and the community had access *outside* school hours. Equally, the community has access to school facilities outside school hours. Little can immediately be done to improve the situation for old-established schools, but authorities should adopt the philosophy of joint-provision and dual use to ensure that new schools have immediate access to high-quality recreation facilities. The facilities provided at Ti-i College, which was established as a school for Sport and the Arts should be regarded as *standard provision* for *all new schools*.

The Report considers the case for improved staffing levels. The pressures on teachers of physical and sports education were highlighted by a survey, following the seminar on the future of sport in education in Hong Kong organised by the Hong Kong Sports Development Board (June 1991). 34% of respondents were responsible for more than 4 sports teams in schools, 46% spent twelve hours weekly, in addition to class teaching, training sports teams and organising extra curricular activities, and 50% of schools which responded offer no other teacher support to the PE staff in extra-curricular sport or recreation programmes.

In its submission to *ECR5* (1991), the Board recommended that a ratio of 1 PE teacher to 8 classes in primary and secondary schools be a minimum requirement, that efforts should be made to train and encourage non-PE teachers to assist in extra-curricular sport and recreation activities, that funding should be made available for schools to invite coaches to support sport activities, that the number of

Principal Assistant Master or Senior Grade Master posts be increased to attract and retain PE teachers, and that a core course in PE be *required* within the teacher training programmes for primary teachers.

Career Opportunities for Teachers

The Report suggests (3.3, p.33) that the proportion of graduates in secondary schools will rise to 75% as graduates in practical and technical subjects acquire degrees. The proportion of secondary PE teachers with degrees however will only reach approximately 25% by 1997, despite the annual output from the B.Ed. programmes at The University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The Report *recommends* that schools be given flexibility to decide how to allocate graduate posts to meet their own defined needs. In an intellectually oppressive environment, there needs to be a way of guaranteeing and protecting graduate posts in practical and technical subjects, otherwise morale and product quality will suffer. Graduate posts in the subject should also be available in primary schools.

The chapter also reveals that arrangements are in hand for a refresher course in special education for September 1993. Recent work by Kwan (1992) suggests that there is a need for a review of the training of physical education teachers for special education and the recruitment of specialist advisers and inspectors in this neglected field.

Graduate Posts in Primary Schools

The proposal to upgrade primary teachers by launching degrees appropriate to the primary level is welcomed. Given the need for generalist teachers at the primary level, it is unlikely that specialists in physical education and sports science will be recruited in that capacity alone. The need however, for *curriculum leaders* at the primary level, particularly in subjects like physical and sports education has been stressed, and specialists would make a valuable contribution as subject leaders and advisers. The recommendation that courses include education theory, education management and subject expertise is made. Subject expertise *must* include the field of physical and sport education. Equally important is the need for *core courses* in physical education for all initial training courses at the primary level. A recent edict by the Education Department has insisted on the

need for training in PE before teachers can teach the subject in schools, and the necessary in-service and initial courses should be established without delay.

The recommendations to provide the number of degree places needed by forms of distance learning combined with face-to-face contact in specialist fields may well be appropriate, but practising teachers have indicated clearly in a survey undertaken in September 1992 by the Hong Kong Professional Teachers Union (sample size = 310) that they do not support distance learning combined with face to face contact alone. Neither do they support programmes of full-fee in-service training, but recommend subsidized attendance at relevant in-service programmes. There would be an opportunity to contract the work to institutions able to offer the facilities and support services necessary for degree level or in-service work, provided appropriate funding and personnel support could be guaranteed. Self-funding courses however may well impose problems for such institutions since current constraints of funding would make it impossible for them to contribute. 'Blister' programmes may face similar opposition.

Improving the Teacher Education Programme

Throughout the world, the preparation of physical education and sport teachers has followed a similar pattern. The early training of 'instructors' was seen as hopelessly inadequate to meet the needs of mid- and late- 20th century physical educationists. In Western Europe, specialist degree programmes were established within normal tertiary education, and in Eastern Europe single-subject specialist institutes of Physical Culture were established to train teachers and sports coaches. In the UK, special 'Wing' colleges were set up in the 1960's to train specialists, and provided with additional facility and personnel support. Gradually, with the advent of an all-graduate profession, these specialist teacher education colleges were absorbed into Universities and Polytechnics.

The Report suggests three possible options:
(a) The creation of a teacher training University
    Any system which separates its initial specialist professional preparation from teachers and students in other disciplines risks limiting the experience and vision of its products.
(b) Linking a teacher training institution to an existing tertiary

institution.

There would seen to be merit in this in the field of physical education. The professional expertise of college staff in methodological aspects of the programme, linked with the scientific and subject expertise of University staff and their provision of laboratory and outstanding sports facilities would offer a way forward to provide specialists and generalists of quality.

(c) The conversion of the colleges and the I.L.E. into an autonomous Institute of Education outside the UPGC system

This proposal is discussed at length in Chapter 6 of the Report. The Report proposes the upgrading of existing college sites (p.70), since it would not be realistic at this stage to recommend a single campus. The proposal aims to improve the space norm to $14m^2$ from the existing $10.5m^2$, but in the field of physical education and sports science, if degree teaching is to become the norm, there is a need for specialist laboratories in physiology of exercise, biomechanics and psychology. There is also a need to offer students the best possible facilities for practical work, including gymnasia, sports halls, swimming pools, tennis courts, an athletics track and field and games pitches. This is the norm in the provision for specialists in this field, whether in North America, Western or Eastern Europe or South East Asia, and a way forward in physical and sport education, if colleges are not to be linked to Universities or other degree-awarding institutions, is to consider the construction of a specialist college for PE and Sports teachers linked to the Hong Kong Institute of Sport. In this way, the problem of provision of specialist facilities would be solved, and the presence of specialist students could enrich the work of the Institute, although contact with students preparing for other professions would be missing.

The Report recommends (p.76) that the Governing Council examine how the Institute of Education could meet the needs of specialist practical and technical areas, and that proposal is supported wholeheartedly. Upgrading of academic and practical support systems must be achieved if specialist preparation is to be effective. The Governing Council should also consider the need for *full-time* specialist degree programmes as a matter of urgency. Although the

University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong offer *part-time* programmes, there is an urgent need for *full-time* programmes in physical education and sports science.

Advice on Teacher Education and Qualifications and Teacher Professionalism

The section of the Report (p.82) dealing with teacher qualifications has immediate relevance for the field of Physical Education and Sports Science.

Traditionally, since no degree programmes were available in Hong Kong, certificate students or pre initial training students who wanted to follow degree courses in the specialism were forced to attend overseas programmes. Those qualifying in Commonwealth countries were immediately recognised and paid standard salaries. Those qualifying in the Republic of China and the Peoples Republic of China were not equally recognised. Such teachers, if considered in the future appropriately qualified, could add significantly to an upgrading of expertise in the subject.

At the level of the Advanced Training Course, separate courses should exist for primary and secondary school teachers, since specialisation for different age groups in the field of physical education is desirable.

There is a general need for the establishment of a Physical Education Association for teachers, lecturers and inspectors in the field. This would allow for professional integration and discussion within the specialist area which does not immediately exist.

SUMMARY

If the provision for the preparation and continued education of teachers in the fields of Physical Education and Sports Science is to be improved in Hong Kong, there will be a need for the following as a matter of priority.
(a) High quality part- and full-time degree programmes in physical education and sports science, and leisure and recreation management should be instituted at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

(b)   A policy of 'Joint Provision' for all new schools built in Hong Kong should be adopted, which gives immediate access for school children and teachers to high quality facilities for exercise and sport, whether within the school promises or in adjacent community, purpose-built facilities.   A policy of dual-use of community facilities, which offers schools priority during the day, and which makes available school premises to schools and the community outside school hours should be adopted.

(c)   A policy of ensuring that all generalist teachers, at the primary or secondary level, follow *required* or *core* courses in physical education within initial training programmes is essential. Degree-holders in the field should also be available within primary education to act as subject leaders or advisers to colleagues.

(d)   The new Governing Council should examine carefully the best method of meeting the needs of preparing specialist PE teachers for Hong Kong, taking into account the need for specialist lecturers, laboratory provision, and the dearth of high quality sports and exercise facilities in the present colleges of education.

(e)   Consideration should be given to the status of physical education degree-holding specialists trained outside the Commonwealth.

(f)   The identification of senior posts for specialist teachers of physical education and earmarked subject grants should be considered to protect the subject in schools which may have a bias towards 'intellectual', rather than 'whole-student' education.

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Developing Teacher Professionalism - But What Kind of Professionalism?

W.O. Lee

INTRODUCTION

Hong Kong has waited ten years for a special report on the professionalisation of teachers, since the 1982 Llewellyn Report called attention to the need for promoting teacher professionalism. *ECR5* pays special attention to various aspects of the professionalisation of teachers, such as professional development, the establishment of the Council on Professional Conduct, and the drafting of operational criteria of professional conduct. This chapter analyses the concept of professional development spelled out in *ECR5*, and suggests alternative views on professional development. It also comments on the proposals related to the establishment of the Professional Council of Conduct and the drafting of operational criteria, mainly from the perspective of professional autonomy.

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The fact that the Education Commission devotes its fifth report to the teaching profession can be seen as the culmination of the Commission's efforts to enhance teacher professionalism over the last eight years. In 1982, the Llewellyn Report made certain

recommendations to improve teacher professionalism, including the improvement of teachers' career incentives, the establishment of teachers' centres and the Hong Kong Teaching Service, and the fostering of whole-staff development (see p.96). In response, *ECR1* (1984) recommended (1) the progressive expansion of the fully aided school sector to increase the proportion of schools subject to government requirements in order to achieve a higher degree of comparability of professional qualifications of teachers in schools, (2) the introduction of a Bachelor's degree in Primary Education to upgrade primary teachers' professional qualifications, (3) the drafting of a 'code of practice' for the teaching profession by teachers, principals, school management committees and sponsors, through the coordination of the Education Department in order to foster a sense of professionalism, and (4) the setting up of teachers' centres to promote continuous professional development and enrichment, and to foster a greater sense of unity among teachers (see pp.58-68).

With a view to enhancing professional training for teachers, *ECR2* (1986) recommended the expansion of postgraduate training and the improvement of training for technical institute teachers, teachers of children with special educational needs, and kindergarten teachers (see pp.62-68, 120-125). *ECR5* proposes a more comprehensive scheme of professional training for raising the quality of the teaching profession.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN *ECR5*

An analysis of the terms used in *ECR5* in relation to professionalism reveals that the Education Commission seems to be particularly concerned with 'professional development'. For example, the terms 'professional qualification' (para. 1.14, p.5), 'professional training' (para. 5.21, p.62), 'professional knowledge and skills' (para. 5.23, p.62), 'professional competence' (para. 5.21, p.62), and 'professional guidance' (para. 2.6, p.13) are all related to 'professional development' in one way or another. Below is a brief analysis of the meanings of these terms as used in *ECR5*:

Professional qualification - This term refers to the award for having gone through some sort of professional training. Such training, as mentioned in *ECR5*, includes the teaching certificate programmes

offered by Colleges of Education (para. 1.14, p.5), the postgraduate certificate or diploma programmes offered by the universities (para. 3.4, p.33), and the Advanced Teacher's Certificate programme to be offered by the proposed Institute of Education (para. 5.24, p.63).

Professional training - This term is used together with professional development, e.g. 'professional training and development' (para. 5.21, p.62), and is therefore seen as a complementary part of professional development. The above-mentioned professional training programmes lead to professional qualifications, but there are other training programmes, described as 'professional development courses', which may not lead to specific qualifications, such as in-service courses offered by various bodies including the colleges, ILE, advisory inspectorate, and some tertiary institutions (para. 5.18, p.61). It is recommended that in-service training should be regarded as a requisite for career-long professional development (para. 5.22, p.62). Professional training is distinguished from 'educational' training, in that while the latter seems to refer to academic knowledge professional training particularly refers to the type of knowledge and skills specific to teaching which include preparation in education theory and practical classroom management issues, with a substantial element of supervised teaching (para. 4.20, p.50). The Education Commission envisages that the teaching profession of the future should be a professionally trained teaching force (para. 9.3, p.95), and Hong Kong should therefore "aim for steady progress towards an all-trained education profession" (para. 5.21, p.62).

Professional knowledge and skills - The acquisition and upgrading of professional knowledge and skills is also seen as a significant part of professional development (para. 1.8, p.4; 2.1, p.10), and one of the aims of providing all sorts of professional training programmes is to upgrade teachers' professional knowledge and skills in a systematic way (para. 1.9, p.6; para. 5.23, p.62).

Professional competence - This term refers to teachers with substantial professional knowledge and skills and classroom experience (para. 5.23, p.62). The enhancement of professional competence is thus a significant part of professional development. To the Education Commission, enhancing a teacher's professional competence may help that particular teacher to remain in the profession (para. 2.1, 2.3, p.10). Thus enhancing professional competence is not only good for the person concerned, but also important for the maintenance of the

professional force.

Professional guidance - This is a way to enhance professional competence, as the term refers to "lesson observation, with follow-up meetings for discussion and advice, and *ad hoc* meetings to analyse and deal with teaching problems and issues" (para. 2.6, p.13). It is also seen as a part of professional development, which can be enhanced through regular meetings with experienced teachers (ibid.).

It is clear that these terms can be grouped under the umbrella of professional development. To summarise, the Education Commission conceptualizes professional development as the provision of professional training and guidance to teachers, so that they can acquire further professional qualifications, improve their professional knowledge and skills, and as a result, enhance their professional competence. From this, it can be seen that what the Education Commission means by developing teacher professionalism actually refers to teachers' professional development, as most of the discussions and recommendations in *ECR5* centre on such issues as professional qualifications, professional training, professional knowledge and skills, professional competence and professional guidance.

The fact that the Education Commission focuses on professional development suggests that the Commission has touched upon a significant issue in recent discussions on teacher professionalism. Hoyle points out that professional development is a relatively new term. It embraces two notions in particular. One is the notion of a process starting with initial training, passing through the induction period and continuing throughout an entire career, whereby the teacher continues to develop the knowledge and skills required for effective professional practice. The other is the notion that knowledge and skills should to a greater degree than in the past be more directly related to the substantive problems faced by teachers (1983, pp.45-7). In short, professional development is the process whereby practitioners improve their competence. The 1980 World Yearbook of Education was specifically designated for the professional development of teachers. Many contributors of the Yearbook put forth the message that professional development is an important aspect of the professionalisation of teachers.

LIMITED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIMITED PROFESSIONALISATION

The above analysis of *ECR5*'s recommendations suggests that the Education Commission's prescription for professional development resembles Hoyle's concept of professional development. However, it is also noteworthy that *ECR5*'s conceptualization of professional development does not seem to extend beyond the development of teachers' knowledge and skills, which leaves it at best a very limited version of professional development.

Professional development should mean much more than upgrading knowledge and skills. It should include at least three other dimensions, namely, professional awareness of social needs, personal growth, and personality development. For the first dimension, Joyce points out that professional development is not only an internal matter of upgrading knowledge and skills and competence, but should have an external dimension in relation to the needs of young people and society (1980, p.20). He further points out that professional development must fulfil three needs: (1) the social need for an efficient and humane educational system capable of adaptation to evolving social needs; (2) the need to find ways of helping educational staff to improve the wider personal, social and academic potential of the young people in the neighbourhood; and (3) the need to develop and encourage teachers' desires to live satisfying and stimulating personal lives, which, by example as well as by precept, will help their students to develop the desire and confidence to fulfil their own potential. Hence a significant part of professional development is to promote professional awareness of all these needs (Joyce 1980, p.34).

As for the second dimension, Taylor holds that professional development should be extended to the level of personal growth, as one of the essential purposes of every kind of organised provision must be to establish, maintain and enhance teachers' commitment to their own education. A comprehensive overview of professional development opportunities needs to take into account all the means available for the teacher to become a better-educated person, to develop judgements and skills, and to keep in touch with ideas and innovations in their own and cognate fields (1980, pp.337-8). The view that professional development should mean personal growth is shared by many other writers on professionalism. For example,

Cawood and Gibbon (1981) regard professional development as an experiential involvement by a teacher in the process of growing. This process is not a short-term one, but a continuous, never-ending developmental activity. Morant (1981) refers to professional development as a life-long personal development. Langford maintains that a major concern of the teaching professional is that teachers themselves should be engaged in the process of becoming educated (1978, p.84).

The third dimension of professional development is a form of personality development. Harries-Jenkins points out that professional training programmes should also aim at the development of the type of personality that is required in particular professions (1970, p.77). Hoyle proposes the concept of 'professionality', which refers to the attitudes towards professional practice by the members of an occupation and the degree of knowledge and skills which they bring to it (1980, p.44). He further points out that there are two types of professionality. Restricted professionality is intuitive, classroom-focused, and based on experience rather than theory. Extended professionality on the other hand tends to treat classroom teaching in a broader educational context and sees teaching as a rational activity amenable to improvement on the basis of research and development (Hoyle 1980, p.49). Whether restricted or extended, professional development in terms of professionality aims at personal development on the one hand, and the development of a certain kind of character or personality which typifies that particular profession on the other.

Elaborating on this third dimension of professional development, Dean suggests that a professional teacher is expected to be highly ethical within the terms of the profession, highly committed to the profession, highly reflective (being able to stand back from current situations and see them in perspective), and highly altruistic in terms of working for the good of the school or college (1991, p.5). For Langford, professionality is reflected in the professional ideal of service, according to which professionals are concerned with the interests of others, and this concern is a special kind of concern for those who need the specialised help which professionals, because of their knowledge and skills, are able to provide (1978, p.16). It is this ideal of service which lies behind the suggestion that teachers have a duty to the children they teach rather than to their employers.

Limited professional development leads to limited

professionalisation. Contrary to the general assumption that professionalisation is always accompanied by professional development, Hoyle points out that teachers' professional development, as far as it refers to the process of improving professional knowledge and skills, may not necessarily further the process of professionalisation, which partly involves the enhancement of teachers' professional status. In his words:

> It cannot be taken as axiomatic that professionalisation is invariably accompanied by professional development. It is *likely* to be the case that a longer period of training leads to a general improvement in knowledge and skill, but the relationship cannot be guaranteed. It may well be that ... "Every improvement in teachers' conditions is inevitably an improvement in the education of children in our schools" but this cannot be taken as axiomatic. Conversely, the process of professional development which leads to an improvement in the general level of knowledge and skills amongst teachers may not, in fact, further the process of professionalisation. Much depends upon the nature of the professional development itself (1983, pp.45-6).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

From the way professional development is expounded in *ECR5*, it is difficult to say that the Report has completely ignored the aspects of professional development mentioned above. The report does mention attitudes, commitment (para. 2.6, p.13; para. 9.3, p.95), and in-service teaching training (para. 5.18, p.61) (which is supposed to be a sort of life-long personal development). However these aspects of professional development are given so little emphasis that they are significantly outweighed by the concern for professional qualifications and professional knowledge and skills, and it is difficult to claim that they are treated seriously in the Report. Further, in the report, one other significant aspect of professional development is obviously missing, that is, professional autonomy.

Dean suggests that professional autonomy is a part of professional development:

> The term 'professional development' suggests a process
> whereby teachers become more professional.... The most
> commonly accepted definitions of a profession are of an
> occupation which requires a long training, involves theory
> as a background to practice, has its own code of behaviour
> and *has a high degree of autonomy*.... A further definition
> of a profession is a group which is in charge of the
> admission of its own new members... (1991, p.5).
> (Emphasis mine)

Professional autonomy is significant for professional development in at least two aspects. First, it is through professional autonomy that professionals develop the ideal of providing service which has intrinsic value to the community. Consequently, they see themselves as the people best qualified and motivated to supervise their own professional activities (Langford 1978, p.46). Moreover, it is through offering a service of intrinsic values that the teacher develops a sense of duty to the children rather than to the employer.

Second, it is only with professional autonomy that we can talk about professional accountability. Kogan (1986) identifies three models of control in the education system, namely, the public or state control model, the consumerist control model, and the professional control model, each with different implications for education accountability. Accountability in the public control model is managerial, bureaucratic or hierarchical. Teachers are held accountable by the school principal for their work, and they are 'assistants' who are required by contract to perform tasks set by the school principal. In turn, the school principal is accountable for the work of the school and has the authority to discharge that accountability. Within this model, calling to account is a power-coercive strategy for changing teachers' behaviour. While the public control model is hierarchical and power-coercive, the other two models, in terms of accountability, require some forms of participatory democracy or partnership (between professionals and clients). In the consumerist control model, teaching professionals, subject to market demands, may be forced to seek measurable results (such as good examination results and places in the most favoured universities) narrowly and instrumentally in order to keep up their 'trade'.

For accountability not to be determined by external determinations of products or outputs, the professional control model

emphasises control of education by teachers and professional administrators, and associated with it is self-evaluation and self-report. However this does not preclude participatory democracy and partnership, as a part of the professional ideal of service emphasises partnership. In fact, Elliott considers that more professional autonomy of teachers and schools will lead to more responsiveness to their clients (1981, pp.*xi-xii*). Professional accountability can therefore be understood as 'responsive accountability', according to which the professionals enter into free and open communication with a variety of interest groups about the aims and the nature of the education they provide. This responsive model suggests that schools ought to be self-accounting, generating and communicating information about themselves in the light of the interests and concerns expressed by their audiences. This can be contrasted with the 'control' or 'productivity' model where the accounting is done by some external monitoring agency. Kogan further elaborates the characteristics of professional accountability as follows:

(a)   accountability would be for adherence to principles of practice rather than for results embodied in pupil performances,

(b)   accountability would be rendered to diverse constituencies rather than to the agglomerate constituency of the public alone,

(c)   the teacher would have to be regarded as an autonomous professional, not as a social technician within the bureaucratic framework of a school and the education system,

(d)   the evaluation through measurement of pupil performances (the 'how' of accountability) would be replaced by a conception of evaluation providing information for constituents allied to a system of proper redress through a professional body (1986, pp.41-2).

Moreover, this model assumes basic values which can be advanced in their own right. They are the values associated with the right of individuals to be regarded as unique and to be allowed self-expression and self-development, and the belief that the quality of education will be impaired if the teachers are not able to rely upon their own professional vision (Kogan 1986, p.106).

In contrast to this last model, the whole approach to the development of teacher professionalism in *ECR5* is a top-down approach, thus closely resembling the public control model. The type of professional development needed, the type of professional

qualifications teachers should acquire, the type of professional training teachers should receive, the need for the school environment, the career opportunities of the teachers, etc., are all defined and designed by the Education Commission. Little in the report encourages teachers' initiatives, participation, or professional autonomy. The only chapter (chapter eight) which comments on views of the educators is critical that the views expressed are not truly representative of the education sector. However the Commission does not recommend any measures to encourage teachers to organise themselves so that they can express their opinions in a more representative way.

COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN EDUCATION

The only suggestion that may involve educators is the establishment of the Council of Professional Conduct. Yet far from encouraging teachers' participation, such an establishment may end up denying teachers the opportunity to organise their own Teaching Council.

The terms of reference for the Council of Professional Conduct are three-fold: (1) to advise the Government on measures to promote professional conduct in education, (2) to draft operational criteria of professional conduct, and (3) to advise the Director in cases of disputes or alleged professional misconduct involving educators (para. 8.23, p.93). As indicated in the terms of reference, the monitoring body for promoting professional conduct is still the Government, not the teachers. Thus the first function of the Council does not encourage teachers' participation (apart from being able to give some advice). The second may involve some teachers' participation, but once the job is over, the extent of participation will be very limited. The third function allows continuing participation of teachers, but the problem is that if in the next five years there are only very few or even no significant cases of disputes or professional misconduct, the Government may justifiably say, after this period of review, that there is no explicit need for teachers to organise their own Council. In this case, teaching professionals are faced with a dilemma. Either they have to expect that teachers do not behave professionally (thus creating more cases of disputes or misconduct) in order to enhance teachers' participation in advising the Government, or they have to expect that teachers in general behave professionally (thus ending up

having no case to handle) and forego the chance of organising their own Council. Hence the idea that the Council of Professional Conduct will serve as a stepping stone for the establishment of a statutory professional governing body (para. 8.18, p.91) is problematic. After all, to give advice on cases of disputes is largely an *ad hoc* matter, and it is far from being a mechanism for enhancing teachers' initiatives and their participation in the process of professionalisation. The effect of the Council of Professional Conduct would be far from promoting professional autonomy and professional accountability. This case illustrates the fact that when the public control model of accountability is adopted, it is difficult to accommodate other models that require participatory democracy, partnership, and autonomy.

THE CODE OF PRACTICE OR CODE OF ETHICS?

In response to the Llewellyn Report proposal to establish a Hong Kong Teaching Service (HKTS), the Education Commission responded with the suggestion that regional teachers' centres should be established and a 'code of practice' drawn up. The result of this was that only one teachers' centre was established. The centre has no doubt provided valuable services to the education sector, yet it is not intended to fulfil the functions proposed for HKTS, such as determining the number and type of persons needed for the teaching profession, providing a new structure for the teaching profession to improve its effectiveness through controlling the credentials of, and affording recognition to, its members, and influencing the teacher education institutions with regard to appropriate professional training programmes (Llewellyn 1982, pp.96-7).

　　Concerning the code of practice, it is indeed arguable whether the code is even an indispensable element for developing teacher professionalism. Harries-Jenkins points out that a written code of conduct no doubt helps a profession to demonstrate its professional status and represents a deliberate demonstration of a generally accepted standard of the particular profession. "Yet the creation of a written code is not, in itself, a critical factor in the process of professionalisation, and it is noticeable that the older associations (for example, the legal and medical collectivities) lack a written code" (1970, pp.83-5). The essential distinguishing feature of the

professionalised group is that the written code is usually supplemented by an informal and unwritten self-regulatory code.

Nevertheless, the Education Commission has regarded the drafting of the professional code as a strategy for promoting teacher professionalism, and *ECR5* even proposes to draft operational criteria of conduct (para. 8.23, p.93). However, requiring teachers to observe operational criteria of conduct actually shifts the focus from professional norms to operational behaviour. Rather than promoting teacher professionalism, such a shift of focus indeed causes harm to professional status of teachers. Instead of promoting a sense of self-discipline and self-regulation within the profession, the existence of such a set of operational criteria also subjects teachers to external judgement of their *professional* behaviour. To characterise professionalism, some groups prefer the term 'code of ethics' rather than 'code of practice'. Elaborating on the meaning of the term 'professional ethics', Reeck says it implies "reflection on the moral meaning of professional action" rather than focusing on the action itself (1982, p.20). Reeck further suggests that the adoption of the term 'professional ethics' implies that there is no one ethic that all professionals should observe. In contrast, the creation of a set of operational criteria severely limits the autonomy and flexibility of the professionals in applying ethical norms.

Maybe this is the difference between the Code of the Education Profession of Hong Kong (CEPHK) and the proposed Code of Professional Conduct (CPC). *ECR5* (para. 8.22, p.92) is critical that some provisions of CEPHK appear more suitable for a manifesto, and other provisions, while expressing worthy ideals, could not in their present form easily be used as operational criteria to assess professional conduct. However this is exactly what CEPHK is designed for - to be a manifesto of professional ideals rather than operational criteria of professional conduct. Although CEPHK does not adopt the term professional ethics or code of ethics, the way CEPHK (1990) is presented closely resembles code of ethics rather than code of practice. It stresses the commitment and rights of the professionals. It emphasises professional autonomy and professional ethos. It is a sort of manifesto, and it expresses professional ideals.

In their response to the Education Commission's proposal for drafting the professional code, Gillies et al. drew attention to the distinction between the code of practice and the code of ethics:

> In the Education Commission Report No. 1 (4.32),
> however, the Education Department [*sic*] recommends the
> fostering of a sense of professionalism by encouraging
> educators to participate in producing a 'code of practice' for
> the teaching profession. The code would "prescribe *ethical*
> standards of conduct for teacher".   Perhaps, then, the
> Education Department wants a Code of Ethics as compared
> to a Code of Practice (1986, p.13). (Emphasis original)

If their analysis is correct, it suggests that the Education Commission
originally wanted a code of ethics rather than a code of practice
(although it was named as the latter), and the proposal for defining the
operational criteria of conduct is in contrast to what it was originally
intended for. One further point that Gillies *et al.* make is worth
noting. Their examination of other codes of practice suggest that:

> All of these Codes, *without exception*, were the embodiment
> of what teachers considered professionalism to be, and were
> re-written, monitored and controlled by a Body which was
> representative of teachers as a whole.... That is, the Code,
> and responsibility for it, was an embodiment of teachers'
> own commitment to professionalism, entirely outside the
> remit of government departments of education.... If the
> proposed code is to be administered by the government a
> question is obviously raised about how the code reflects the
> embodiment of the teaching profession's views (1986,
> pp.13-4). (Emphasis original)

Their comment suggested that if a code was to be established, it
should be self-monitored by teaching professionals.   However, in
contrast, *ECR5*'s proposed CPC is to be monitored by the
Government, as the ultimate decision on any penalty would remain
with the Director of Education (para. 8.20, p.90). If a self-monitored
code is a part of professionalisation, proposing a government-
monitored code is counter to professionalism.

There may still be a further problem. When *ECR5* proposes to
invite educators to help draft CPC, it repeats the strategy adopted for
the drafting of CEPHK. Yet it turned out that CEPHK was not
regarded as acceptable to the Education Commission.   This will
necessarily create doubts among the drafters of the proposed CPC as
to whether their draft will be acceptable to the Education Commission.
Would there be a new version of CPC proposed again, when the

drafted CPC was eventually found to be unacceptable to the Education Commission? This is a good example of the dilemma faced by the Government if it wants to remain in control on the one hand, but also wants to invite views from the teaching profession on the other. What happens if there is a conflict of views and interests between the Government and the education sector?

CONCLUSION

That the Education Commission has paid special attention to the development of teacher professionalism is to be applauded. *ECR5* has certainly made significant contribution to the professional development of teachers. Recommendations in the report are specific, with careful consideration and meticulous calculation of the scale of expansion. However, while the contribution of *ECR5* to teachers' professional development should be highlighted, the limitations of the *ECR5* recommendations should also be noted. The above discussion suggests that the scope of professional development proposed by the Education Commission is limited to professional qualifications and training. To further the professionalisation of teachers, many more dimensions of professional development should be considered. There should be development of professional awareness of social needs, and the dimensions of personal growth and professionality should also be taken into account.

An essential element of professionalisation which is absent in the report is professional autonomy. The absence of this element characterises the professionalisation of teachers in Hong Kong as a public control model, rather than a professional control model of accountability. This top-down approach to professionalisation creates inherent problems for the proposals made in *ECR5*. First, the idea of establishing the Council of Professional Conduct as a testing ground for the future establishment of the teachers' Council has created a dilemma for teachers. Either they have to expect teachers not to behave professionally, in which case, there will be instances of misconduct and disputes, and teachers will be invited by the Government to give advice. This will create an image that teachers are active in giving advice to the Government. Or they have to expect teachers to behave professionally, thus anticipating that there will be

few cases to handle. This will then create an image that the teaching professionals are inactive in giving advice to the Government. Second, the proposal to establish operational criteria of conduct, although it provides objective criteria for measuring behaviour, actually reduces the observation of professional norms to the technical and behavioural level. Moreover, this is not even in concert with what was originally intended for the code, that is, providing ethical standards (*ECR1*, para. 4.32, p.65) rather than operational criteria. Third, that the code is to be monitored by the Government is against professional autonomy. Moreover, the need to develop a new set of operational criteria in place of CEPHK suggests that the participation of educators, even though previously invited by the Government, is no guarantee that their voice will be heard.

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The Cat, Pigeons, Hawks, and Headless Chicks: *ECR5* and Aspects of Teacher Professionalism

W.T. Sze

INTRODUCTION

The first two members of the title's metaphorical menagerie originated from an earlier publication in the Education Papers' series (Sweeting 1990). In this, a particular chapter focused on relations between the Universities and the Hong Kong Government and was called 'The Cat and the Pigeons'. The Cat represented the Hong Kong Government, which, at about the time of the Education Commission's third Report (*ECR3*), seemed to be alarming most of the Pigeons (tertiary education institutes) and ruffling a few feathers in the process. The last two members of the menagerie suggested themselves to the present author as he read the Education Commission's Report No. 5 (*ECR5*) on the Teaching Profession and reactions to it from within the 'profession'.

His main initial reactions to the Report itself were positive. The Report itself was clearly the product of much hard work. Reading between its lines and recognizing the significance of the several publicly announced delays of its published form, one can infer that it was also the product of much hard bargaining.

The Report which eventually emerged is basically wellintentioned. As other chapters in this book detail, it pays earnest attention to *qualitative* aspects of education.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For reasons which might be linked both with colonial attitudes and

with traditional Chinese cultural values, historically primary schooling in Hong Kong has been "the Cinderella of Education"[1]. In the post--World War II period, Government officials, representatives of voluntary organizations, and private investors made strenuous efforts to improve the position as far as *quantity* 'was concerned, most dramatically and successfully in the 1950s. With the circumstances of the time including a massive influx of young adults and children into Hong Kong, this was not surprising. And the achievement of universal, free primary education by 1971 was remarkable.

Doubts about quality in education persisted, however. If anything, they grew in the 1970s and '80s with the new emphasis on the quantitative expansion of secondary education. They might have been expected to grow further in the 1990s with the more recent emphasis on the quantitative expansion of tertiary education. They had not been allayed to any great extent by the establishment of the Curriculum Development Committee in 1972. Its advocacy of the "Activity Approach" (alternatively termed "Learning by Doing"), while defensible in theory, seemed more relevant to rhetoric than to widespread practice. Among the most important reasons for this was a lack of morale and a sense of dissatisfaction among primary school teachers. Unhappy teachers do not make for high quality in the schools.

The Certificated Masters' Dispute of the early 1970s publicized the situation, but its delayed and uneasy resolution and even the eventual publication of the T.K. Ann Report did not herald fundamental change. A few years later, the Green and White Papers on Primary Education and Pre-Primary Services[2] appear to have had more cosmetic than structural effect. Similarly, the apparent elevation of the Curriculum Development Committee into the Curriculum Development Council in 1987 proved to be merely nominal. And, after widespread initial enthusiasm about the recommendation in Education Commission Report No. 4 (*ECR4*) that a full-time, professional, and generously-resourced Curriculum Development Institute be established to take the business of curriculum innovation seriously (*ECR4*, Chapter 2), by 1992 several educators were expressing anxiety about its actual implementation[3]. Moreover, the Certificated Masters' Dispute had led directly to the formation of a more highly politicized organization, the Professional Teachers' Union, which attracted members mainly from discontented non-graduate teachers (mainly at primary and junior secondary level). The trend towards the politicization of issues involving education policy received reinforcement in the late 1970s and was especially accentuated after the

Sino-British Agreement over the future of Hong Kong in 1984.\ The result was the embitterment of much discussion of education policy. This was partly the outcome of defensive campaigns by the Education Department. It was also affected by the emergence and increasing publicization of a group of "hawks", associated with the Professional Teachers' Union and other pressure groups, whose knee-jerk reaction to any Government announcement of educational change was "too little, too late".

Meanwhile, the Education Department had developed something resembling a "mother hen" attitude towards the main sources of supply of non-graduate teachers, the Colleges of Education whose number was augmented by the creation of the Technical Teachers' College.

The length of some teacher education courses was extended to three years. Little was done, however, to improve (or even evaluate) the teacher education programmes themselves and little was done to improve the quality of the staffing. The Education Department seemed excessively protective of its little chicks. The opening of lectureship appointment to applications from outside the Department was one of the very few examples of enlightenment, but this was not accompanied by a loosening of the bureaucratic urge towards uniformity and control. A consequence of this attitude was that the Colleges remained largely isolated from other institutions of teacher education (the Universities and the Polytechnics) and, hamstrung by departmental regulations, were rarely in a position to maintain a high social, cultural, or intellectual status. They were particularly hit by the "Brain Drain" and its side-effects, losing both staff and students and thus also needing to struggle even harder to improve quality. The announcement of the tertiary education expansion programme, its acceleration, and eventual consolidation, did nothing to help the Colleges of Education. Indeed, with increased opportunities for sixth-formers to study at tertiary level, the Colleges experienced further attenuation of its chances to recruit more mature students.

Now, however, the publication *ECR5* might offer new grounds for optimism about qualitative aspects of education. This is especially true about the primary and secondary levels and the way in which teachers affect quality. Cursory examination of the chapter headings of *ECR5* shows that the Commission was concerned with qualitative matters. More detailed study suggests that ideas about quality were almost invariably circumscribed by financial and institutional considerations. Other papers in this volume deal with such issues as the working environment in schools, career opportunities for teachers, the staffing qualifications needed at primary school level, improving the teacher

education programme, upgrading the Colleges of Education, institutional provisions for advice on teacher education and qualifications, and matters related to earlier proposals for a General Teaching Council. This paper focuses on Teacher Professionalism as a concept and as an historical phenomenon. The reason for such a focus is that these are precisely the aspects which the published form of *ECR5* neglected.

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AS A CONCEPT

It ought to be surprising that, in a chapter entitled "Teacher Professionalism", there is no effort made to analyze the concept of, or even offer a definition of, professionalism. Of course, one riposte is that the concept is so well-known that its characterization does not repay the effort. In view of the fact that, in much discourse reported in our local press, the term appears to be interchanged freely with the related, but surely different, process of "professionalization", this appears to be a weak argument. But, particularly in times of verbal inflation and vagueness, when even kindergarten pupils "graduate", perhaps one should begin with an investigation of the meaning(s) of "profession". In relation to the implicit aims of *ECR5*, the connotations for "profession" to be found in the Oxford English Dictionary which seem most germane are:

* The occupation which one professes to be skilled in and to follow.
* A vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or in the practice of an art based upon it.

Thus, to claim the status of profession would seem to assume skills, commitment and a sense of vocation, a body of knowledge (or science), the practice of an art based upon this, and/or the application of the skills, knowledge, arts, etc. to the affairs of others (quite possibly clients and more than likely for a fee). A delineation of what a teacher is expected by modern society to know and do would appear compatible with this.

By analogy with other "-ization" words like democratization or colonization, *professionalization* would seem to refer to the actual process(es) by which individuals or groups might make themselves eligible for the assumption of these skills, commitment, and sense of vocation. By analogy with other "-ism" words, *professionalism* would seem to apply to the sense of commitment, the values, skills, standards,

and ideology necessarily possessed before either an individual or a whole workforce can claim to be professional and usually acquired through the process of professionalization.

One might also query the specific contradistinctions to "professional". Is the most appropriate contradistinction in the teaching context, "amateur" or "technician"/"craftsman"/ "tradesman"? When one is making claims for teachers as professionals, is one emphasizing that they are paid and trained or that they belong to a group which is, in some sense, superior to others involved in mere techniques, crafts or trade. Loose discourse enables people to switch between meanings.

It is helpful to conceptualize teacher professionalism as sets of triadic interactions. This type of conceptual "map" appears below as Figure 1.
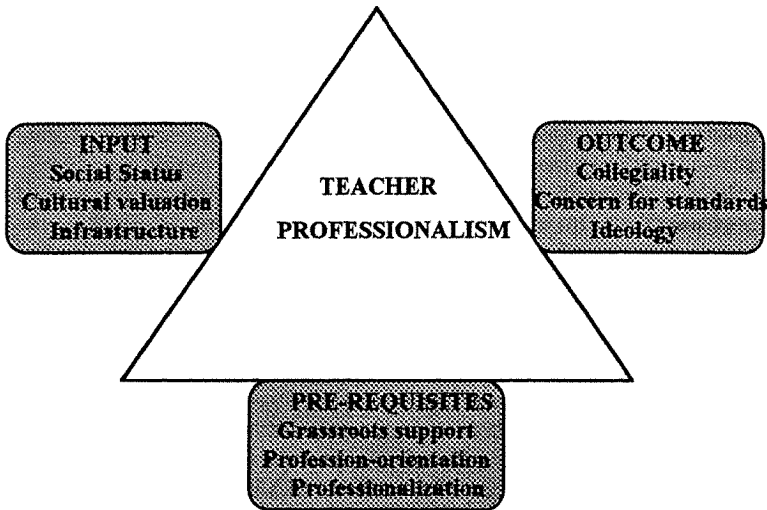
Fig. 1   Triadic Interactions in Teacher Professionalism

This model postulates for teacher professionalism three main dimensions or aspects, each of which has three different components. The prerequisites or bases of teacher professionalism include grassroots support, an orientation towards profession as distinct from individual, family, or even trade union predispositions, and the existence of some provision, formal or informal, for professionalization. Upon these bases, there are three main forms of input which, through their

interaction, influence the quality and extent of professionalism. These are the social status accorded to the teaching force, both through lip-service and especially in reality; the way in which the teaching function and teachers themselves are valued in the culture of a particular society; and the efficacy of an infrastructure for teacher participation in decision making about education policy (including, especially, curriculum policy) and about their own career options. The interaction of prerequisites creates outcomes which might also be considered as tripartite. The three facets of outcomes are the development to a greater or lesser extent of a sense of collegiality among and between teachers of similar and disparate ranks and levels, a concern for standards (especially with regard to relevant knowledge, communication skills, and relations with pupils), and the emergence, in more or less explicit form, of a corporate ideology. These outcomes are not static, even within the career lifetime of one teacher. They feed back into the interaction of prerequisites with inputs.

If the text of Chapter 8 in *ECR5 is* considered in juxtaposition with this model (or any one which seeks to characterize and clarify the numerous aspects) of professionalism, it takes on an attenuated, incomplete tone.

As far as prerequisites are concerned, the text of *ECR5* focuses on professionalization. It is possible that its authors were concerned about the perceived lack of grassroots support for (and exemplification of) professionalism and also about what they considered a low level of profession-orientation (rather than self-, family-, or trade union-orientation). If they were, they must have deemed it politic not to mention their concerns. Similarly, with regard to inputs, the Commission concentrate almost entirely on the desirable infrastructure, paying little attention to the social status of the teaching profession in modern Hong Kong and in the world outside or to the cultural valuation of teaching. As far as outcomes are concerned, the Commission appears obsessed with the commitment to standards. It uses this as an opportunity to criticize the recently revised "Professional Code of Conduct", to deny calls for a General Teaching Council (on procedural grounds and doubts about readiness), and to substitute for this a recommendation that a "Council on Professional Conduct in Education" be established in the near future. The membership of this proposed Council includes clients and other non-members of the profession and thus is unlike any other professional council such as the GMC or the Bar Association. Its business is restricted to matters concerning the *misconduct* of individual teachers. What has happened, in fact, is quite simple. Appeals for a professional

council, which would represent the teachers at the grassroots and would enable them to participate in important decision making, develop further their sense of collegiality and ideological clarity, have been fobbed off. In their place is an offer of a nonprofessional council which will simply provide legitimacy to the central government department when dealing with cases of individual misconduct. Its more appropriate name would be the Nonprofessional Council against Unspecified Professional Misconduct.

In sum, the Commission has offered negotiable institutional remedies for what is actually a social, cultural, and educational problem. It relies upon a written Code (which it also criticizes) and a non-statutory, but regulatory, body to provide a solution "which encourages steady progress in *promoting* the profession, secures *widespread support among both educators and the general public*, and ensures that the *functions of other relevant bodies are complemented rather than overlapped*" *(ECR5, p.89*; my emphasis). Its principal interests appear to be those of the central bureaucracy which might, in a paternalistic way and via a public relations exercise, agree that the profession be *promoted,* but which is mainly concerned with avoiding institutional overlap!

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AS A HISTORICAL PHENO-MENON

Chapter 8 of *ECR5* includes near its beginning a short section called "Background". This provides historical background only as far as 1982 and the Llewellyn Report. Sweeting (1993) offers a much broader historical perspective on questions related to teacher professionalism in Hong Kong. No attempts will be made to replicate or paraphrase that work here.   Instead, the main themes which emerge from the investigation will be briefly summarized.

First, for almost the whole of Hong Kong's long history of educational endeavour, professionalism was *not* an issue. Differences *between* teachers were much more important than any signs of incipient collective solidarity. Most teachers were amateurs in the sense that they had no special training and did not confine their activities to teaching. This was true of teachers in the Xinan County long before 1841. It was also true after 1841 of most missionaries and most upwardly mobile "Chinese assistants".

Secondly, the outward respect for teachers which is so prevalent an aspect of traditional Chinese culture might have disguised a

disinclination to improve their living and working conditions. The scholar's sense of vocation might have been exploited as a diversion from concern about more material improvements.

Thirdly, even after forms of *professionalization* began via early types of teacher training, the teaching career remained for many a second choice and/or a 'secondary occupation', prized (if at all) as a rung on the ladder of socio-economic advancement.

Throughout the history of education in Hong Kong there has been a prevalence of top-down exhortation. In the past century and a half, this has been combined with centralized decision-making about all aspects of education and, only belatedly, a little window-dressing via token teacher representation on curriculum and examination committees. Only very recently and very gradually have there been changes in attitudes, status, and the operational infrastructure for teacher participation in the policy process.

Broader, international trends have been towards a more closely defined sense of professionalism in many societies. In the recent VIIIth Congress of Comparative Education Societies held in Prague, the case was put that teachers involved in trade union activism ran the danger of losing their sense of professionalism and even that trade unionism could be considered incompatible with or at least very different from professionalism. The latter points provoked violent disagreement from conference-participants who espoused the trade union cause and claimed that professionalism could only begin to develop after basic minimum working and living conditions had been secured. In one sense, however, members of a (learned) profession may be distinguished from trade unionists as in cricket "gentlemen" used to be distinguished from "players".

In the more recent past, another broad international trend has been the increasing invocation of "parent power" to de-mystify the whole business of teaching and learning in schools, as well as the suspect activities of teacher educators, and to disguise a move towards the increasing centralization of policy making. Thus, through the popularisation of simplistic "attainment targets" and the publication of dubious "league tables" purporting to offer data on the best schools as a type of consumer guide, parents have been encouraged to question the expertise of local educational administrators, teachers, and teacher educators. Consequences of this trend, most noticeable in Thatcherite and post-Thatcher Britain, include the weakening of local education authorities, their replacement by school councils on which lay opinion is heavily represented and which depend on the central government for resources, the greater use of school-based teacher education, and, thus,

teacher education 'on the cheap'. The proliferation of curriculum targets for teachers has increased their public accountability and opened the way for them to be proletarianized and dealt with as mere line-workers, rather than as professionals.

A similar trend may be near its onset in Hong Kong. Since the publication of *ECR4* in November 1990, the Hong Kong Government has become committed to attainment targets and target related assessment (TTRAs). The recent publication of a *General Introduction to Targets and Target-Related Assessment* (1992) does not allay anxieties that Hong Kong is following the lead of Thatcherite Britain. While officially basing the rationale for the TTRA initiative on the general and educational context of Hong Kong and including much persuasive commentary on the principles of learning and modern assessment practices, the authors of this document appear narrowly and unnecessarily subject-based and primarily concerned with providing "clear *direction* to teaching, learning and assessment" (Ibid., my emphasis). Their concentration on publicly accessible targets and on the products of learning which may be used in exercises of teacher accountability leads one to suspect that they use the word "direction" not only in its compass-oriented sense, but also as a synonym for instruction. *ECR5* might be examined, therefore, to see whether it reinforces the pressures for teacher uniformity and conformity. A similar investigation might be made of the aftermath of *ECR5*.

ECR5 AND ITS SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION: HEADLESS CHICKS AND HAWKS

As indicated at the outset of this chapter, there is much in the Commission's latest report which merits support, in particular the acknowledgement of the aim to make steady progress towards an all-trained and eventually all-graduate teaching profession, the increased funding recommended for teacher education at the primary and junior secondary levels, the intention to "upgrade" the colleges of education and to release these chicks from the suffocating attentions of their mother hen, the Education Department.

One might admire the altruism of the Education Department in agreeing to relinquish its control. The new proposals of the Commission, however, are possibly the outcome of behind-the-scenes bargaining. Whatever their provenance, they leave the chicks headless, though accompanied by a rather plumper one (or, if mixed metaphors could be forgiven), a possible cuckoo in the nest - the Institute for

Language in Education (ILE). The suggested Institute of Education appears to be the result of bureaucratic compromise and a "marriage of convenience" rather than the outcome of rational, long-term planning. It satisfies the understandable aspirations of the ILE for greater academic respectability, but it does little to boost the morale or provide for the raising of the standards of the staff of the Colleges themselves. Nor does it show confidence in them by giving them the right to be involved in the planning and implementation of degree-level courses. Instead, it offers the proposed Institute the opportunity to run a sub-degree "Advanced Teacher's Certificate", as if the inflation of paper qualifications at this level could solve the problems of non-graduate certificated teachers.

In the more heatedly politicized atmosphere of post-1984 Hong Kong, it is not surprising that *ECR5* has attracted comment from pressure group leaders and trade unionists which is largely negative. A recent survey by the Professional Teachers' Unions (PTU) seemed to show that most teachers in Hong Kong were not interested in improving the teaching environment or in raising standards of learning and teaching, but only in increased financial returns for themselves[4]. This does not inspire confidence in prospects for reform from below. The even more recent call from the PTU itself for the Education Commission's membership to be dependent on nomination from massive block votes and for its procedures to lose the protection of confidentiality in the interest of efforts to establish a party-line is even more depressing[5]. It adds fuel to the somewhat heterodox thought, disseminated in Prague, that trade unionism, particularly of the politicized strain so characteristic of modern Hong Kong, is actually inimical to the development of teacher professionalism.

The fire of this heterodox thought is stoked even more when one examines the actual survey conducted by the PTU and considers how the leaders of the organization, whose recent public pronouncements entitle them to be considered the hawks of educational discussion, interpreted its findings[6]. The questionnaire itself could be used as a classic model of fatally flawed research instruments.

Its target population was restricted to PTU members, all of whom would have had ample opportunity of acquiring close knowledge, through the PTU's Newsletters, of the opinions of its leadership. One of the most important items of the questionnaire represents a (presumably disingenuous) "wish-list". A list of recommendations which the Education Commission might have included in their fifth Report is provided and the subjects of the questionnaire are asked to rate them on a simple Likert scale as "Very important", "Important",

"Not very important", "Not important", or "Undecided/No opinion". In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that teachers would rate as "Very important" or "Important" that they should have better fringe benefits, higher salaries, smaller classes, and more support via the computerization of school administration, additional support staff, etc. Nor is it surprising that policies which had been loudly and frequently advocated by PTU leaders (such as the full-scale implementation of full-day schooling in primary schools, an increase of training opportunities and of salaries for kindergarten teachers, and the abolition of "floating classes") received massive endorsement. What is, perhaps, significant is that at no point in the questionnaire were the respondents asked to prioritize their desiderata. Nor were they ever asked to consider how the numerous reforms would be financed. Instead they were treated as children making up their lists for some Santa Claus to implement fully and immediately.

The Chairman of the PTU asserted almost indignantly that the survey was both representative and inspiring[7], even though the return-- rate was only about 42.4% (134 valid returns from 316 teachers "randomly selected"). He did not, however, explain the basis of the random selection. Instead, he explained the low response-rate by referring to the over-loaded work requirements of teachers, neglecting to mention that the survey was conducted in late July when almost all teachers were on vacation. On the issue which for a trade union might be regarded as crucial, the Chairman of the PTU was less than frank. He admitted, with some surprise, that 77.6% of the respondents had found the salary scale recommended by the Education Commission for graduate primary school teachers acceptable, but took the opportunity of a press release to point out that 17.9% did not accept the salary scale proposal on the grounds that, when compared with graduates at the secondary level there should be equal pay for equal work. In fact, 104 respondents (77.61%) did accept the recommended salary scales, 24 (17.91%) did not, but of these 24, only 17 (or 12.29%) actually endorsed the argument about equal pay for equal work and 7 (or 5.22%) did not. On issues for which the PTU had not yet provided a clear lead, the members whom they had consulted tended to be divided or to opt for the soft option. Thus, there was a spread of opinion about whether participants in primary teacher education degree courses should contribute tuition fees at a level similar to those paid by university undergraduates (36.57%) or whether the primary school teachers and the Government should each pay half the cost (50.75%), with 10.45% even prepared to accept the Commission's recommendation that the courses be self-funding (i.e., with teachers

bearing all the costs) since they could expect to receive salary increments on completion of the course. When consulted about the mode of delivery of education degree courses for primary school teachers, only 9 respondents (6.72%) opted for distance learning combined with face-to-face tuition and 32 (or 23.88%) for class lectures combined with face-to-face tuition. The majority (84 respondents, representing 62.69% of the returns) supported all three modes, possibly influenced by a type of quinella mentality. A major finding from the PTU survey of its members' opinions is that the Professional Teachers' Union lacks the professional expertise to construct a valid and reliable survey.

CONCLUSIONS

As commented upon earlier, a major international trend, exemplified especially by the excesses of Thatcherism in the United Kingdom, has been towards the centralization of education, obsession with public accountability, and penny-pinching. More or less successful attempts have been made to manipulate so-called 'parent-power' and the insecurities created by a very fragile economy in order to de-mystify both teaching and teacher education. There is a distinct possibility that such moves degrade teachers into line-workers scantily rewarded only when they can demonstrate achievement of a set of simplistic targets. This trend has acted as a major setback to teacher professionalism. Indeed, it has presented the spectre of a new proletarianization of British teachers. Friends of education in Hong Kong need to scrutinize *ECR5* and, especially, measures taken to implement it in order to ensure that similar trends do not take hold here.

The very recent endorsement of *ECR5* policy and especially the specific mention of increased finances for this purpose in the new Governor's address when opening the Legislative Council[8] arouses more optimism concerning implementation in the short-term future than one would otherwise have been justified by the track-record of the Hong Kong Government over earlier Education Commission Reports. In the same spirit, the announcement via an Education Department circular[9] that the earlier plans to increase the size of primary school classes from 38 to 40 would soon be reversed and that by 1997 primary class size would be reduced to 35 may be more successful in restoring confidence and morale within the teaching profession itself than any promises of a Council of Professional Conduct or of an Institute of Education. It also deprives the hawks of some

opportunities to contrast the apparent Government largesse to the tertiary field, which affects only an increasing minority, with extreme frugality towards the primary and pre-primary sectors, which cater for the masses.

The Report itself appears to be the outcome of a series of compromises through which, on the whole, an accountant's mentality has prevailed over the best of intentions.   Instead of dealing comprehensively with the prospects for teacher professionalism in Hong Kong, it has focused narrowly on institutional arrangements, qualifications, and accreditation.   It is possible that members of the Commission deliberately took this approach in the belief that apathy among some teachers and an embittered, politicized, but divided spirit among others made it impossible for them to take any other.   In connection with their rejection of the proposal to create a General Teaching Council at least in the short term, they refer to "underqualified and untrained teachers" and divisions within the workforce about "procedures for electing the governing body" (*ECR5*, p.89).   Some aspects of the public discussion of their Report - especially the squawking of hawks and the sad predicament of headless chicks - would seem to add substance to these reservations. Perhaps it is time for the cat and, possibly, the pigeons to intervene.

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ENDNOTES

1. See, for example, Edmund Burney, *Report on Education in Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Government Printer, 1935, pp.7,9,25.

2. The Green Paper on Primary Education and Pre-Primary Services, Government Printer, 1980; the White Paper on Primary Education and Pre-Primary Services, Government Printer, 1981.

3. See, for example, the *PTU News*, No. 223, 20 April 1991; the *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, 29 November 1990, p.32 & 23 January 1991, p.19; the *Hong Kong Times*, 9 December 1990, p.19; *Wen Wei Po*, 24 November 1990, p.9, 4 December 1990, p.7, & 10 December 1990, p.9.

4. See, for example, Beryl Cooke, 'Teachers seek more staff, higher wages', *South China Morning Post*, 3 September 1992, p.1, or *Wen Wei Po*, 3 September 1992, p.1.

5. See, for example, Catherine Chan, 'Teachers Seeking Changes to Education Commission', *South China Morning Post*, 10 September 1992, p.1.

6. 'PTU Survey of Opinion about ECR5', 15-30 July 1992; PTU Draft Press Release, 2 September 1992.

7. See, for example, 3 September 1992 issues of the *Sing Tao Daily*, p.20; the *Express*, p.8; the *Ming Pao Daily News*, p.42; the *Wen Wei Po*, p.7.

8. *Our Next Five Years - The Agenda for Hong Kong*, Address by the Governor, the Right Honorable Christopher Patten, at the Opening of the 1992/93 Session of the Legislative Council, 7 October 1992, paras 25-30.

9. Education Department, ED (SCH) B/2/1/88 of 8 October 1992, 'Reducation of Class Size in Public Sector Primary Schools'.

A Matter of Professional Legitimacy:
ECR5 Recommendations and Confusions about the General Teaching Council[1]

K.M. Cheng

INTRODUCTION

ECR5 recommends a deferment of the consideration for a General Teaching Council (GTC). Instead, a Council on Professional Conduct in Education is proposed for monitoring professional conduct among teachers. This proposal goes against the education community's endorsement in principle of the establishment of the GTC. This paper purports to analyze the context in which educational bodies in Hong Kong recommended the GTC, and the possible factors contributing to the decisions of the Education Commission.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The story started with a recommendation from the Llewellyn Report (1982) to establish a Hong Kong Teaching Service (HKTS). The suggestion was based on the observation that there was a

> lack of cohesion and indeed the absence of a sense of there being a teaching *profession* in Hong Kong as distinct from groups of teachers who work in particular schools (Llewellyn et al. 1982, p.96).

This HKTS would co-operate with the Government in formulating conditions of work and would influence teacher education programmes. It was not clear, however, how this HKTS would be

constituted.

The recommendation was not supported by the Education Commission in its earlier discussions, on the grounds that the proposed HKTS would duplicate the role of either the Government or unions (*ECR1*, p.64). It is commonly believed that the rejection of the idea of a HKTS was also influenced by decisions within the Executive Council.

Instead, the Education Commission thought that it would be appropriate to compile a *Code of Conduct* for teachers. A Preparatory Committee for the *Code* was therefore established under the initiation of the government Education Department as part of the implementation of *ECR1*. In the process, 63 educational bodies, including teachers' unions, school groups and major school sponsoring bodies were invited by the Education Department. There were debates in the first meeting about the representation of the 63 bodies, given that there were over 150 educational bodies and most of the professional associations had not been invited. Nevertheless, a 25-member Preparatory Committee was elected at the second meeting in 1987.

The Preparatory Committee met two major conceptual barriers in its deliberation of the *Code*. First, it became immediately clear to the Committee that the drafting of a Code could not be separated from its implementation. If the Committee stopped short at producing the Code and the issue of implementation was not addressed, the Code could easily degenerate into paying lip-service to grand principles. It could also be abused by inappropriate bodies external to the teaching profession, such as government agents or employers. The Committee therefore extended its terms of reference to include recommending ways of implementation.

Second, the Committee was charged with the duty to produce a *Code* which would affect all members in the education profession, but the Committee itself was elected from among only major educational bodies identified by the Education Department. Since the *Code* would be a matter of internal discipline, the issue of mandate became immediately clear. The problem became more acute in the light of increased elected elements in the legislature and the subsequent resentment of any top-down approach in such matters as internal discipline. The Committee, in view of this, declared that it was playing a servicing role rather than a decision-making one (Preparatory Committee, 1989, p.4).

In early 1988, the visit of Eric Hoyle from Bristol University, England, drew committee members' attention to the fact that a code

without an organization was inconceivable. This inspired the Preparatory Committee to launch overseas visits in the following two years which further confirmed in very practical terms that "although professional bodies may exist without a code, no code survives without a professional governing body" (Preparatory Committee, 1990, p.4).

The idea of a "professional governing body" solves the problems that the Preparatory Committee was facing. Such a body, necessarily established under a full constitution with legitimate representation, should have the mandate to implement the proposed *Code*. After further investigations and two territory-wide consultations, this idea evolved into what is now commonly known as the General Teaching Council (GTC).

Meanwhile, a *Code for the Education Profession of Hong Kong* was published with two revisions. The *Code* was formulated after the collation of items from 23 similar codes overseas and after territory-wide consultations among individual teachers with item-wise endorsement and comments. The *Code* included, as one of its major components, the proposal for a GTC, with the specification that the *Code* should not be used for disciplinary purposes before the establishment of the GTC.

The Preparatory Committee proposed a three-phase approach to the establishment of the GTC, an approach which had been endorsed by a general polling. In Phase One, a Working Party was set up. It was formed in February 1991 by election at a meeting where *all* educational bodies (over 170 in number) were invited. It was asked to form a GTC Organizing Committee elected from the broadest base. The Working Party proposed an Organizing Committee with representation from not only educational bodies, but also from schools. In this respect, the structure of the Advisory Management Committee of the Hong Kong Teachers' Centre has been largely accepted as a viable model (for details see the discussion in a later section). In Phase Two, the Organizing Committee would be established, but this is yet to happen. The Organizing Committee would then formulate a constitution for the GTC. In Phase Three, the GTC would be formally established.

It is not clear why the Government in the early 1980s rejected the idea of the HKTS. However, it was quite obvious that during the deliberation of *ECR5*, the issue was re-opened and the recommendations in *ECR5* are new decisions. *ECR5* recommends deferring the decision to establish a GTC and setting up the Council

on Professional Conduct in Education as a substitute to handle the *Professional Code.* Although the Education Commission recommendations do not preclude the establishment of a GTC by non-governmental efforts, they have *de facto* disappointed the education profession which has reached a general consensus about the necessity of the GTC and has expected Government support in one way or another.

The following is an analysis of the Education Commission's decisions in an attempt to understand the basic thinking underlying such decisions.

THE NOTION OF A PROFESSION

Any attempt to define the term *profession* will lead to philosophical debates which often confuse rather than clarify the political issue. From a very practical point of view, the GTC, as proposed by the Preparatory Committee, is not identical with the original HKTS, as proposed in the Llewellyn Report (1982); and the GTC as understood by the Education Commission again differs from that proposed by the Preparatory Committee.

A *profession* as discussed in the Llewellyn Report is an *organization*. The Report made a shrewd observation that teachers in Hong Kong perceive themselves as belonging to various schools, but not to a *profession*. Teachers may belong to various educational bodies in one way or another, but they are only members of those bodies when it comes to a particular aspect of a teacher's life. A teacher who belongs to the Professional Teachers' Union will claim union membership when it comes to contractual disputes or, more often, to discounts such as in insurance policies. Likewise, a member of the Hong Kong Association for Science and Mathematics Education may be proud of his/her membership, only when it comes to matters such as curriculum innovations and instructional reform in Science and Mathematics. The objective of the HKTS is to create a sense of identity with a professional organization. It is in this context that the Llewellyn Report discussed at length the HKTS's role in negotiating with the Government about teachers "salaries and conditions of work" (Llewellyn et al. 1982, p.97). The primary aim of a professional organization is necessarily for professional benefits, as different from economic benefits which are taken care of by unions.

The Preparatory Committee approached the matter in a pragmatic

way. It was initially charged with the duty of only producing a document which was a Code of Practice. After the first round of territory-wide consultations, the Preparatory Committee became convinced that central to the concept of profession, in the Hong Kong context, is professional *autonomy* which may guard teachers against non-professional interference. Such interference may come from either politicking within Hong Kong or political imposition from outside. This understanding of a profession is further reinforced by the June 4 incident in Beijing in 1989 and the increasing elements of partisan battles in Hong Kong. The general feeling among the Preparatory Committee members, which to a great extent reflects feelings among educators in general, is that unless teachers can establish their professional credibility among the community, developments in education can easily be swayed by considerations which are based on non-educational or *ad hoc* necessities in the political arena. Hence, the GTC proposed by the Preparatory Committee was more of a body for professional rights than for professional benefits.

In more concrete terms, the functions of the HKTS proposed in the Llewellyn Report overlap with those of existing unions in Hong Kong. The Preparatory Committee's proposal deliberately distinguishes itself from the unionist approach. Members of the Preparatory Committee were of the view that it would be exactly the non-unionist and non-political nature of the proposed GTC that would allow the education profession to survive in future political battles.

The Education Commission's understanding of the concept of a *profession* is not always consistent. The recommendation against setting up the HKTS in *ECR1* was political. It was made at a time when even the establishment of the Education Commission was seen as a threat to the existing structure (see Cheng 1987, p.313-316). It is therefore understandable that the Government was not prepared to see the establishment of an organized force which would have legitimate authority to negotiate with the Government on an equal footing. In this sense, the HKTS would be more powerful than the strongest union, the Professional Teachers' Union, which was already a headache for the Government at that time. The Government's concern, as reflected in *ECR1*, was perhaps not on the idea of a profession *per se*, but rather, to avoid facilitating a competitive power.

The recommendation in *ECR5* to defer establishing the GTC is again political, but in a different context. In 1992, the political scenario is no longer one of the Government facing opponents in

negotiations. The introduction of direct elections in the Legislative Council has substantially changed the position of the Government. Research findings seem to indicate that the relevant government department is trapped in a purely political perspective and interprets all events as acts of conspiracy (see, for example, Yung 1992). There is, for example, a distrust of the unions' support of the GTC, in that such support may be abused for purposes of election campaigns for Legco membership. There is also a fear that any election in the proposed GTC will end up with a predominance of the unions. These purely speculative assumptions could well underlie the relevant government department's assessment of the situation and could lead to its perceiving the proposed GTC as a potential threat. Such perceptions put the proposal about GTC in very unfavourable conditions. Even before the Education Commission made its decisions, interactions between the Preparatory Committee and the Commission or the relevant government department were overshadowed by excessive fears about political threats. Apparently, the Education Commission was overwhelmed by the political speculations and consequently has lost sight of the professional elements in the issue of GTC.

THE PROFESSIONAL VERSUS POLITICAL ARENAS

The Government's assessment of the situation is also biased by its general neglect of the existence of a *professional* arena which is different from the *political* arena.

One of the new developments in the education community between *ERC1* and *ECR5* was the emergence of possibilities for educational groups with diverse backgrounds to come together and discuss issues of common interest.

The Preparatory Committee itself was one of the first attempts where various educational bodies sat together to work towards a consensus. As mentioned earlier, when the Education Department invited 63 educational bodies to discuss the preparation of a *Code* in 1986, there was immediate confrontation between the unions and the government officials. Also, the unions and the other groups were suspicious of each other, the latter being largely school councils or principals' organizations. One union in fact withdrew in protest on the spot. Even at the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee in 1987, the atmosphere was tense. Most of the organizations represented were

either unions or those seen by the unions as the "employer" groups. None of the professional associations were represented. The representative from the Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong, was the only exception, and was therefore elected Chairman.

The work that the Preparatory Committee undertook in the following four and a half years proved that most of the confrontations and suspicions were unnecessary. During the process of preparation of the *Code*, there was little disagreement except in the sections about "professional rights as an employee" and "commitment to employer". However, it was exactly with these items that debate and discussion became useful, because only then did the Preparatory Committee come to grips with what was acceptable to all parties and what was not; what could be put down as consensus and what should not because of the lack of consensus. It is not that conflicts do not exist, but there is always a way in which conflicts can be handled within a professional framework. Most of the members of the Preparatory Committee appreciated the opportunity for parties, who would otherwise confront each other, to work towards the same goal. In other words, employers and employees, for example, may have unreconcilable conflicts, but such conflicts do not necessarily become issues in the professional arena where all parties work towards education of future generations.

The precedent of peaceful co-operation of diverse groups in the Preparatory Committee was further developed in the formation of the Advisory Management Committee (AMC) of Hong Kong's first and only Teachers' Centre. Initially, the constitution of the AMC, which was produced by an elaborate process through a representative organizing committee, required 30 members to be elected from nominees of educational bodies and another 30 among school nominees. The latter was done through prescribed democratic procedures[2]. There are three ex-officio members representing the Director of Education. Four elections have been held so far. On the part of the unions, there has never been signs of an intention to dominate the scene, and their representatives have never been elected to the Chair. In fact, they have never stood for election.

There has developed a tacit agreement among all parties that it is necessary to create a neutral zone where the widest consensus can be sought. As long as the employer groups are not taking a dominating position, the unions are quite happy to play a low key. Some unions are keen, however, within the ideologies for direct election, to see more seats going to school-based rather than organization-based representatives[3], but this does not affect the

general will to create a zone for peaceful co-operation.

This situation is similar with the Working Party which was established in February 1991. The most powerful unions actively participated, became elected, but have never really swayed the Working Party's determination of its orientation. Apparently, the most powerful unions are willing to abide by rules of the game set down by the virtual confederation of educational bodies. Again they treasured the occasion as a neutral zone and wished to be seen as professional rather than militant in these circumstances.

There is a general misunderstanding of the situation on the part of the Government, and hence a mis-judgement which affects the eventual recommendation of the Education Commission. The crux of the misunderstanding is a confusion between the *political* arena and the *professional* arena. The Professional Teachers' Union (PTU), for example, has undoubtedly become a base for the opposition power in Hong Kong. Szeto Wah, the former PTU president, is a champion of the opposition. He was instrumental in the formation of the United Democrats which is the most powerful political party and first of its kind in Hong Kong. He was twice elected to the Legislative Council as the sole representative of the Teaching constituency, and is now in the Legislative Council through direct election. He is also chairman of the local coalition which supported the student movement during the Tienanmen Square incident. Szeto's successor, Cheung Man-kwong, also won his seat in the Teaching constituency with overwhelming majority votes. The PTU is also *the* organization which organizes various large scale rallies and demonstrations which are often effective in influencing government decisions. The PTU has given the Government an impression of being invincible in elections, which has made the proposed GTC a worry for the Government: If the proposed GTC were elected by full constitution and if the "invincible" PTU gained control of the GTC, would it not give the PTU a *legitimate* powerful position in policy matters? Such a worry is repeatedly expressed by government officials during interactions with the Preparatory Committee.

Such worries, if tested against what has happened in reality, are quite unnecessary. In the cases mentioned above, the participation of powerful unions such as the PTU has been seen as essential, but they are seldom seen as professional leaders. Even the unions themselves seldom see it this way. In most of these cases, the PTU, for example, actively participates, makes recommendations in one way or another and may hold strong views from time to time. However, it never even

presents itself for candidature of leadership. Rather, it sees itself as a watchdog representing the "grassroots", as long as the leadership has not fallen into the hands of the "employer" groups.

This is perhaps a matter of pragmatics rather than a matter of wisdom on the part of the unions. The PTU, for example, has been the most vocal group and has gained support from teachers as a powerful opposition against a colonial government. Teachers, however, seldom rely on the PTU for advice on the actual operation of the education system. The latter is either in the hands of school councils in the realm of administration, or with the professional associations when it comes to curriculum, teaching and other school activities. In cases of major confrontations against government policies[4], even the PTU would try to align the broadest coalition among educational bodies, including groups of administrators and employers.

The government's views about the GTC reflect that it has little concern about the *professional* arena. It has therefore made a wrong assessment which would otherwise be valid for the *political* arena. Thus, the recommendation in *ECR5* to defer the establishment of the GTC, which reflects the government's views, has deprived education professionals of a good opportunity to consolidate themselves into a solid body which will protect education against unforeseeable non-professional interference.

POLITICAL IDEALS AND PROFESSIONAL REALITY

The Government was perhaps not the only one to make wrong assessments. At a later stage in 1991, the PTU also made invalid judgements, but in a totally different context. This occurred in the PTU's insistence on "one-man-one-vote" and the GTC's power of registration.

The Preparatory Committee has deliberately kept the two points vague. It thought of the constitution of the GTC as a matter that could only be considered by a fully representative Organizing Committee which would make decisions only after some kind of general polling among teachers. Prior to that, any pre-condition would be pre-empting decisions of the proposed Organizing Committee and would therefore be illegitimate. The Preparatory Committee's recommendation therefore laid down only the general principles: "That the proposed GTC be established with the widest participation of

practising teachers" (Preparatory Committee 1990, p.14). There is also the background that in most countries, GTCs are virtual confederations of existing educational bodies, not of individual teachers. This is the case in similar teachers' professional organizations in Canada, and certainly is the pattern of the proposed GTC in England and Wales. The Hong Kong proposal is already far more "democratic" than similar bodies elsewhere.

The Preparatory Committee has also been vague about the power of teacher registration. It "feels that the issue of registration power should be brought to the agenda only when both the Government and the professionals are fully prepared" (*Ibid.*, p.13). The Preparatory Committee gathered from its territory-wide consultations that it is difficult to expect teachers to respect the powers of the GTC before it demonstrates its being. Between the Government and just a prospective GTC, teachers still feel more secure with registrations in the hands of the Government. It is for practical reasons rather than reasons of principle that the power of registration is not top of the priority list. This perhaps also demonstrates that *power* is not the prime concern of the Preparatory Committee.

The Preparatory Committee was aware of the controversy that might arise from the issue, but felt that power of registration is but one aspect of the GTC's role and again should not become a pre-condition of the GTC's establishment. Such considerations are made on firm grounds. Overseas organizations similar to the proposed GTC hold varied positions in connection with the power of teacher registration. Indeed, with the exception of the Scottish GTC and the English GTC which is yet to emerge, most other GTC's or equivalents may advise the government on registration policies, but few hold the actual power of registration.

The above recommendations by the Preparatory Committee were included in the revised version of the *Code* and had passed a general polling among teachers in late 1990. The PTU representative was among those who endorsed the recommendations. However, the PTU surprised the education community by insisting in November, 1991 that "one-man-one-vote" and the ownership of teacher-registration power should be prerequisites for the establishment of the proposed GTC.

The reason for the change of the PTU's stand was unclear. Although the process of decision-making within the PTU is not known, one may still trace the ideological context in which such decisions are made. The PTU has always been seen as the champion

advocate of democracy in Hong Kong and has always been conscious of procedures of elections. To some extent, it has taken election procedures as *the* substance of democracy. This has been the case in the Legislative Council election where the United Democrats has always been pressing for total direct election. Apparently, the PTU has transplanted the idea of direct election to organizations within the education profession. There were precedents in the Advisory Management Committee of the Hong Kong Teachers' Centre where the PTU argued that educational bodies are not representative of teachers, conceived of school nominees as "real" teacher representatives and proposed the inclusion of candidates who were not based on organization or school nominations. Following this line of thought, it is not unexpected that the PTU would perceive "one-man-one-vote" as a "must" for any democratic organization. It has not taken into consideration, however, the nature of the GTC and its practical functioning which relies almost totally on the co-operation and solidarity of all existing educational bodies. Like the Education Commission, the PTU has also misused the principles that are otherwise valid in the *political* arena for the *professional* arena.

The ideology behind the insistence on power of registration is similar. As is the case with all other professions, the power that teachers may convincingly secure lies with their professional expertise. One may argue, as exchange theorists may do, that teachers may trade their professional expertise for political power (e.g. Archer 1981). However, direct possession of political power is often beyond the capacity of teachers. Whether or not teachers' power of registration is within the realm of political power could be a matter of debate, but placing the power of registration as a pre-condition for the emergence of GTC is obviously confusing professional rights with political power, and hence unduly exaggerating the political dimension of discussions about the GTC.

Given that the Government has always kept a political eye on the GTC issue, the PTU's change in attitude towards the GTC has serious effects on the Government's consideration of the case, which in turn could have influenced the Education Commission in its decisions. In other words, the PTU's emphasis on election procedures and power of registration may have reinforced the Government's suspicion of the GTC and prompted the Government to reject the idea on political grounds. The voice of the real professionals has been totally neglected. All efforts towards a professional solidarity have been subsumed under an unnecessarily created political battle.

There is no evidence suggesting that either the Government or the PTU was obsessed by conspiracies. However, there were suspicions from both sides that led to misunderstanding and over-reactions which totally confused the picture of the GTC.

It has to be noticed that the time factor played an important role in the incident. Deliberation on the Code started in 1987 when the political implications of elective seats in Legco was still not felt. The scene was totally different in 1991. The PTU's change of mind came at a time of election campaigns. The election climates have made PTU leaders extremely sensitive to election procedures in general and one-man-one-vote in particular. Meanwhile, the election campaigns have alerted government departments who have become over-sensitive to political conspiracies. At one point, for example, officials in the Education Department suspected that the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee had a hidden agreement with the PTU to use GTC as a card for election campaign (see Yung 1992). It so happened that the Chairman and the Secretary of the newly elected Working Party were also candidates for the Teaching constituency in the Legco election. All this might have suggested a total conspiracy among the proposers of the GTC (*Ibid.*), and the Government would seem stupid to agree to all the GTC recommendations.

The other time factor was related to the Governor. In late 1991 and early 1992, the United Democrats, of which the PTU played a major part, were not seen favourably by the then Governor. This explains the widespread suspicion among education officials of the predominance of GTC leadership by the PTU. And indeed any move of the PTU was assessed in that orientation. If the Education Commission had pondered upon the GTC during the latter half of 1992 with the new Governor in power, the recommendations concerning the GTC could have been perceived differently and the Education Commission could have come out with totally different recommendations. The new Governor is not hostile to the United Democrats at all.

PROFESSIONAL CODE VERSUS OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

The recommendation in *ECR5* for a Council on Professional Conduct in Education worsens rather than improves the situation. The Education Commission made it very clear in its recommendations that the Council would be advisory in nature. In other words, it would be

the Government who would carry out disciplinary actions among
teaching professionals. This is against the very nature of a GTC and
the very principle of professional discipline. Professional conduct,
governed by a Code, is not anything that could be handled by legal
and administrative stipulations.   Professional conduct concerns
teachers' acts which are legally justified and administratively allowed,
but are unacceptable from a professional standpoint. To give a very
simple example, a teacher may resign on August 31 right before the
beginning of the school year. He or she may be willing to pay
compensation and hence clear all legal obligations, but will still be
seen as committing professional misconduct because of the harm he
or she may cause to students.

The imposition of an external disciplinary body over the
education profession is non-professional interference and is exactly
what the GTC was to guard against. It would set a very unfortunate
precedent of regulating teachers in realms outside the legal and
administrative frameworks, yet beyond the control of the professionals.
This point has been made very clearly in the *Code*:

> Before the establishment of the General Teaching Council
> and its appropriate disciplinary component, under no
> circumstances should the Code be used as basis for any
> disciplinary action (Preparatory Committee 1990, p.14).

Teachers take professional conduct with pride because it is
complementary to professional autonomy. External disciplinary action,
on the contrary, impose additional requirements on teachers and
hampers professional autonomy.   The Education Commission
obviously had not discerned the crux of the nature of a professional
Code and hence came up with a recommendation which is
incompatible with the very concept of a Professional Code.

For the same reasons, the Education Commission made
interesting remarks on the contents of the Code which to a
considerable extent exhibit naivete if not ignorance (see *ECR5*, p.92).
The Education Commission expected operational criteria which would
dictate the details of professional conduct. This is inconceivable. A
professional code, by its very nature, has to be vague. Interpretation
and judgement have to be made within the profession under
jurisdiction trusted by both the professionals and the community.
Typically, a panel trusted by the profession will judge cases of
misconduct, based on thorough investigation and dependent upon the
culture of the profession at that time. A professional code is not
meant to prescribe operational criteria. This would be the last thing

any professional body would like to see.

The above understanding of the professional code and the role of the GTC in relation to the code is by no means a creation of the Preparatory Committee. It grew out of the Preparatory Committee's visits to 18 countries. Nor is the format of the draft *Code* a creation of the Preparatory Committee. It was based on similar codes collected from 23 countries. The kind of operational criteria proposed by the Education Commission is unheard of. They run counter to the basic characteristics of a professional code. Had the Education Commission read carefully the appended visit reports and attached overseas codes, it might have come up with more mature remarks.

The confusion about the GTC in the *ECR5* is perhaps itself a demonstration of disrespect for the teaching profession. It is justifiable for the Government and its advisory body to make value judgements and for the former to make decisions. However, judgements and decisions have to be made on an informed basis. There should be a basic trust in information and facts, and professional analysis thereof. The Government and its advisory body may be doing themselves a disservice by ignoring the results of serious research, and creating ideas which are generated purely from meetings.

The Education Commission's lack of understanding of the GTC proposal is perhaps not totally unexpected. The membership of the Education Commission limits its sensitivity to the general feeling of the teaching community in Hong Kong. The only member in the Education Commission who is also a member of the Preparatory Committee did not see herself as the defendant of the GTC and hence did not articulate its strengths. The Preparatory Committee was allowed only to present its case for a short session in front of the Education Commission together with other representatives. The Education Commission's Secretary who made an effort to understand the deeper story unfortunately was moved to another position during the discussion of the GTC. It is perhaps true that members in the Education Commission knew much less about the essence of the GTC than a concerned school teacher. It is an irony that, on the one hand, the Government and its advisory bodies try not to be over-sensitive to what is conveyed in the media, but on the other hand, views tend to be ignored if they are not made loudly through the media. The GTC was obviously a case of the latter. The massive consultations over four years and the consequent findings seemed to carry much less weight than a 30-minute press conference made by the PTU due to an *impromptu* decision of its Standing Committee. It is amusing but sad

that educators who have no access to the Chinese papers may see the Code as a "mouse-like" document (Sweeting 1992, p.31) and hence hold unfair views against the Code. Some members in the Education Commission may suffer from the same communication gap.

THE CASE FOR PROFESSIONAL LEGITIMACY

The analysis above readily lends itself to interpretations in terms of legitimacy. The Preparatory Committee's endeavour has been to establish a *professional legitimacy*. This has been interpreted by both the Government and the PTU from a political perspective and both have viewed as *politically* unacceptable what is otherwise *professionally* favourable.

Legitimacy is often used in reference to beliefs and opinions which provide the state with justifications other than power and coercion (see, for example, Dahl 1984, p.35; Connolly 1984, p.108). The notion of legitimacy may also be extended to "recognized principles or accepted rules and standards" which may apply to discussion other than the state or the government (see detailed discussion in Cheng 1987, p.102-118).

What the Preparatory Committee strived for was a mechanism which would provide educators with autonomy in professional matters and which would guard against non-professional interference. Such a mechanism has to be built upon the community's trust of the profession, or *professional legitimacy*. Such a legitimacy may contain the following:
(a) Teachers are providing an essential social service.
(b) Such a service cannot be achieved with mere routines or administrative directives because students differ and their environments vary.
(c) Hence, teachers should be given professional autonomy when fulfilling their responsibilities.
(d) Teachers' autonomy is a professional right which is for the benefit of the clients, who are students. This is different from teachers' other rights which are for self-benefit.
(e) Teachers' professional autonomy should be complemented by internal discipline to guard against professional misconduct.

The suggested "areas of concern" for the proposed GTC (Preparatory Committee 1990, p.12) - qualification, pre-service and in-service training, standards, discipline, international and external

relations - are all conceived around this notion of *professional legitimacy*. Hence, the proposed GTC is a way in which *professional legitimacy* is realized. It is a mechanism to develop and defend this legitimacy, to disseminate the notion to the community, and to ensure continuity in this legitimacy.

In one sense, professional legitimacy is non-political. It is not for the claim of more political power, nor for more resources. It should prove unharmful for any political authority. In another sense, professional legitimacy is a means to guard education against political interference, and hence can be seen as political (see Cheng 1991). From all perspectives, however, professional legitimacy is effective only when it maintains its professional outlook, when it works within the realm of expertise. Teachers maintain professional legitimacy exactly because of their impartial status in the political arena.

If teachers dropped their impartiality, they would virtually undermine their own legitimacy and lose the respect of politicians (see e.g. Benveniste 1977, p.75-76). They would then have to regain respect through competition with other politicians. By so doing, they would lose their professional status. They would lose the protection provided by their expertise and have to play a political game which they are not trained for.

This is unfortunately the case with GTC in Hong Kong. Election procedures and power of registration have never been the teaching profession's primary concern during its deliberation of the GTC. The PTU's emphasis on election procedures and power of registration of the GTC has shifted the attention on the GTC from the well-being of clients to the political power of teachers. Such an emphasis has also affected the Government's perception of the GTC. In the end, teachers lost an opportunity to start establishing professional legitimacy, only because the issue of GTC was pushed into the political arena.

The proposed creation of a Council for Professional Conduct in Education (CPCE) will again undermine the process of building professional legitimacy among Hong Kong teachers. Unless the CPCE makes sure of its interim nature and prepares for a takeover by an internally constituted professional body, the CPCE is likely to meet strong opposition and is not likely to function. The reason is straightforward. To carry out internal discipline among professionals, the implementation body should be built upon solid legitimacy, that is, trust from all professionals. For that, there can be no substitute for the General Teaching Council. This is the one truth that the Preparatory

Committee discovered through endeavours over more than four years. Perhaps it should take the Education Commission less than that to discover the same truth.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The idea of a General Teaching Council has grown out of the preparation of a professional code for teachers. The idea was initiated by an Overseas Panel as a general recommendation, but was rejected by the Hong Kong Government in 1984. The idea was resurrected during the preparation of the Code, under changed circumstances where the GTC is seen as symbol of professional autonomy and is seen as essential in view of the changing political scene. However, undue political considerations have confused the picture and prevented the Education Commission from gaining a deeper understanding of the issue and from arriving at sensible recommendations. Hence, the education profession of Hong Kong is deprived of a very good opportunity to build its professional legitimacy. Nevertheless, the Education Commission did not preclude the establishment of a GTC with non-government initiation. The ball is now in the court of the professionals. The issue is now perhaps whether or not the education professionals are prepared to take care of their own future.

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ENDNOTES

1. The writer has been Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Professional Code for Education Workers, which recommended in its final report the establishment of a General Teaching Council.

2 This was later modified to expand the number from a total of 60 to 70, and to include representatives nominated by 20 teachers.

3. This has the underlying assumption that educational bodies (perhaps with the exception of unions) are less representative of grass-root teachers than school nominated teachers. There is even the assumption that representatives by direct nominations are more "grass-root". These assumptions are not shared by all sectors of the education community.

4. The most significant cases are the united front against the Junior Secondary Educational Assessment (which is a virtual discriminative public assessment) during the 1970s and the recent concerted action against government measures to increase the class size (1992).

A Response to *ECR5*

Faculty of Education
The University of Hong Kong

1. PREAMBLE

The Faculty of Education responds positively to *Education Commission Report No. 5* (hereafter referred to as the Report) which includes many proposals for which teacher educators have been canvassing in the past decade. It is heartening to see that the quality of teacher education is now on the Government's agenda and that there is commitment to a move towards an all-graduate profession.

We are nevertheless concerned that the entire Report is largely an administrative one rather than an educational one. There does not seem to be adequate underpinnings of educational theory for the proposals made. We are also concerned that teacher quality and teacher education in practical, technical and vocational subjects are largely neglected.

2. THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS (Chapter 2)

The bulk of the resource in this area is allocated to the improvment of the physical environment, staffing levels, class sizes, and computerization. While these are important aspects of school environment, equally important are aspects like teacher development, teacher involvement, home-school cooperation, and school-based curriculum. Inadequate resources are given to the improvement of the latter.

In the Report, SMI is narrowly perceived as a purely management issue. A broader view of SMI should be taken in which the school administration should involve teachers in mobilizing resources to support better and more effective teaching and learning in the school.

Since the introduction of SMI in some schools in 1991, teachers and administrators have expressed concern about the increased workload and the lack of expertise to implement it. Adequate training therefore should be provided. When teachers and administrators have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge, and are committed to implementing the changes, their confidence will be boosted and their assessment of workload will be more realistic.

2.2 Induction of New Teachers (2.2)

It is very encouraging that the Report gives attention to this very important aspect of teacher education. The recommendations for setting up a systematic induction programme in schools are welcomed.

However, the perception of induction, as reflected in the Report, is too narrow. It is seen as an attempt to improve the working environment and to make the teaching profession more attractive for teachers rather than as an integral part in the provision of a comprehensive continuing education and development of teachers. Induction should be seen as an important intermediary phase in teacher education which follows initial education and is followed by in-service education. It is a phase in which new teachers are given help in the application and development of the knowledge and skills that they have acquired in the initial education programmes and which facilitates the smooth transition from the initial phase through the induction phase to the in-service phase.

2.3   Home-School Cooperation (2.9)

The Report's positive approach to enhancing cooperation between home and school is commendable. Indeed, parents should see their right and responsibility in the education of their children not as something conferred by a particular school or by the Education Department, but something inherent in parenthood. Schools should move towards establishing better communication with parents rather than contacting them only when problems arise.

The proposed terms of reference for the suggested Committee on Home-School Cooperation have to be expressed more rigorously and specifically. For example, while acknowledging that there should be "no attempt to impose on all schools a single, central model for home-school cooperation" (2.17), we feel that the proposed terms of reference are in danger of leading the Committee to the other extreme of not providing any specific guidelines for schools at all. Moreover, positive fostering of home-school relationships will probably need more than grants for innovative approaches.

3.   CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS AND UPGRADING PRIMARY TEACHERS (Chapters 3 and 4)

3.1   Graduate Teaching Posts in Primary Schools (Chapter 4)

We welcome the proposal to establish graduate posts in primary schools which would raise the status of primary school teachers.

The proposed conversion of 35% of the current primary teaching posts into graduate posts in 15 years' time is too little, too slow and too late. The Government should move towards an all-graduate teaching profession at a much faster pace and increase the proportion of graduate posts in primary schools.

The Report states that the proposed graduate posts can be filled by upgrading non-graduate teachers via distance learning B.Ed. programmes. It does not state clearly whether this is the only means of upgrading primary teachers. Should this be the case, we are concerned that it may be too restrictive in terms of recruiting talent into primary education. Currently, there are 441 primary teachers with either local or commonwealth degrees (2.3% of the primary teaching

force) (Teacher Survey 1991:61). According to the survey, more and more primary teachers are leaving for further study. These teachers may not have a primary education degree but their knowledge and primary teaching experience would enable them to make valuable contributions to primary education. They should be encouraged to join the primary teaching force.

The distinction between self-funding B.Ed. and B.Ed./B.A. (Primary education) is invidious and unwarranted. Under the proposed scheme, graduates of the proposed self-funding B.Ed. would be considered inferior to other graduates. Their salary structure is not comparable to their counterparts in the secondary sector. There is a further discrimination in career development (4.34). Teachers who study for a B.Ed. degree via the self-funding distance learning mode can only become "trained graduate primary teachers" whereas those who study for a B.Ed./B.A. degree (primary education) now offered by the two universities can become graduate primary heads and senior teachers [see p.65, table 5(ii)].

We suggest that in order to raise the quality of primary education, there must be parity between graduate teaching posts within the primary sector and between the primary and the secondary sectors. We also suggest that graduates from other disciplines, upon the completion of teacher education programmes, should be encouraged to join the primary teaching force.

3.2 *Kindergarten Teachers* (3.13-3.26)

We support the proposal to legislate the proportion of trained kindergarten teachers in each kindergarten. However, this proposal needs to be coupled with measures to ensure appropriate salaries for kindergarten teachers. Already many kindergartens are not following the 1989 recommended kindergarten teacher salary scale. There is a strong likelihood that enforcing training without enforcing the recommended salary scale will have the effect of exacerbating the dissatisfaction amongst kindergarten teachers which could result in an increase in the already high wastage rate of 22.3% and a consequent decrease in the quality of kindergarten education.

We also support the proposal to increase the funds available for the fee remission scheme so as to extend number of benefitting families (3.25).

We welcome the inclusion of representation from kindergartens

on the proposed Committee on Home-School Cooperation [Annex C(1)]. We hope that special efforts will be made at kindergarten level to set the pattern for cooperation between schools and homes. It is where the first habits of cooperation or lack of it are established and where parents and teachers become socialized into their roles and relationships with each other.

We are, however, disappointed that the quality and professional concerns of kindergarten teachers are largely neglected in the Report. No reference is made to the quality of the professional training provided for these teachers and the infrastructure to provide training for them at different stages in their career development. The proposals contained in the Report are further evidence that kindergarten education continues to be treated as the cinderella of the education system. Moreover, it will be confirmed as the cinderella in the education system in the next 15 years because all the resources will have gone to primary and secondary education.

3.3 Special education teachers (3.27-3.30)

There seems to be considerable confusion in the Report with regard to special education teachers and special school teachers. Special education teachers are narrowly defined as special school teachers. There does not seem to be any link between the recommendations for special education in ECR4 and those in this Report.

The role and place of special school teacher education are viewed as completely separate from the overall manpower planning for teachers.

The proposal of introducing one year full-time course is an improvement on existing practice (3.28). However, it is by no means clear how this course would fit into the overall upgrading of the teaching profession. The career path and the salary structures of the special school teachers are not mentioned.

4. TEACHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES (Chapter 5)

In the Report, although the term "teacher education" is used, the thinking behind the proposals reflect the perception of "teacher education" as "teacher training". This can be seen not only from the

fact that the two terms are used interchangeably, but also that in the Report several references are made to the goals of education degree courses being to enhance the instructional and managerial skills (see for example, p.43, p.44:4.7). There is much more to teacher education than imparting instructional and managerial skills to teachers.

We welcome the initiative to improve the quality of the teaching profession. In order to achieve this goal, the provision of and demand for professional development opportunities will need to be examined closely. Rather than leaving the individual teacher to take advantage of these opportunities, there should be a well thought-out schedule for implementation.

The Report recognizes the importance of the development of a structured and systematic range of courses for serving teachers (5.19). However, the means of doing it has yet to be specified. At present, there is a large number of in-service professional development courses offered by various bodies with little co-ordination among them. Thus the proposal to set up ACTEQ (7.34) is welcomed since it enhances communication and co-operation among institutions. It is important, however, that the proposed ACTEQ has sufficient academic and professional input.

The proposal to increase the importance of professional development as a factor in career development will strengthen the quality of the teaching profession. The Report specifies various professional development opportunities for graduate and non-graduate teachers. It is crucial that these courses are not mere labels. They should be able to equip teachers to go through various stages of their professional development. The objectives of each course should be carefully formulated, taking into consideration the needs of schools and teachers.

The recommendation of the introduction of an advanced Teacher's Certificate (5.24), which is yet another non-graduate qualification, is a retrograde step when we are moving towards an all-graduate profession. Any new programmes introduced should be designed as part of the upgrading process of non-graduate teachers to graduate status.

We feel that it is very important that apart from administrative considerations, there is professional input and educational theoretical underpinning in the shaping of teacher education programmes.

5. INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (Chapter 6)

The perception of teacher education as teacher training is reflected in the proposal of for an Institute of Education (6.2) (hereafter referred to as I.E.) which is segregated from tertiary institutions. The formal linkage of colleges to UPGC institutions is rejected by the Commission on unconvincing grounds and without seeking the views of at least this University as to the ways in which we might be able to contribute.

We are doubtful whether a separate Institute of Education can generate its own development and whether there is adequate leadership. We are also concerned that the proposed Governing Council will not necessarily have the expertise to promote suitable teacher education [Annex C (2)].

As for the quality of the staff of I.E., we applaud the proposal to grant study leave to staff members who wish to upgrade themselves. We are, however, concerned that the heavy reliance on natural wastage, as proposed in the Report, will not result in an adequate provision of staff (6.13). We feel that tougher measures have to be taken; for example, setting out deadlines for the upgrading of suitable staff and transferring out inadequately qualified staff. Early retirement arrangements might also be considered for some staff.

6. TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

The Report does not explore or define the concept of professionalism. Professionalism is narrowly construed as no more than the accreditation of teacher qualifications, drawing up codes of practice which are essentially regulatory. The essence of professionalism, which is the involvement of teachers in the decision making process in education, is not reflected in the proposals in the Report. Educational decisions have always been and continue to be top-down and so teachers have no control over their own career development. This should be changed. The proposal for a Council on Professional Conduct could be a substitute for professionalism rather than, as claimed by the Report, a first step towards professionalism.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Report states that educational spending is investment. In terms of investing in more than one million school children, the sum of $23.5 billion spent over a span of 15 years is by no means large. In fact, the Report, in proposing conversion courses, non-graduate certificates, self-funding B.Ed. as means of upgrading the teaching profession, is seeking a cheap way out of teacher education and development which hampers the provision of good quality teacher education.

It is heartening to see that, in the recent Governor's policy speech, it has been proposed that the reduction of class sizes and teacher-student ratio take place at a much faster pace than is proposed by *ECR5*. While this commitment on the part of the Government is highly commendable, measures should be taken to ensure that the extra number of teachers required to implement the proposals should not be obtained at the expense of the quality of the teachers.

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