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A U S T R A L I A

'Moving up, but not moving out': A policy ecology of the Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme in Malaysia

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<u>Abstract</u>

This thesis offers an exploratory policy ecology of a teacher career path policy in Malaysia, namely the innovative *Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme* (hereafter the ETP/S), a scheme endorsed by Cabinet in 1994 and extended and developed further since that time. The research focuses on the production of ETP/S policy texts, their enactment/implementation in schools and also provides an evaluation of the ETP/S based on semi-structured interviews with important policy actors. The study addresses a gap in the Malaysian literature in terms of its usage of critical policy sociology with a policy ecology approach and through its focus on a specific teacher career path policy, the ETP/S, created to allow for the promotion of teachers, but keeping them in the classroom, 'moving up, but not moving out', as one research interview put it.

The study explores a number of aspects of the ETP/S, particularly factors involved in its production and views of its implementation or enactment. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a range of 'policy actors', including policy makers, excellent teachers, excellent principals and a Teachers' Union (TU) representative, who have all been directly involved in the development and enactment of the ETP/S. Data were also collected through analysis of relevant documents, including the Tenth Malaysia Development Plan (10MP) (2010). These documents are analysed as part of the policy ecology framework to provide some understanding of the complex and multilayered contexts in which the ETP/S has emerged. There were also some issues in data collection connected to my dual insider/outsider status as a senior Malaysian public servant on leave and as a fulltime doctoral student. The contractual conditions of the employment of Malaysian public servants also impacted on research interviews, particularly in relation to transcription of recorded interviews, and potentially also impact on policy evaluations done by the government.

The study also used the Foucauldian concept of 'governmentality' to show how the lack of clear role definition for excellent teachers at the school level saw them putting a lot of work pressure on themselves in a self-governing or governmental way. Issues to do with how to evaluate applicants, select them and appoint them were also raised, particularly as the quota of excellent teachers was increased and selection moved out of the Ministry to the school level. For many of the research respondents, this raised concerns regarding whether those selected at school level were really 'excellent'.

The study found that the formulation of the ETP/S had multiple motivations, comprising pressures from the profession concerning slow promotion rates and limited career paths, and related political pressure from the TU. The broader meta-goals of the Tenth Malaysia Plan (10MP) also provide part of the ecology today of the ETP/S. While the quota for excellent teachers has been increased, excellent teachers still only constitute less than four percent of all teachers in Malaysia, an indication of significant budgetary implication of higher salaries for teaching as a mass profession. Policy makers in Malaysia are always wary of potential spill-over effects when one scheme of service in the public service gets a new career path. There is concern that this will spill-over into other schemes of service, with budgetary implications. Indeed, the Excellent Teacher category borrowed much of its framing from the specialist doctor category, but without the requirement of an additional qualification. While the empirical focus is on the Malaysian ETP/S, the research will be of interest to researchers and policy makers elsewhere, as teacher quality has become a focus of educational policy around the globe, and is another part of the ecology of ETP/S.

The study also found that 'implementation' is a better descriptor of what happened in practice with the ETP/S, rather than the concept of policy 'enactment'. This is due to the multi-tiered structure and highly centralised Malaysian political and policy contexts, which constitute important elements in the ecology of schooling policy. Any mediation in the policy implementation occurred at various level before reaching teachers at the school site, reflecting a top-down and multi-tiered approach to policy production and implementation. Indeed, the study found that the excellent teachers actually wanted more prescription from the Ministry as to the requirements of their roles in schools. Through this policy ecology study of the ETP/S, it is argued that Malaysia's desire, through rewarding quality teachers with various incentives and packages to stay in the classroom as a promotional path, must be complemented by other policies to 'strengthen' national human capital and global competitiveness, which are central goals of the 10MP. A transition towards informed prescription within policy making and informed professionalism at school level will also be important in moving towards such goals. Further research is also needed to understand the actual relationships between improved career paths for classroom teachers (as with the ETP/S), quality teaching and improved student learning outcomes. As the study demonstrates, these relationships are assumed in the current ETP/S and the distinction between quality teachers and quality teaching is often neglected.

<u>Declaration by author</u>

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my research higher degree candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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Publications during candidature

No publications

Publications included in this thesis

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Contributions by others to the thesis

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Statement of parts of the thesis submitted to qualify for the award of another degree

None

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Table of contents

List of tables

List of figures

List of abbreviations used in the thesis

ACT	Advanced Chartered Teachers
AST	Advanced Skill Teachers
CT	Chartered Teachers
DEO	District Education Office
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
EPs	Excellent Principals
ETs	Excellent Teachers
ETP/S	Excellent Teachers Program/Scheme
GTP	Government Transformation Program
MOE	Ministry of Education
NBCT	National Board for Certified Teachers
NBPTS	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
NEM	New Economic Model
NRS	New Remuneration System
PSD	Public Service Department
SPM	Senior Policy Makers
SEO	State Education Office
TU	Representative of Teachers' Union
10MP	Tenth Malaysia Development Plan

CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   Introduction

Teachers constitute one of the largest professional occupations in any nation. There are 417,749 school teachers in Malaysia (MOE, 2013). This figure can be compared with that in Australia, where there are approximately 290,854 school teachers, most employed on a full time basis (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). In Malaysia, the education sector is the largest in terms of total public service workforce, constituting 36 per cent of 1.27 million public servants, followed by health with 12 per cent (Laporan tahunan, 2009; Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2009, p. 43). These percentages illustrate that teaching is a mass profession. It is this characteristic, along with other complex features of the teaching profession, which form the basis of a range of interrelated policy issues surrounding teachers' salaries, career paths, and promotional tracks, which create difficulties for governments. It needs to be acknowledged that teachers' salaries constitute a large proportion of government education budgets. Related to the issue of developing strong career pathways and salary structures is the question of how to retain high performing teacher candidates in the profession. Retention here can be read in two ways: first, remaining in the profession and second, remaining in the classroom. The latter aspect of retention is important as promotional opportunities for teachers have generally seen them moving out of classrooms into administrative, managerial and leadership roles.

This thesis outlines research conducted in Malaysia regarding changes to career pathways for the mass profession of teaching through a policy analysis that explores the Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme (hereafter referred to as ETP/S). The ETP/S was developed as a way of providing a career path for outstanding teachers that enabled them to stay in the classroom. As will be shown, a high salary was also attached to those promoted under this scheme. This research suggests that this salary along with the definition of 'excellent' ensured that ETs s were under pressure to contribute in ways beyond their classroom work, for example to policy and curriculum development and to the professional development of other teachers. While the research will be of interest to researchers and policy makers in Malaysia, it will also be of interest to other researchers and policy makers in other nations, looking to develop more productive teacher career path policies. There are specific Malaysian features to the education policy setting; for example, retaining teachers in the profession is not the issue it is

in nations such as Australia, the UK and the US. However, allowing for the promotion of excellent teachers to stay in the classroom is a policy issue in most systems around the globe.

Over recent years, education policy in most nations has been framed by a human capital approach that sees the quality and quantity of school graduates as important to the economic and global competitiveness of national economies (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). These concerns are also linked to research that recognises that teachers and their classroom practices are central to enhancing student learning and thus ensuring quality schooling and quality learning outcomes (Hayes, Mills, Christie and Lingard, 2006; Hattie, 2009). Drawing on his current research, Yeah (2010) states that many researchers have concluded that teacher quality is perhaps the most important in-school factor predicting and 'determining' student achievement (See also, Ferguson, 1998; Goldhaber, Brewer, and Anderson, 1999; Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin, 2004; Hattie, 2009). To illustrate this point, Hanushek (1992) found that high-quality teachers can increase student learning by an entire grade level equivalent beyond the amount contributed by a low-quality teacher. At the same time, teachers' subject knowledge (Leigh and Mead, 2005), skills, and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) also contribute to quality teaching and thus to the enhancement of student learning.

There is complexity surrounding this research into student achievement in that teachers and their knowledge and practices are not the only factors contributing to student learning. Factors related to students' home environments and societal structures are also very important (Hayes et al., 2006; Hattie, 2009). Education policy often neglects this reality and most often the focus is solely on teachers, ignoring the significance of socio-economic contexts, locational effects (e.g. urban versus rural contexts), and young people's experiences in the home and community and their socio-economic backgrounds (McEwan,1999). While such factors are often marginalised in policy statements, it is the in-school factors, particularly teacher quality, that offer the strongest potential policy levers for Education Departments to affect student learning outcomes (OECD, 2005). In this assumption, though, there is often an implicit denial in policy of other salient contributing factors such as context in relation to student learning outcomes. OECD (2013a) research using PISA data demonstrates quite clearly that funding targeted on the most disadvantaged students and schools is also a necessary policy complement to good teaching. The addressing of broader social inequalities is also important (OECD, 2013a, p. 44). Nevertheless, education policies around the globe have focused on ways to improve teacher and teaching quality as a way to improve student

learning outcomes. The distinction between teacher quality and teaching quality is also an important one here.

Over the last decade or so, the policy focus in education on teachers and teaching quality has been global and we know today that there is a great deal of policy borrowing and travelling of policy ideas across nations (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). The 2009 OECD report, *Evaluating and Rewarding Quality Teachers,* for example, indicates that effective evaluation systems and appropriate rewards help motivate and retain teachers in the profession. The OECD (2013b) has continued this approach with its recent, *Teachers for the 21st Century: Using evaluation to improve teaching*. These and other OECD reports (2005, 2009), suggest that clear and developmental career stages, good compensation schemes and salary systems not only help in attracting teachers, but also in retaining them in the profession and in the classroom. However, it should be noted that the issue of retention operates differently from one country to another. As of 2009, the Malaysian the retention rates or the number of people leaving teaching for various reasons was around 3553 out of the total population of approximately 400,000 teachers (Laporan tahunan, 2009; Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2009). By comparison in Australia and the USA, retention trends are quite different, with teacher retention becoming a significant policy issue in both nations, particularly for younger teachers in their early years of teaching. In Malaysia, however, this is currently not a significant policy issue. Rather, Malaysia faces issues of developing a totally graduate teaching profession and attracting quality graduates into the profession. Retaining quality teachers in classroom practice is a significant issue in Malaysia, as in most countries, and one that is addressed by the ETP/S. Most often in most schooling systems, teacher promotion means moving out of the classroom into leadership and management positions. ETP/S addresses this policy issue, which was expressed by one research interviewee as 'moving up, but not moving out'. It is that feature of the policy that will be of interest to researchers and policy makers around the globe.

1.2   Purpose and context of the study

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of the ETP/S. It should be noted here that there is limited research in Malaysia on teacher career paths and specifically on the ETP/S. This will also be demonstrated in the literature review chapter. Thus this research will fill a significant gap in the current literature. I chose this research topic because of the original and idiosyncratic nature of the ETP/S in the Malaysian and global education policy contexts.

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of the ETP/S. The ETP/S is a program introduced to promote quality teachers in Malaysia, approved by Cabinet in 1994 and developed and extended in various ways since then. There have been various iterations since its instigation with increases in quotas, and the scope of the program, including application to the leadership level, the administrative level in the Ministry and other institutions under MOE. ETP/S's initial purpose was to keep quality teachers in the classroom, but similar career path models have been extended to other schemes of service within education.

While the quotas have been increased over time, ETs still only constitute approximately 3.8 per cent of the teaching profession in Malaysia. Thus, while this study focuses on the ETP/S, it is viewed in this research as only one strategy for improving the quality of the teaching profession (and teaching) in Malaysia.

The research reported in this thesis is a policy study utilising a policy ecology framework (Weaver-Hightower, 2008), seeking to understand the policy representations and aspirations in relation to ETP/S as stated in various contemporary policy texts and practices and as articulated by relevant policy makers, principals, teachers and a Teacher Union representative in Malaysia. The policy ecology approach also pays attention to the multiple and competing factors, as well as contexts, policy and others that contribute to the development and evolution of policies over time.

As stated above, the analysis of the data in this study will utilise the ecological policy analysis approach. According to Weaver-Hightower (2008, p. 155), a policy ecology involves not only the policy text, but texts and discourses that contribute to its context. These may include historical, social, geographical, sociological, economic and political discourses surrounding the issues addressed within the policy. As such, policy ecology locates the policy text and related policy production and implementation or enactment processes in a broader context than traditional studies of policy trajectories (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, p. 59). More specifically, this study focuses on the production of the policy text, its history, and issues of the context surrounding its production. The study also considers the implementation or enactment of the ETP/S at the school level, which differs from ETs in the Ministry of Education (MOE), as well as in other institutions under the MOE. This research is further informed by considerations of the policy implementation/enactment distinction outlined in Ball, Maguire and Braun's work (2012). Ball and colleagues' research argues that the idea of

policy enactment acknowledges the mediating role in policy implementation of those responsible for carrying out the policy in practice. Specifically, they demonstrate how school contexts are important in mediating policy enactment. Utilising this distinction, evaluations of the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level are then analysed in this research. These matters of policy production, implementation/enactment and evaluations are considered respectively in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 and form the empirical core of the research.

1.3   Rationale of the study

The rationale for this study is to explore teacher career path policy in the contemporary Malaysian education policy setting and to understand how career track progression is important in attracting and retaining good teachers in the profession and particularly in the classroom to produce good schooling outcomes. In addition, this study also explores the dynamic and complex web or ecology of contextual factors, relationships, behaviour, rules, system and processes that influence governments to formulate appropriate policy and invest in teachers' career advancement. Specifically, the focus will be on the ETP/S that seeks to reward quality teachers who have an impact on student learning outcomes. ETs sit at the peak of the teacher career path in Malaysia, yet as already noted, such ETs constitute a very small percentage of total teacher numbers in Malaysia. Research of this policy is vital, however, because it offers a unique approach to developing a career path that seeks to keep high quality teachers in the classroom. It is a policy that will be of interest to policy makers in other national systems because of its character and the high level salaries attached.

These explorations are both conceptualised and contextualised in relation to the objectives of a number of ecologically connected policies, including the *Tenth Malaysia Plan* (hereafter referred to as 10MP) that aims to produce a first world talent base for the nation. This plan is an important meta-policy context of the ETP/S and in the ecology surrounding the policy.

Given this rationale and context, this research explores:

1) The development, characteristics and aspirations of contemporary education policy in Malaysia, especially in relation to teacher career paths/career tracks policy, specifically the ETP/S;
2) Policy makers' and ETs' views on existing teacher career path policies including the ETP/S, its intent, enactment and efficacy;

3) Current teacher career path policies, including the ETP/S in Malaysia, providing an evaluative account based on the previous two aims, and recommendations for possible ways forward for policy.

As argued throughout this thesis, teaching is a mass profession with enormous implications for government budgetary interests with respect to teacher salaries and career paths. Rewarding teachers financially through a good model for career paths requires a significant amount of government funding. However, whether such career paths have, to date, produced quality teaching and improved learning outcomes is questionable and is a topic that has not been thoroughly researched. Another important issue here relates to the numbers of ETs. Clearly this career path policy needs to be complemented by a range of other policies in relation to teachers and their work. In respect of the 10MP, ETP/S and its goals and aspirations, the ETP/S will need to be accompanied by other developments in teacher career path policy, as ETs represent such a small percentage of all teachers in Malaysia. This is an important and pressing area for research in contemporary Malaysian education policy.

The study might be seen as a possible precursor to subsequent studies that would need to explore the relationships (if any) between career path policy and teacher quality, quality teaching and student outcomes. Such linkages and causations are often implicit in teacher career path policies; they appear to be implicit in the policies surrounding the ETP/S in Malaysia. However, further research is required to determine the extent to which these elements are linked and perhaps have causal relationships. The research reported in this thesis is a first step in that direction. This study has a policy analysis focus, but a range of different approaches may be required to address the question of: if career paths are a key factor in helping teachers produce improved student outcomes, how do career path policies contribute to these desired outcomes?

The importance of human capital development is a central point in the national agenda in Malaysia. Education policies link quality teachers with student learning outcomes to achieve the aspired vision for the country as developed nation (see Chapter 2). Career paths are selected as the focus of this study due to the evidence that career ladders are able to recognise, develop and reward quality teachers in a school system. The research will allow for recommendations on appropriate teacher career paths, which potentially can ensure greater job satisfaction for teachers and are linked to enhancing student learning outcomes,

and consequently assisting Malaysia in its journey towards becoming a developed nation. The latter is a central goal of the 10MP. The research is, however, wary of overstating the role of teacher career paths in achieving this policy goal and would argue for an ensemble of complementary policies as necessary to achieving improved outcomes from schools.

There is a lack of empirical research on career paths for teachers and especially on ETs policy in Malaysia (Ibrahim, Aziz and Nambia, 2013). In my review of literature, I have identified various approaches and methods used in developed countries such as the USA, Australia, and the Republic of Korea, stressing the importance of quality teaching for producing good student outcomes (OECD, 2009). There is, however, limited research considering the links between these factors (Goldhaber, 2004; Hanushek and Rivkin, 2004; Hattie, 1999, 2009; Ingvarson, Meiers,and Beavis, 2005), which are considered as policy variables by this study, and there is no research explicitly on the topic of the role of teacher career path policies in Malaysia. Thus this thesis will address a gap in empirical evidence by exploring the ecology of a specific teacher career path policy in Malaysia geared to promoting and keeping ETs in the classroom. This provides a backdrop for subsequent research.

While the previous discussion outlines the academic rationale for this thesis research, there is also a personal rationale associated with my research topic choice. First, I have a deep interest in policy formulation and organisational development in government agencies, based on my role as a public servant and my current and past experiences as the principal assistant director in the Public Service Department of Malaysia and assistant secretary and principal assistant secretary at the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. I thus wanted to better understand policy processes in education. The policy ecology approach of this research contributes to better understanding of policy making in Malaysian education. Secondly, this research will contribute to an understanding of the importance of career tracks for teachers, an area of research where there is currently limited empirical data, both generally, and specifically in the Malaysian context. The research will contribute to the education policy literature on teacher career paths, as well as assisting in policy development in Malaysia. Thus the research topic is of interest to me as both a policy maker and as a researcher, and will also be of interest to other researchers and policy makers in Malaysia. I will also comment below on how my researcher 'positionality' (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010) framed and affected data collection for the study.

1.4   Dimensions of the study

This study explores various actors' perceptions of the ETP/S and the processes of policy implementation/enactment at the school level. Deverson and Kennedy (2004) state that, "perception is an interpretation or impression based on one's understanding of something" (p. 840). In this regard then, it was important to explore how the research respondents interpreted the production of the policy texts of the ETP/S, the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level and the policy's relationship with the 10MP (2010-2015) as reflected by their own understandings. Mantilla (2001) also used an interpretive approach to examine how teachers perceived their role in the formation and approbation of new educational policies.

In order to gain an understanding of the production of the policy texts of the ETP/S at the school level and the system level, I interviewed participants from four main groups: the Excellent Teachers (ETs), the Excellent Principal (EP), the Senior Policy Maker (SPM), and a representative of the Teachers' Union (TU). In order to find out how they interpret and understand the ETP/S, I used a semi-structured approach to these interviews, conversations with a purpose, as it were.

While the first dimension of the study focused on perceptions of policy production, the second dimension focuses upon the perceptions of respondents of the implementation/ enactment of the ETP/S at the school level. This research explored how the ETs and EPs at the school level interpreted the main challenges that ETs faced as a result of the implementation/enactment of this ETP/S. Additionally, the perceptions from the SPM were also taken into account to explore their understandings of the difficulties faced by the ETs at the school level.

The focus of the third dimension is an evaluation of the policy, including evaluations of implementation/enactment at the school level by stakeholders. Deverson and Kennedy (2004) suggest that to 'define' is to describe or explain the scope of the roles of the stakeholders, while 'enact' is to perform or put into practice. Additionally, this dimension is focused on how the ETs and EPs at the school levels and SPM at the MOE describe their roles, and how they perform and understand the objectives of ETP/S and the implied links with teacher quality and enhancing students' learning outcomes. This dimension will also consider the implementation/enactment distinction referred to earlier and covered in the work of Ball and colleagues (2012).

1.5   Research questions and data collection

At its broadest, this research focuses on education policy in Malaysia since the introduction of the first remuneration system in the public service for teachers that was motivated by the production of better (more quality and greater quantity) human capital development. The major focus of this policy ecology is to understand the challenges associated with teacher career path policies. The study pays particular attention to the dimensions of policy development, tensions in policy production and the issues of implementation/enactment and their significance in the production of education policy for a mass profession. The ecological framework used in this study highlights the scope of influences on the development, implementation/enactment and success or otherwise of an individual policy. This framework provides a researcher with an opportunity to unravel the multiple strands of 'causation' and influence in the production and implementation of ETP/S. The research focus, research questions and methods of data collection are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Research foci, research questions and data collection

Research focus	Research question	Data collection
1. **Explore the development, characteristics and aspirations of contemporary education policy in Malaysia, especially in relation to teacher career paths/career tracks policy, specifically the Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme (ETP/S).**	1.1 What are the implications in the 10MP for teacher career path policy and educational goals? 1.2 When and why was the current teacher career path policy/career tracks policy developed in Malaysia (e.g.: 10th Malaysia Development Plan), 1.3 What are the characteristics of this career path policy? 1.4 What does this policy imply regarding the relationship between teacher quality and teaching quality?	• Document analysis of the relevant publicly available documents (Malaysia Plan, Ministries' Documents, Budget reports, government minutes, reports) • Interviews: with Policy makers, Teachers, and administrators in MOE Semi-structured interviews with senior government officers 5 people.

2.	Explore policy makers' and Excellent Teachers' views on existing teacher career path policy including the Excellent Teacher policy, its intent and efficacy.	2.1 What are the main purposes and goals of creating teacher career path policy? 2.2 What do policy makers and Excellent Teachers hope the outcomes from this policy will be? 2.3 How do policy makers and Excellent Teachers view teacher and teaching quality in relation to this policy? 2.4 Do they see this policy is having efficacy? Has it achieved its goals?	• Interviews with Policy Makers in the Human Resource Departments, Senior Government Officers, Public Service Department • Semi- structured interviews with senior government officers 5 people and 5 Excellent Teachers in MOE, school and Institute of Teachers College
3.	Explore whether career path policy contributes to attracting quality teachers to the profession in Malaysia.	3.1 Do policy makers think teacher career path policies contribute to attracting quality teachers to the profession in Malaysia?	• Semi- structured interviews: Policy makers in Teacher Division in Ministries) 5 peoples • Semi-structured interviews with 5 Excellent Teachers
4.	Based on the above, provide an evaluate account of current teacher career path policy including the Excellent Teacher policy in Malaysia and make recommendations for possible ways forward.	4.1 What do the policy makers see as the impact of this existing policy and how do they evaluate it? 4.2 What are the recommendations for changes policy to improve teacher quality	• EPU data (Teacher and Teaching Quality and Student outcomes: based on 4 main dimensions (vision and mission; organizational management; educational program management and pupil accomplishment)

1.6 Focusing the research

Given the importance of teacher quality, it is inevitable that education systems are increasingly seeking to assess teachers' work, and in some instances link their performance to differentiated pay. In the context of a globalised world and globalised economies, most nations understand the necessity of high quality human capital that is produced through education, including schooling, as central to their future economic prosperity. This is the case in Malaysia as indicated in the 10MP (2010) (see section 2.8.3 in Chapter 2).

There are many issues concerning the motivation for structuring the career paths of teachers in policy. Often, the primary question relates to the speed with which teachers are promoted or can be promoted. This raises issues of merit versus seniority. Other questions relate to how policy makers can help teachers improve their motivation to teach students well and produce good results. Can systemic policy enable conditions for achieving such policy goals? Additionally, questions are raised regarding whose interests should be served by well-structured teacher career paths. Clearly, the policy answers would suggest multiple interests:

students, teachers, families and those of the government and nation. In attempting to assuage these multiple interests, policy usually becomes a compromise. As this research will demonstrate, the ETP/S is a policy that has been developed through such compromises.

There are numerous issues to be explored with respect to career path policy for teachers, which have become a pressing global policy issue in education. First, given teaching is a mass profession, huge expenditure is necessary to fund teacher salaries adequately and to develop attractive career paths for teachers. Second, the existence of such career paths should attract and retain quality teachers in the system and classroom. Finally, through extrinsic rewards, combined with the intrinsic rewards, such as job satisfaction that many teachers indicate as central to their work (Lortie, 1975), the school system tends to expect improved quality teaching and also, related, improved student learning outcomes. This could be seen in policy terms as a 'win-win' situation. It is the complexity of the relationships between investment in schooling, the provision of productive career path for teachers, and quality teachers and quality teaching and improved student learning outcomes that requires research to enhance our understandings. There is the complexity here in the relationship between quality teachers and quality teaching as well; the former referring to the characteristics and qualifications of individuals, the latter referring to practices such as pedagogies and classroom assessment practices, both formative and summative. As suggested earlier, policy often assumes causal relationships (without a research base) between these policy variables.

As a policy issue, the notion of managing teachers as well as taking care of their welfare is a complex issue. As part of the government service, the teaching sector requires a lot of government funding, even just considering the first stage of selecting or recruiting new teachers for the system, including a series of interviews and the management of a large number of candidates in all states in Malaysia, is both costly and time consuming. The allocation of Ministry budget for this recruitment was on the agenda in the yearly plan in the treasury of Malaysia. The assumption was that the quality of teachers was largely determined by the quality of recruitment by the Ministry. Thus, this required a great effort from various government agencies, as well as the Public Service Department (PSD) and the Treasury. The quality of teacher education candidates has also become a policy issue around the globe. This is the question of who enters the profession.

Attractive compensation schemes with good promotional tracks for teachers are important ingredients for retaining good quality teachers within the system, particularly in classrooms. Petra, Jamil and Mohamed (2012) studied teachers' professional development in Malaysia and suggested that allowances and incentives are significant factors in retaining high quality teachers, recognising different teaching conditions and rewarding excellence. For example, there are alarming anecdotes of the turnover of teachers with a Doctor of Philosophy in the Malaysian schooling system, who switched their interest to the university lecturer positions because of the better career path and promotional opportunities, when compared with those in the Ministry of Education, where there were limited opportunities.

1.7   The research and various policy issues

The research reported in this thesis is exploratory in some ways and focuses on the gaps or absences identified in the research literature. The study seeks to provide recommendations for improvement by exploring teacher career path policy in Malaysia. The policy issues surrounding teacher career path policy can be divided into three major areas, 1) an issue for policy makers to endorse, 2) an issue of the scale of the teaching profession, and 3) an issue of the implementation/enactment of the programs and policy evaluation.

The promotion of ETs has been a foremost concern of education policy in Malaysia. The state has produced a range of policies and programs that aim to ensure good quality teachers by rewarding them with promotions and other incentives. However, there is still much debate about the efficacy of the ETP/S as an appropriate means to achieving these goals. Petra et al. (2012) researched teacher professional development programs in Malaysia and suggested that the ETP/S was developed to retain teachers in the classroom and recognise their excellent practices. Critics of the program include Hamzah, Mohamad and Ghorbani (2008), who state that the assessment of the ET model in Malaysia needs to be reviewed. Mokhsein, Hussein and Vongalis-Macrow (2009) argue that monetary and non- monetary benefits are particularly important for educators in Malaysia in order to motivate teachers to produce better outcomes at the school level.

Additionally, there are no policy ecology studies of the ETP/S in Malaysia. The government seemed quick to respond to teachers' dissatisfaction regarding seniority-based promotion systems and as a result formulated the ETP/S in 1994. The stated objectives of the ETP/S are to improve the quality of teachers as a way to improve students' learning outcomes and to

offer teacher promotion that allows for teachers to remain in the classroom. As such, the development of this policy addresses teacher desires for improved career path progression and the issue of retaining quality teachers in the classroom. In this study, the ETP/S is located ecologically within meta-policy goals about Malaysia becoming a developed nation.

1.7.1 Context of the study

This study was influenced by a number of contexts or ecology, including my personal and professional interests. Additionally, other contexts have contributed to and influenced the research framework and focus on Malaysian education policy. This section focuses on my personal and professional contexts that developed my interest in doing this research, that is, my 'positionality' (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010) as a researcher. The conceptual and methodological contexts that informed the research framework are also discussed in this section.

1.7.2 Personal context: Policy maker background and researcher positionality

There are two contexts that influenced my interest and ideas in relation to this research about teacher career paths and professional considerations; first, my position as a policy maker in the Ministry of Education and my first-hand knowledge of dealing directly with the formulation of policy; and secondly, my interest in this research topic grounded in my engagement with the issues being investigated, both professionally and academically. This second position refers to me as a doctoral researcher.

1.7.2.1 Policy maker background

In discussing the positionality dimension of this research (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010), it should be noted that this is interrelated with my background, experiences, contexts, ideas and values. Thus, the starting point for me in discussing the dilemma of positionality is the consideration of the extent to which a policy maker's background is likely to be viewed as an advantage or a disadvantage that restricts the chosen area of study. Being a public servant at a senior level in the contexts of policy makers, there is less complexity in locating my position for engaging and dealing with other top policy makers (policy elites) in this research. However, my interest is to see this issue in broader contexts across the country. In other words, my aspiration is to see this issue beyond that of the formulated career path program. I note here that policy makers in central agencies usually give most attention to the production of policy and tend to

neglect implementation issues. I was also concerned in this study with implementation and evaluation issues. I have focused on developing an analytical, critically and rationally outlined argument concerning the issues of teacher quality as an expressed goal of Malaysian education policies. To this end, I was reflexive about the issues throughout the research process and sensitive to the potential impact of my own positioning on data collection and analysis.

I was aware that my background as a senior policy maker in the Ministry of Education in Malaysia offered good opportunities for access to interviews with SPMs in respect of the ETP/S and also at the same time potentially narrowed my view of the policy. As a result, I have undertaken an academic policy analysis, analysis *of* policy, rather than analysis *for* policy (Gordon et al., 1977). I would note here that my Ministry colleagues pointed out when I was interviewing them for this study that I was now a doctoral student not a senior public servant and thus had different access privileges. These colleagues were involved in analysis *for* policy, as I had been in my role as a senior public servant.

Apart from my background as a policy maker and my interest in issues of policy making, my initial interest in a policy study related to this career path policy derived from my involvement in formulating the organisational structure in the Ministry of Education for more than eight years. These experiences contributed to developing a sense and strong interest in the impact of the programs implemented by the Malaysian government. This began when I was directly involved in organisational development in the MOE. My experience in handling the implementation of the additional posts, and restructuring and streamlining structures at various level of the MOE indicated that the issue of additional posts through various career path programs needed to be addressed. For both my personal and professional contexts, this developed a sense that policy makers in such positions were important and significant in influencing policy processes and structures in the Malaysian education system. However, this experience also raised for me the important issue of policy implementation. From working in the Ministry, it became very apparent to me that more effort was put into policy production than implementation and that what actually ultimately mattered was implementation.

Observations of contemporary Malaysian public service and public discourses on the delivery system in education and in relation to teacher quality also provided some indication that the state has to consider various views and opinions about the career development of teachers in

order to improve quality and teaching quality. There also very much needed to be a focus on both the implementation/enactment and evaluation of such policies in the Malaysian education context. In other words, the government always needs to take into account the various interests of teachers, including teacher unions and the carrier of the program specifically the ETP/S, which significantly related to quality teachers in Malaysia. Thus policy most often seeks to meet and assuage competing interests. However, policy decisions were sometimes influenced by the political element within the Ministry. At this point, I agree with Apple's (1979) suggestion that "education is political, so those people who wish to make education non-political are failing to understand that the purpose and procedures of education reflect what people want" (p. 15). This was the experience I had working at the MOE. Therefore, I decided to look into the teacher career path policy, particularly the ETP/S within the Malaysian education policy, while at the same time recognising the limitation of the scope of government finances to fulfil the needs of the mass teaching profession. As Bourdieu (1999) suggests, by acknowledging the potential significance of my role in the public service and in public policy, my study moves beyond a state of 'epistemological innocence' (see discussion later in Chapter 4 - the methodology chapter) in accepting the significance of my positionality to the research reported. I consider this concept next.

1.7.2.2 *Researcher positionality*

As a researcher, I am inseparable from the culture of academe. As outlined in the previous section, my interest for this study was drawn from my background in policy making at the MOE in Malaysia. Additionally, I sought to undertake research based on a social scientific approach when exploring these issues related to teacher career path policy. The topic was drawn from my experiences and perspectives as a policy maker and researcher with direct and indirect dealings with the topic of the research.

As a researcher who is interested in the area of education policy and from the literature review concerning education policy in Malaysia, I considered that insufficient attention was being paid to the program being implemented, given that the broadest goal of the policy was to produce a first-world talent worker, as stated in the 10MP (see Chapter 2). My previous experiences and observations at the MOE suggested there were no studies in this area, and given that the ETP/S program was launched in 1993 and approved by Cabinet in 1994, it has been over 16 years since implementation and still there has not been a systematic study to identify the various levels of impact of the program. This raises a number of questions that

influenced me to look at the macro-level in the education arena, which located the focus of this doctoral research on education policies in relation to aspects of teacher and teaching quality. This is why I adopted a policy ecology framework. Unlike some public service officers in the MOE, I do not come from a teaching background, rather my academic qualifications are in political science. My interest was developed as I tried to cultivate my knowledge of the implementation and successes of the programs through research in the field of education by reviewing the policy initiatives, programs or projects related to education that were produced by the MOE. Further, I wanted to identify the extent to which the policies have been implemented and to estimate their success in fulfilling the needs and the interest of teachers and the system. My sense was that the Ministry was weakest in respect of both policy implementation issues and evaluations of policy that might feed iteratively into rearticulation of the policy.

Studies about Malaysian education policy and the career paths of teachers are limited, both in number and in scope. There are a few studies, and these focus more on teacher job satisfaction and what the government can do to further enhance teachers' career development. The notion that good quality teachers can be developed through government investment in teacher career paths needs further investigation and exploration. To some extent my public service colleagues have helped frame the findings and conclusions drawn from this research. On the other hand, an aspiration underpinning this research was to adopt a macro or inclusive viewpoint, working across the policy makers, policy carriers and teachers who were impacted by the program. Hence in this research, I take a meta-position across various groups of policy makers, teacher administrators and ETs in Malaysia as a means of producing an analytical, critical, and rational perspective concerning the issues of career path for teachers aimed at achieving quality teacher and quality teaching and enhancing student achievement.

In the methodology chapter, I also pursue another matter to do with my 'positionality'. As a doctoral student, I was no longer a senior Ministry public servant. In my research interviews and contact with the Ministry, my colleagues there reminded me that I was no longer 'one of them', but rather now a doctoral student. This changed the nature of my access and relationship with them. However, as a public servant I was still constrained by agreements that all Malaysian graduate professional public servants, especially the Administrative and Diplomatic Officers, must sign with the government, about not divulging the workings of government. There were tensions here for this research around these matters in data

collection. This was manifest in the issue of recording, but particularly transcription, of research interviews as well. These matters are traversed in more detail in the methodology chapter.

1.7.3 Theoretical context: Critical Policy Sociology

This is a policy study that involves, in the most basic sense, the systematic collection and presentation of information (Ritchie and Spencer, 2002). A useful definition of policy states that it can be seen as the 'authoritative allocation of values', that gives emphases to political authority, allocation or implementation processes and the values or ideology underpinning a particular policy (Easton, 1953; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have argued that each element of this definition has been challenged to some extent by the multiple processes of globalization. Policy research is a type of research that can provide communities and decision-makers with useful recommendations and possible actions for resolving fundamental problems that policy seeks to address (Majchrzak, 1984). Research *for* policy provides policy-makers with pragmatic, action-oriented recommendations for addressing an issue, question, or policy problem (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). A policy research effort begins with a social issue or question that evolves through a research process, whereby alternative policy actions for dealing with the problem are developed (Lingard and Ali, 2009). For example, my study seeks to understand the link between research and the development of teacher career path policy and communicate alternatives to/for policy makers.

The theoretical position for this research was underpinned by sociological and critical concerns of policy research. The theoretical position is derived from the discipline of sociology, which is related to policy analysis, usually referred as 'policy sociology' and located in the social science tradition, and historically informed by qualitative and illuminative techniques (Ozga, 1987, p. 144). This policy sociology perspective was used to highlight the ideologies and processes of policy production and in relation to the challenges in the Malaysian education system. This approach can be contrasted with other policy research traditions which are largely "technocratic and managerialist in orientation and concerned mainly with the implementation questions" (Lingard, 1993). What is important in a policy sociology research perspective is the recognition that "policy is texts and action, work and deeds; it is what is enacted as well as what is intended" (Ball, 1994, p. 10), which recognises the competing interests involved in the practices of producing policy, as well as focusing on the language of the actual policy text, and what is actually enacted. This study

takes a further step by also analysing the views of those people who have first-hand experience of the policy regarding the impact that the policy has had on their work.

Within policy sociology, the study utilises what Weaver-Hightower (2008) calls a 'policy ecology' as a frame for analysing the ETP/S. This approach locates the analysis of policy texts and their effects in broader political and social contexts and is evident in Chapters 2 and 3, for example, when I outline the multiple policies that framed the development of the ETP/S and constituted its context.

Governments are also recognising the important role that research can play in policy development (Levin, 1998). Here policy practices are strongly aligned with policy analysis. Similarly, Jamil (2010) stresses the need for using the policy sociology in his study focused on issues in Malaysian educational policy regarding ethnicity. Harvey (1990), cited in Jamil (2010), stated that this alignment positions the investigation of policy as cutting through the surface appearances to provide a more in-depth understanding of policy. Within such an endeavour of moving beyond the surface, the intention is to contribute towards the betterment of the policy situation and to identify those elements which have the potential to change things (Troyna, 1994) by conceptually engendering cognisance and understanding of the issues being studied.

Although there is no extensive research in the area of education policy in Malaysia, it is commonly considered that most of the research which is related to policy in education has adopted the technocratic and managerialist perspective. Policy makers' views on policy research usually refer to what is best to apply in informing decisions - the technicist or rational paradigm in policy research. My study is utilising research *of* policy rather than research *for* policy (Gordon et al., 1977), as it adopts an approach that utilises greater criticality than is usually the case with research *for* policy. However, in making recommendations for possible change in the final chapter of the thesis, I move tentatively towards a research *for* policy approach. Here I recognise that the research *for/of* policy distinction is perhaps better thought of as existing on as continuum rather than as a simple binary (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010).

1.7.4 Methodological context: Approach to policy research

Since independence in 1957, Malaysia has instituted a series of development programs and innovations in the education system geared towards the progression of policy research in various institutions, including universities and the Ministry of Education. However, a common practice in policy research in Malaysia is the appreciation of the managerial perspective inclined to the demands of policy makers. Here the researcher's position as a policy maker sees the research problems constructed by the policy makers. This was research *for* policy, not research *of* policy, with topic and intellectual resources for the researcher 'determined' by the state. However, my focus, as indicated earlier, is a research *of* policy stance. I will take up a research *for* policy stance briefly in the concluding chapter, when I consider some policy recommendations that flow from the data analysis provided in my research of the ETP/S.

My data collection approach was also grounded in the belief that policy research should not be limited to a single methodological framework. In contrast with pragmatic, positivistic, managerialistic and bureaucratic perspectives on policy research, I locate the research represented in this thesis in a methodological context that will enable illumination and development of meaning and understanding of the issues being investigated. In this way, I have attempted to ensure that the methodology is suitable to answer the research questions, complementary to the theoretical concepts which underpinned the research, and in line with the desire to produce to produce in-depth knowledge about the research topic. Put simply, my research of the ETP/S used a policy ecology framework to research the production, implementation and evaluation of this policy and utilised a methodology in line with critical policy sociology, namely research interviews and document analysis.

1.8 The significance of the study

This research is a critical study of education policy in Malaysia. It is anticipated that the research will be significant in providing key insights and underpinning elements regarding the issue of teacher career path policy and teacher quality in Malaysian education policy. Potentially it can help to promote new knowledge and information that could meaningfully contribute to informing the policy debate and also provide useful insights for improving education policy and achieving quality teaching in Malaysia.

The critical point of view employed in this research through policy analysis focusing on previous Malaysia Plans, will provide new insights regarding career path policies for teachers. The analysis and the interpretation of education policies and the challenges faced by the mass profession will contribute to knowledge and understanding of the role and the development of education in assisting governments to formulate policy environments for quality teachers in the system.

The views of Malaysian policy makers and bureaucrats will be examined together with the opinions of the teachers who have been selected to be promoted as ETs and to support and enhance quality teaching in the system. This research will also look at the challenges faced by ETs at the school level. As such, I provide a critical interpretation regarding the career development of the teaching profession. More broadly the analysis of the data from this study will contribute towards clarity in understanding policy making processes and policy enactment in Malaysian education. Major themes of the analysis have been derived from perceptions, views, arguments and opinions amongst the various 'actors' involved directly and indirectly in this study, through a focus on the complex scenarios of the multilayered processes of policy enactment (Ball, 2010).

The intention of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge and understanding which is likely to inform knowledge for policy production in relation to teacher career path policy in Malaysia. The contribution of this thesis is also intended to develop the academic literature about the research topic as well as opening up views on how to handle career development for a mass profession, not only teachers, but for any schemes of service that are under government control.

Ultimately, the aim of this study is to contribute to the improvement of Malaysian policy making particularly in designing or rewarding teachers through promotional tracks. To this end, on completion, this study will be located in the library of the Public Service Department of Malaysia giving the Malaysian government department access to the data.

1.9   The organisation of the chapters

The structure of the thesis is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Organisation of the thesis
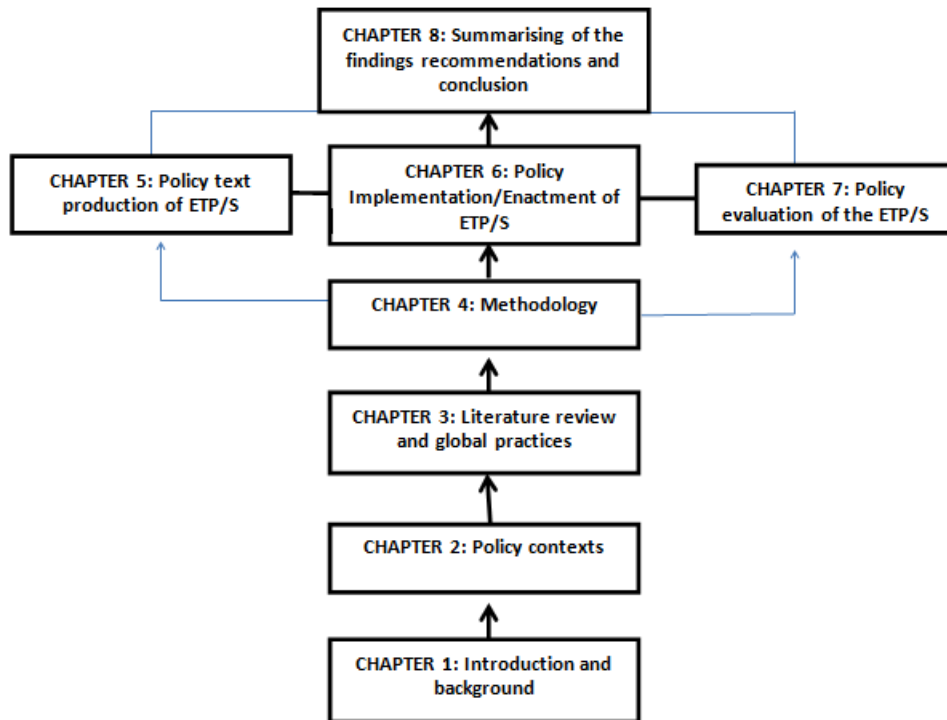
Chapter 1 has provided an introduction to the research work presented in this thesis, outlining the topic of the research and its significance. It described the research background and explained the motivation for pursuing this work. In addition, it provided an overview of both the methodological and theoretical approaches taken. Finally, it introduced the structure of the thesis.

The work of Chapter 2 reflects the diversity of issues involved in exploring teacher career path policy in Malaysia. This chapter describes the Malaysian contexts in which policies that relate to ETP/S have been developed and implemented. The chapter also outlines the geographical context of Malaysia and the extensive literature of rewarding quality teachers and retaining them at the classroom level to enhance student learning outcomes.

Whilst different approaches have demonstrated the significance of teacher career path policy has been further discussed. To this end Chapter 3 discusses the literature around issues of career path progression for teachers, including issues of identifying and rewarding 'quality teachers' through certification and bonuses. The policy ecology approach as developed by

Weaver-Hightower (2008) is also outlined. Chapter 3 also defines the related concepts of master teachers, super teachers, advanced skills teachers and ETs.

Chapter 4 presents methodological issues in greater depth. The chapter begins with a discussion of the rationale of the study and explains the framework used for the collection and interpretation of the interviews and documents examined as data for this study. This chapter notes the ethical procedures that the researcher dealt with. The chapter then describes the research fieldwork processes, such as gaining access to the selected schools, MOE and central agency, negotiating research access and entering the field, applying data collection methods which follow University of Queensland Ethics Committee requirement and identifying the theoretical framework for analysing the data.

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the empirical core of the thesis, I present the findings of this study. Chapter 5 discusses the perceptions of various policy actors, with different backgrounds and positions, concerning the production of the ETP/S policy. Chapter 6 relates the findings regarding the policy actors' perceptions about the implementation/ enactment of the program at the school level. Chapter 7 focuses on the evaluative accounts of the ETP/S at the school level.

In Chapter 8, I draw together the evidence from previous data chapters to compare and integrate it with the policy contexts outlined in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The findings of this ecological policy analysis of the ETP/S are summarised and implications drawn. Finally, the chapter concludes by summarising the main points discussed in the previous chapters, noting the contributions and limitations of the study and providing recommendations for policy makers in Malaysia and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2:   POLICY ECOLOGY

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter I provide an overview of Malaysian policy contexts, which covers details of geographical, demographic and political aspects of the nation and a description of the national education system. My overview also covers the development of policies linked to the establishment of the ETP/S. The contextual features of the Malaysian education system, including policies designed to reward quality teachers at the classroom level, are discussed to understand the complexity of the program. Furthermore, I discuss the debate on aligning the teaching profession with other schemes in the Malaysian public service, as one of the significant points in relation to the context of this study. I highlight how the policy analysis and research framework adopted in the study resides within an ecological framework. At the end of the chapter, the evolution of contemporary Malaysian educational policy is critically examined as central to the contextual backdrop to this study and its policy ecology approach to policy analysis.

2.2   Overview of Malaysia, its people and education structure

The Federation of Malaysia comprises thirteen states and three federal territories of Kuala Lumpur, Labuan, and the newly created administrative capital for the federal government of Malaysia, Putrajaya (Moser, 2010). Malaysia covers approximately 329,758 square kilometres. According to the Malaysian Department of Statistics, the Malaysian population was 28.25 million in 2009 (Laporan Tahunan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2009). Malaysia is a multi-cultural society, with 54.2 per cent of the total population Malays, 25.3 per cent Chinese, 7.5 per cent Indians and 13 per cent of the population made up of other ethnicities and cultures (Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister Department, 2010). By constitutional definition, all Malays are Muslim, of the Shafiei'te school. They, along with the natives of Sabah and Sarawak (eastern Malaysia), are officially classified as Bumiputra (sons of the soil, or indigenes). The 'non-Bumiputra' population consists mainly of people of Chinese and Indian descent. Large scale immigration took place in the nineteenth century with colonisation and modernisation. Malaysians of Chinese descent comprise about a quarter of

the population and have historically played an important role in trade and business. Malaysians of Indian descent are mainly Hindu Tamils from Southern India, speaking Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, and some Hindi. Bahasa Melayu is the official language of the country, but English is widely spoken. It has been suggested that Malaysia has become a melting pot of cultures (Moten, 2011), while each ethnic group attempts to cling to its traditions, religion and language.

The Malaysian government places great emphasis on education. Education is the largest item on the federal budget, with the goal of improving Malaysian economic development through a world class quality education system (10MP, p. 17). Primary education is compulsory for all Malaysian children. Primary and secondary education are free for students aged between seven and 17 in the public school system (which also includes national-type schools teaching in Mandarin and Tamil). Malaysia has a literacy rate of 93 per cent, with over 97 per cent of seven years olds enrolled in the public school system (Quick fact, MOE, 2011).

Malaysia has a bicameral legislative system, adopting a democratic parliamentary system consisting of the *Dewan Negara* (Upper House/House of Senate) and *Dewan Rakyat* (Lower House/House of Representatives). The head of the country is the King or the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, a position which is changed every five years among the Malay Sultanates. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The hierarchy of authority in Malaysia, in accordance with the Federal Constitution, has stipulated there be three branches or administrative components of the Malaysian government, these being the Executive, Judiciary and Legislative branches.

Malaysia has a multi-party system. The Barisan Nasional coalition currently consists of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) who form the government.

2.2.1   The education structure in Malaysia

Like other developing countries, Malaysia has adopted a unified system of education aimed at social and political integration. The Malaysian education system is positioned within the public service. The administration of education is centralised at the Federal level, where major national policies and objectives of education are formulated. This centralised and bureaucratic system ensures that power and control are held by the Ministry of Education,

Malaysia (MOE) and delegated to State Education Offices (SEO). Its administrative structure is organised within a four-tiered hierarchy, namely: national, state, division/district and school.

At the State level, the SEO is directly responsible to the MOE for the implementation of national education policies and the management of all schools and other educational administrative institutions in the State. The SEOs also operate on a four-tier hierarchical model comprising:

(i)   The State Education Office (SEO);

(ii)   The Divisional Education Offices (DEO),(two States in Malaysia Sarawak and Sabah);

(iii)   The District Education Offices (DEO); and

(iv)   The School.

2.3   Development of teacher career path policy in Malaysia

In this section I outline the evolution of approaches to managing teacher career paths through related policies linked to education reforms, particularly around managing teachers' careers in Malaysia. Four main phases are briefly reviewed to outline the development of various policies that have impacted on education. In the later part of this section, I concentrate on the education plans and 10MP which provide some of the context for the ETP/S and this study.

Hussein (2008) commented on the force of political and socio-cultural demands that have underpinned the education reforms in Malaysia. Malakolunthu (2010) suggests that globalisation, liberalisation and the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have forced Malaysia to implement further reforms "to achieve parity with the global development of education" (p. 79). Such reforms require the investment of huge amounts of capital. Hussein (2008) and Mokshein et al. (2009) reported that National education expenditure in 2008 has increased, when compared with the total government expenditure and the Gross National Product (GNP).

Malaysia constantly continues to formulate and implement its various development plans. On 16 January 2006, MOE released its Education Development Master Plan (EDMP) or Blueprint for 2006-2010 (MOE, 2006). More recently, on 6 September 2013, the Deputy

Prime Minister of Malaysia, who is also the Education Minister, launched the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. These educational plans and blueprints are designed to work towards the national goal of achieving developed nation status by the year 2020 through a high quality, internationally competitive system of education.

The ETP/S in Malaysia, the policy that is the focus of this study, was developed and funded by the Federal government as a fast track approach to rewarding a small number of quality teachers at the classroom level, district, state and related divisions under the MOE. It was intended to promote the skills and expertise of ETs in specific subject areas and their ability to enhance student learning outcomes. It provides a highly personalised program of coaching, mentoring and development for teachers. Since its official commencement in 1994, when the Malaysian Cabinet approved the policy, annual recruitment has grown substantially and there are currently around 14,595 ETs (data as 2014), at various grades on the program.

Under the ETP/S, the promotion of teachers was based on certain quotas allocated by the MOE after getting appropriate approval from the Public Service Department and Treasury. The development of the program was spread across two stages of remuneration reform that took place in the Malaysia Civil Services, namely the New Remuneration System (NRS) introduced in 1992 and Malaysia Remuneration System introduced in 2002 (see Appendix 3). The MRS was introduced with the aim of improving the ability of the public service to attract, develop and retain the 'right' calibre of employees. Further goals of this remuneration system included inculcating the culture of continuous learning and developing knowledge workers in the public service. Significantly, the MRS provided a comprehensive remuneration package that was designed to meet the public service requirements in the economy. It consists of four core components: first it introduced improvements to the conditions of service. Secondly, it implemented Key Performance Indicators to assess the competency levels of public service. Thirdly, the MRS involved modifications to the salary structures, allowances and prerequisites for public servants and, finally, the system offered improvements for career development (Utusan, 2005, p. 61).

Thus the reform of the remuneration system impacted on the promotional grades of all public service employees in Malaysia, including teachers. The categories stated in Table 2a show ETP/S involved graduate teachers, who enter the public service at the grade of DG 41 and move on to the levels of DG 44, 48, 52, 54 (see Appendix 4). More than that, under the MRS,

the government has offered new quotas for higher grades such as Premier Post C, which is a grade that is equivalent to Directors in MOE, or State Education Directors. Similarly the benefits of faster promotions are also enjoyed by non-graduate teachers, whose grades were referred to as DG 6 and DG 5 during the NRS. Under the MRS, more promotional grades were made available for non-graduate teachers as part of the ETP/S, who entered at grade DGA29 and could be promoted to grades DGA 32, DGA 34 and DG A 38 (see Appendix 4). The latest development under the MRS was the establishment of a new grade for teachers (DG 42), in response to the integration/combination between the graduate teacher program and non-graduate teacher program.

To illustrate further, Table 2a below shows quotas for the various ET positions as of 2014. Appendix 4 outlines the various promotional tracks for graduate and non-graduate teachers and Appendix 3 explains the various categories (for example, DG3 and DG2) used in this paragraph to outline the increase in ET quotas from 1994 until 2014. In 1994, the original quota of ETs approved under the New Remuneration System was 1000 for promotion from grade DG3 to DG2, hereafter known in the MRS as DG 41 to DG 48 and 1,600 for promotion from grade D6 to DG5 later changed to DG A29 to DG A 32 in the MRS. In 2004, the government established 12 places for ETs of Special Grade C. In 2006, it increased the quota for grades DGA32, DGA34, DG44 and DG52, bringing the total quota of ETs to 9,374. Beginning in 2006, the concept of Special Grade C ETs, which was originally reserved for school teachers, was extended to other institutions such as the institute of teacher education and matriculation colleges. In 2009 the figure showed two significant increased numbers of grade DG48 in which there were both quotas allocated for graduate teachers in secondary and primary school. This is due to the fact that, the graduate teacher program initiated by the government to produce quality teachers in line with an aim to reduce the number of non-graduate teachers at the primary level. The meeting of the Education Service Promotion Board, which was held on 26 March 2009, approved the quota increase of ETs to 14,327 (Table 2b), constituting just under 4 per cent of all teachers in Malaysia.

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Table 2a : Allocation of quotas for Excellent Teachers

Grade	Quota Approved by Year								
	1994	2004	2006	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Special C	-	12	24	36	36	72	72	72	72
DG54	-	-	100	134	166	166	166	166	166
DG52	-	-	250	336	336	336	336	336	336
DG48	1,000 (DG2)	-	1,000	1,345 (SS) 173(PS)	1,345(SS) 173(PS)	1,345(SS) 173(PS) 203(ITE)	1,345(SS) 173(PS) 203(ITE)	1,345(SS) 173(PS) 203(ITE)	1345(SS) 173(PS) 203(ITE)
DG44	-	-	4,000	5,379 (SS) 1,737 (PS)	5,379(SS) 1,737(PS)	5,379(SS) 1,737(PS)	5,379(SS) 1,737(PS)	5379(SS) 1737(PS)	5379(SS) 1737(PS)
DGA38	-	-	-	237	237	237	237	237	237
DGA34	-	-	800	950	950	950	950	950	950
DGA32	1,600 (DG5)	-	3,200	4,000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000
Total	2,600	12	9,374	14,327	14359	14595	14595	14595	14595

Source: (MOE website, data as of 2014)

Table 2b shows the number of ETs expressed as a percentage of all teachers in Malaysia. Here we can see the increase of the percentage of ETs from 2.6% to 4.3% in 2014. While there has thus been a real increase in the number of ETs, they still only constitute a small percentage of overall teacher numbers.

Table 2b: Allocation of quotas for Excellent Teachers and percentage of total population of teachers in Malaysia (Source: MOE data as of 2014)

Year	Total number of quotas allocation for ETs(schools, SEO, DEO, and other institutions under MOE)	Total population of teachers at schools , MOE, SED,DED and institution under MOE	% of ETs
1994	2600	352000	2.65%
2004	2612	353000	2.65%
2006	9374	353292	2.65%
2009	14327	437532	3.27%
2010	14359	436197	3.29%
2011	14595	436581	3.34%
2012	14595	440484	3.31%
2013	14595	452952	3.30%
2014	14595	423927	3.44%

The ETP/S has many similarities with the concept of 'fast streams' within other professions, where individuals with high potential are identified and developed to reach positions of professional influence at an earlier stage in their careers. Accelerated development schemes and programs exist in other organisations in Malaysia, for example in the Ministry of Health.

The ETP/S was one of several MOE reforms intended to modernise the teaching profession. A key driver of this modernising agenda was to realise the full potential of the education system by attracting and motivating teachers and allied staff through the use of incentives,

continuing professional development, and overall support. Developed and funded by the MOE, the ETP/S was designed to reward quality teachers in their careers and importantly, keep them in the classroom. It provided a highly personalised program of coaching, mentoring teachers based on the teachers' areas of expertise.

This study explored the production of the policy texts of the ETP/S as a policy used by the government to produce and retain elite quality teachers in the classroom. The study explores how the ETP/S has been developed and then enacted at the school level, aimed at raising the standard and quality of teachers.

2.3.1   ETP/S and fast track promotion

In considering the ETP/S within the Malaysian contexts, Ibrahim et al. (2013) defined Excellent Teachers as 'master teachers' comprising the *crème de la crème* of the Malaysian teaching profession. Additionally, they indicate that the teaching practices of ETs should be different from the general, non-master teachers. Cheah (2007) defined ETs as having a 'mastery of skills' in their content area, as well as effective classroom management and discipline skills, and possessing consistent and respectable characters. This definition was adopted from Ministry's guidelines published in 2007, which states that an applicant must:

- have the right personality;
- possess knowledge and skills;
- be able to expand the learning outcomes of students (work culture);
- possess excellent communication skills;
- exhibit potential (visionary, proactive with initiative); and
- be able to contribute to the nation's development in the field of education (Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher MOE, 2007).

Teachers who are interested in applying for this scheme must satisfy several technical requirements that include an excellent prior service record teaching in their area of expertise and being sanctioned by their superiors (Mohamed, 2001).

2.3.2   Application of Excellent Teacher Post

In the Malaysian education system, any teacher who is interested in holding the post of ET can apply by filling in the required Excellent Teacher Application Forms, depending on their

various salary scheme or salary grades such as DG 44 or DGA32.Upon submission of the application to the Principal or Headmaster of the applicant's school, the evaluation and selection procedures begin (see Appendix 2 for the lists of criteria for evaluation and assessment of ETs). These steps are undertaken by the IQA of the MOE. At least two Inspectorate Officers from the State Department Office are involved in assessing Excellent Teacher Candidates. All applications however are subjected to Annual Performance Appraisals (eligible candidates must have scored above 85% for the past three consecutive years). In 2006, the Government launched the Education Blueprint to strengthen the teaching profession. As part of the Blueprint, they increased the quotas for ETs by 300% to promote fast track promotion so more teachers could enjoy the benefits of the ET scheme.

Following the drastic quota increase in 2006, changes were made to the process through which applications for ETs status were evaluated. Evaluations for grade DG 48 and below were undertaken by Principals and Headmasters, rather than the Inspectorate division of the MOE. When the MOE received so many critical comments about the performance of ETs selected by the principals, the Inspectorate Division took over the assessment and evaluation for that particular grade. Grade DG52 and above are now evaluated and assessed by the Inspectorate Quality Assurance (IQA) for promotion to ET.

2.3.3 Criteria for selection as an ET and changes over time.

IQA revealed the criteria for selection as an ET remained the same from 1994 until 2006. However, when the drastic increase in the quota for ETs was approved in 2006, the selection process needed to be changed in order to fill up the new quotas. The selection process was until then carried out by IQA. With t6he increased quota, this process was transferred to the School Division of the MOE. The SEO then devolved the selection to principals and headmasters, who were empowered to choose their best teachers to apply for some levels of this scheme. Principals and Headmasters, however, were only responsible for the selection of applicants up to the employment grade of DG 48. As there were many complaints that resulted from that selection process, in 2009 IQA took over the selection process again.

Table 2c below shows the stipulated acting conditions that must be fulfilled by potential candidates for promotion to ET. These conditions are divided into (2) parts: general and

specific conditions. Table 2d then documents the formal expectations of various kinds of ETs.

Table 2c: General and specific requirement for appointment of ETs

General Conditions	Specific Conditions
Confirmed in service (for grade DG44 (personal to holder) acting post only):	i. Grade DGA32 (personal to holder): at least 5 years of teaching, including 3 years of teaching subject matter expertise:
i. Achieve the required performance level based on the annual performance evaluation report for the last 3 years;	ii. Grade DG44 (personal to holder): at least 5 years of teaching, including the last 3 years of teaching subject matter expertise;
ii. Free from disciplinary action;	iii. Grade DG48 (personal to holder): promoted to grade DG44 (personal to holder)/actual grade DG44;
iii. Made personal asset declaration;	iv. Grade DG52 (personal to holder): promoted to grade DG48 (personal to holder)/actual grade 48;
iv. Passed Malaysian Anti- Corruption Commission (MACC) for integrity screening;	v. Grade DG54 (personal to holder): promoted to grade DG52 (personal to holder)/actual grade DG52;
v. Not in the list of Education Loan Institution Hardcore Borrower;	vi. Special Grade C (personal to holder): promoted to grade DG54 (personal to holder)/actual grade DG54.
vi. Recommended by the Head of Department / Service.	

Table 2d: The Expectation and Management Stipulation of an ET: Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher, MOE, 2007

Expectations from Excellent Teachers	Excellent Teacher Service and Management Stipulations
a. An outstanding personality which includes practicing , strong ethics in the teaching profession and acting as role models to other teachers	After being appointed as an Excellent Teacher, the MOE has stipulated the following status of appointment and posting procedures:
b. An expert in his field and subject matter	a. The Excellent Teacher will be placed on a special scheme without having to fill in the post of promotion.
c. Possess the ability to produce excellent results/learning outcomes	b. The Excellent Teacher will be permanently required to teach the subject which he is certified to be an expert.
d. Possess excellent communication skills	c. The Excellent Teacher is not allowed to hold any administrative post.
e. An individual with high potential as an educator	d. The Excellent Teacher can be posted anywhere by the MOE depending on the MOE service needs.
f. A contributor to the nation's education development	e. The Excellent Teacher who has accepted the post is not allowed to return to his previous teaching post as a regular teacher
	f. The Excellent Teacher can be transferred to any schools from time to time depending on the MOE service needs.

Aimed at qualified teachers in the early stages of their teaching careers, the ETP/S provides support and opportunities for teachers based on their contributions that have made a difference to their school. In return, it requires teachers to have commitment and drive to take on additional responsibilities within and beyond the school. From its commencement, the ETP/S has been an innovative initiative.

In the Malaysian education system, any teacher who is interested in holding the post of an excellent teacher can apply for the post by filling in the required Excellent Teacher Application Forms, depending on their various salary scheme or salary grades such as DG 44 or DGA32.Upon submission of the application through the Principals or Headmasters of the applicant's respective schools, the evaluation and selection procedures begin (see Appendix 2 for lists of criteria for evaluation and assessment of ETs). These steps are undertaken by the IQA of the MOE. At least two Inspectorate Officers from the State Department Office will be involved in assessing the ET Candidate. All applications however are subjected to high Performance Appraisals Marks (at least above 85% for the past three consecutive years) obtained by the excellent teacher candidates. In 2006, the Government with the same intention and effort of encouraging more teachers to perform at the excellence level and enjoy the benefit has increased the quota for Excellent Teachers by 300 percent. Changes happened when the drastic quotas approved during 2006 when the Education Blueprint was launched to strengthen teaching profession in Malaysia. The evaluation for grade DG 48 and below was selected by the Principals and Headmasters. Later on when the MOE received so many comments about the performance of selected ETs by the principals. Inspectorate Division was taken over the assessment and evaluation for that particular grade. However, the higher grade 52 and above still under Inspectorate Quality Assurance (IQA). Below the process of selection and assessing ET from the ministry level to the school level is documented.

Figure 2a : The process of selection and appointment of ETs

1.Human Resource Division (HRD) MOE, identified quotas allocated	2.IQA Posted advertisements	3.Application made based on recommendations from Principals or Headmasters
6.Final screening by HRD to ensure only qualified candidates have been shortlisted for ETP/S	5.Two officers from IQA evaluate and make assessment to propose to the SEO and Human Resource Division	4.Shortlisted applicant will be notify to DEO
7.Public Service Department Promotional Board Meeting for endorsement	8.Successful Candidates appointed as an ETs	

Figure 2a illustrates the selection and appointment process of ET in Malaysia. This process begins with identifying quotas at the MOE level, and advertisement endorsed by the IQA division, the process later on cascading down to the state, district and school level to identify potential candidates to apply and fill up the quotas of ETs. Shortlisted applicants will be evaluated and accessed by two officers from IQA. The final screening committee situated in HRD will propose qualified candidates to the Promotional Board as shown in Figure 2b. Finally, successful candidates will be appointed as ETs.

There were three main career paths designed for teachers in Malaysia, namely the promotion based on vacancy of post which was introduced in 1957, the Excellent Path (ETP/S) (based on the vacancy of quotas) established in 1994, and the Time-Based Teachers (based on the years of service) that started in 1998. These three paths were regulated by the procedure that was endorsed by Malaysian Civil Service (MCS) (see Appendix 4). There were two main terms used in defining the promotion for teachers. One refers to acting positions, or " public officers … performing, the duties on a full-time basis of another post which is of higher

grade than the officer's substantive grade in the same service and the scheme of service with the approval of board" (Service circular No.7 of 2010, Guidelines for Action and Promotion Procedures in Public Service). The second promotion refers to substantive promotions, or "the substantive upgrading from one grade to a higher grade within the same service and scheme of service of the officer concerned with the approval of the board" (Service circular No.7 of 2010, Guidelines for Action and Promotion Procedures in Public Service). The promotion to a grade is identified as moving from a lower grade to a higher grade, and it is confined to the higher grade of 54. Selection of the candidates is based on merit and seniority and it is carried out by a promotional boards based in the MOE and the Public Service Department (PSD). The promotion to a vacancy of post, the second method, refers to moving from lower grade, such as the grade of 54 to a higher grade to the top post or the premier post or special grade. The selection is based on the suitability and adaptability of the candidates. It is usually decided by the appointed committee, based on each individual case of the selected individual.

There are two categories of promotion for teachers in Malaysia. One is the graduate teachers, who can hold posts at various grades (DG 41, DG 44, DG48, DG 52, DG 54, JUSA C or Premier Post C). The second are non-graduate teachers, who enter at the grade of DGA29 and can be promoted to grades DGA32, DGA34, DGA38. Non-graduate teachers in Malaysia have been trained through teacher training colleges and not university Teacher Education Programs. However, under a recent development, the programs for graduate and non-graduate teachers have been integrated and a new promotional grade for non-graduate teachers, who have been able to complete university study, has been established at DG 42 (see 2.3 para 6). This study, however, is focusing on the career path policies for teachers available up to 2013. Figure 2b illustrates the promotional boards that governed teachers under MOE up until this period.

Figure 2b: Appointed board/committee for promotion of teachers (graduate and non- graduate teachers
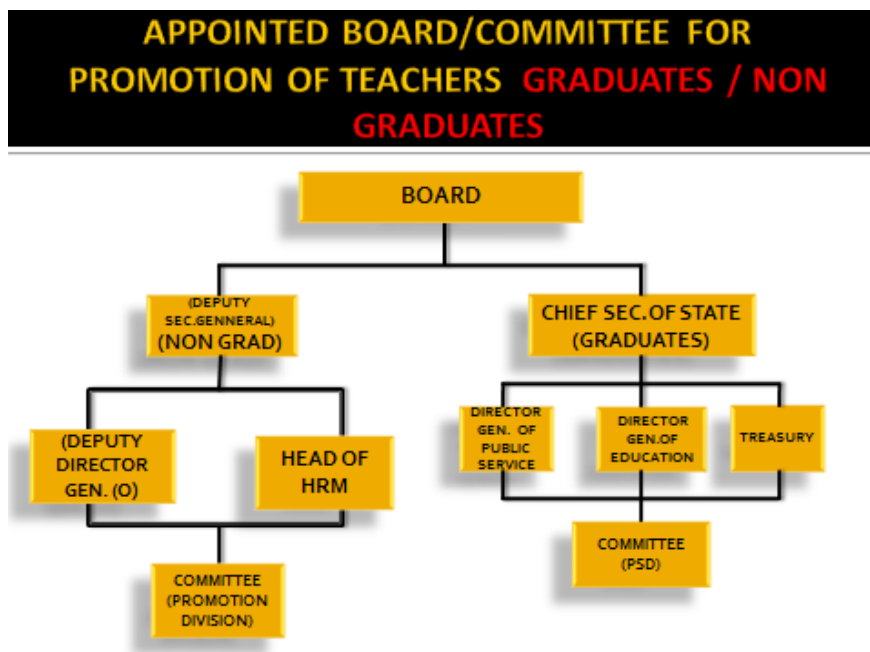
Source: MOE website on the Excellent Teacher Program

The appointed board for the promotion of teachers, as shown in Figure 2b, handles the promotions of all teachers in Malaysia. The Board is divided into two committees, one of which manages the promotion of non-graduate teachers and the other manages the promotion of graduate teachers. All processes regarding the promotion of non-graduate teachers take place under the auspices of the MOE. Processes related to the promotion of graduate teachers, on the other hand, are managed and controlled by the Public Service Department (PSD) in term of approval and budgetary approval from the Treasury. This process will be discussed later (see Chapters 5 and 6), as the perceived power and the daunting structure of the ETP/S were reported by the respondents in this study as generating tensions.

As this study is focused on the ETP/S, it is important to note here the Malaysian context of the Excellent Teachers (hereafter referred to as ETs). Figure 3 is a diagram that shows the program details and how ETP/S expanded in the Malaysia education system. The G-T refers to 'Graduate Teachers', while the N-G-T refers to the 'Non-Graduate Teachers'. Both

categories classify the opportunities that teachers can enjoy if they are selected under this program.

Figure3: Excellent Teacher Program in Malaysia

Figure 3 shows the development of the ETP/S in Malaysia. Initially, the quotas for ETs were introduced for secondary and primary schools in 1994 through to 2014 (see Table 2a). Subsequently, the ETP/S was extended to Institute Teachers Education (ITE) in 2010 to acknowledge teachers in teacher training institutes. The program was also expanded to recognise the contributions of Principals in 1995. Excellent Principals (EP) quotas were thus allocated in 1995, starting with grade DG 54. From 2009, additional quotas were approved for teachers, as well as principals and headmasters. The Excellent Officer (EO) category, which refers to teacher administrators in the MOE, SEO, DEO and other institutions under the MOE, were also eligible for ET in 2009. From 2010, the School Improvement Program (SIP) has used the allocation of ETs quota as an initiative to challenge, motivate and support schools in Malaysia to improve student outcomes and improve the standing of all schools. It is designed to work using a comprehensive mechanism with the cooperation of PEMANDU

(Performance Management and Delivery Unit). Under this program, schools are given partners such as lecturers of *Institut Aminuddin Baki,* specialist coaches and ETs. They are managed by the Teacher Development Division, MOE. The SIP comprises of three core elements:

i. Listing of school performance
ii. School improvement toolkit
iii. Service line support program

SIP was monitored through key performance indicators (KPI) for the schools individually after the problems have been identified. This is done through the toolkits in order to identify areas of improvement and the partners will brief the head of schools on the right approach to take to improve their standing and performance. Expansion of the ETP/S from the year 1994 up until now has had significant impact on selecting and rewarding quality teachers. The promotion of quality teachers into this fast track scheme was assessed through their performance and an appraisal system. Schleicher (2011), a senior OECD Education Directorate official, in his report for the OECD suggests that Malaysia has gained the top scores on the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) in terms of teacher evaluation and compensation. Criteria for TALIS included:

- Teacher appraisal;
- Teacher feedback;
- Student test scores; and
- Innovative teaching practices.

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- Teacher appraisal;

- Teacher feedback;
- Student test scores; and
- Innovative teaching practices.

Schleicher (2011) reveals Malaysia received a ranking of around 90 per cent overall in TALIS. On the other hand, in terms of the professional development undertaken by those teachers teaching students with special learning need was 49 per cent. The impact of appraisal on teachers' careers showed Malaysia recording 50 per cent increase in opportunities for professional development activities; 61 per cent relating to the public recognition from the principal and/or colleagues; 58 per cent a change in the likelihood of career advancement; and a 78 per cent change in work responsibilities that make the job more attractive (Schleicher, 2011). Thus, Schleicher stated,

> Career advancement opportunities, salaries and working conditions are important for attracting, developing and retaining skilled and high-quality teachers and are intertwined. As teacher salaries represent by far the largest single cost in school education, compensation schemes are a critical consideration for policy makers seeking to maintain both the quality of teaching and a balanced education budget. Decisions on compensation involve trade-offs among related factors, such as ratios of students to teaching staff, class size, instruction time planned for students, and designated number of teaching hours. Data from PISA show that high-performing education systems tend to prioritise the quality of teachers, including through attractive compensation, over other inputs, most notably class size. (p. 45)

ETP/S is a Malaysian policy attempt to focus on 'quality teachers'. This study explores the production, enactment and evaluation of policy texts and the ETP/S, based on the views and perceptions of respondents, who have had first-hand experience with the policy. The first part of the literature in this section outlined the earlier development of teachers' promotion schemes that were initiated after the country's independence. As the development of the country followed the globalised world, the changes can be seen in the approaches taken by the Malaysian government in addressing issues of neo-liberalism and new public management (see Rizvi and Lingard, 2010; Ball, 2013) and their impact on the country.

2.4   The position of teachers in the Malaysian public service

As previously mentioned, the teaching profession is part of the public sector in Malaysia, and it is important to contextualise this in terms of the national population and demographics

(also see section 1.1). The fact that teaching is part of the public service has a significant influence on the policies related to teacher career paths.

A total of 1,027,857 public servants were recorded in 2009 in Malaysia, including teachers, doctors and security services like police, the army, and other schemes of services. Table 3 below shows the placement by gender and service groups, where the total females in the public service represent 53 per cent, compared to 47 per cent males.

Table 3: Placement by gender and service group up to 31 December 2009

Service of Groups	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Top Management	1,667	71%	677	29%	2,344
Administrative and Professional	111,467	39%	175,414	61%	286,881
Support	368,424	50%	370,207	50%	738,631
TOTAL	481,558	47%	546,298	53%	1,027,856

Source: Annual report of Public Service Department (2009 pp.138)

Table 3 shows the total number and distribution of public servants in Malaysia, including teachers. A more detailed distribution of public servants, outlining the numbers of those involved in the MOE, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Health, has been included in Appendix 1. The table in Appendix 1 shows that the number of teachers and other professionals within the MOE constitute half the number of the entire Malaysian public service. As such, teachers make up the largest category of public servants in Malaysia.

The massive numbers involved in the Malaysian education system, particularly in the teaching profession, places significant budgetary demands on the government. Table 4 outlines the details of the numbers and range of teachers:

Table 4: Summary of number of teachers

Number of Schools	Number of Schools	(Enrolment	Number of Students	Level	Number of Teachers
Primary	7,744	Preschool	192,277	Primary	238,851
Secondary	2,350	Primary	2,742,938	Secondary	178,898
		Secondary	2,306,607		
Total	10,094	Overall Total	5,241,822	Total	417,749*

Note:*Data updated on 31 August 2013, MOE website, not included teachers in MOE and various departments (www.moe.gov.my/ guru cemerlang)

The school system in Malaysia involves more than 10,094 schools and 5,241,822 students with 417,749 teachers allocated at the school level. These numbers highlight the complexity associated with handling the teacher profession. The data provided under the ETP/S up to 2009, suggest that only 14,327 places were provided for rewarding quality teachers, which made up of 3.8 per cent of the total population of teachers (See para 2.2 and Table 2a). The rationale for limiting this quota was that the salary increases would hold implications for the education budget, from which the greatest expenditure goes towards paying teachers' salaries. Budgetary constraints required the government to limit the number of places available for these higher salaries. There are significant implications for teacher career path policy, given this budgetary reality. Governments will always be looking for trade-offs in respect of teacher salaries and promotional opportunities.

2.5   Policy and policy research framework

The complex nature of the ETP/S, as discussed in previous paragraphs, involves various actors in the production of the policy texts. The formulation and implementation/ enactment of this policy also involved complex webs of relationships between actors, the environment and systemic structures in Malaysia. In order to adequately explore these complicated relationships, it was decided that this study would use Weaver-Hightower's (2008) policy ecology as a framework. Section 2.7 provides a definition of the concept of policy and detailed discussion of the policy ecology framework.

There is extensive research interest in policy studies from a range of disciplines, including social sciences and education. According to Taylor et al. (1997), in the 1960s policy studies focused on technical aspects of policies and the distribution of resources within states. Subsequently, shifts in the approaches and methods used across disciplines to study policies have led to a range of labels for this type of analysis, including policy science, policy studies, policy analysis, policy scholarship (Grace, 2002) and more recently, policy sociology (Ozga, 1987, 2000; Ball, 1990, 1997; Bowe et al., 1992; Lingard, 1993; Raab, 1994; Taylor et al., 1997; Rizvi and Lingard, 2010).

This section explores the concept and nature of policy studies generally, including a more specific focus on education policy. Additionally, this discussion considers the role of education policy and the contributions that the study of education policy has made to the broader field of policy analysis. Drawing from the discussion, a framework for analysing the ETP/S was developed for this study. This section advocates a critical approach to policy and policy analysis and understands policy in ecological terms.

2.6 Defining policy

Scholars in this field have no universally shared definition of policy. Indeed it has been suggested that there are conceptual ambiguities between many definitions of policy both within and across disciplines (Prunty, 1985; Ozga, 2000). Ozga (2000) adds that how the term 'policy' is understood depends to a considerable degree on the perspective of the researcher. Ball (1994) argues that many policy researchers fail to offer a conceptual definition of policy. He believes that the meaning or possible meanings that we give to policy affect 'how' we research and how we interpret what we find. I believe then that the definition given to public policy in this study will affect the research approach.

In defining public policy, this study draws on literature that argues "for the policy to be regarded as a public policy, it must to some degree have been generated or at least been processed within the framework of government procedure, influences and organisations" (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984, p. 24). Similar views are offered by Taylor et al.(1997), who refer to government generated policies, which are developed and implemented through state bureaucracies and related machinery. This approach, according to Finch (1984), involves public institutions and governments that seek to meet social and individual needs and to solve social, political and economic problems. In short, policy in general terms refers to a field of

activity, actions, plans, purpose and intentions of the government or state, dealing with various fields of economics, social and political problems and aims.

The definition of 'policy' is sometimes related to decision making processes within the government bureaucratic structure. For example, Dye (1992, cited in Taylor et al., 1997) suggest that 'policy' is whatever government choose to do or not to do, and refers to either a government's action or statement. In accordance with this broad definition, there are various approaches involved in analysing policy, such as the policy cycle model developed by Rist (2000), which involve policy formulation, policy text production, policy implementation and policy accountability. Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) also developed a policy cycle approach to understanding policy that stressed interactive, non-linear relationships between three policy contexts, notably, the context of influence, the context of policy text production and the context of practice or policy implementation. In recent work, Ball and his colleagues (2012) have spoken of 'policy enactment', instead of implementation, to stress the translation most often involved when policy texts are put into practice in schools and classrooms. This distinction is utilised in the policy analysis developed in this research. The study, however, has chosen to use a policy ecology (Weaver-Hightower, 2008) framework in conjunction with a critical policy sociology approach.

2.7   Ecological framework

Policy ecology was adopted in this study in order to achieve the aims of this research to answer all research questions as stated in Table 1 in the first chapter. Adopting an ecological perspective involves the realisation that policies exist in wider social, political, economic, cultural, religious and ideological contexts that make up human society. Therefore, when adopting an ecological approach to the examination of policies for formulating promotional tracks that reward quality teachers in the system, one needs to venture beyond the material aspects and examine how other relevant factors in these various contexts interact with the policies. According to the policy ecology approach, outlined by Weaver-Hightower (2008), the acknowledgement of the complex interplay among these factors is required to understand both the broader context and influence on a specific policy, its development and articulation. Local contexts, however, do not function independently of global ones, and therefore local considerations which shape policies, need to be deliberated within a wider framework of global development (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010).

As such, the local contexts associated with the ETP/S in Malaysia need to be considered within the context of rewarding and retaining quality teachers at the classroom level, set against global and international developments. In order to explore these multi-layered policy contexts, the policy ecology approach (Weaver-Hightower, 2008) has been chosen. In outlining this approach, Weaver-Hightower indicates that educational policy exists within a complex system that reflects various international, national, regional, and local dynamics. His formulation of policy ecology focuses on a particular policy or related groups of policies, both as texts and as discourses (Ball, 1994), situated within the environment of their creation and implementation. In other words, the policy ecology framework not only involves the policy text, but all of the discursive features, actors, relationships, environments and structures, and processes that affect or are affected by the policy in production and implementation/enactment spheres.

National policy contexts are mediated by a range of agencies, providers and social actors and exercise powerful effects at the local level. It is here, in the national context, that the processes of the ETP/S are primarily enacted. The broad ranges of factors that influenced the development of the ETP/S that have been identified as part of this study include:

- Pressures arising from a global economy and from local needs;
- Teachers' perceptions of the opportunities available to them;
- The norms and traditions of the public service that align remuneration systems between schemes of service;
- The Teachers' Union demands resulting from the slow promotion of teachers; and
- Various patterns of institutional relationships.

All of these factors, among others, work together to affect how the MOE has developed and implemented the ETP/S as a policy for rewarding quality teachers. In addition to these local factors, a number of factors described by the OECD (2005, 2009) in relation to rewarding quality teachers in international systems were evident in the Malaysian case. The policy orientation for employment and deployment of teachers in most OECD countries is organised along markedly different lines in different systems, whether it is 'career based' or 'position based'. The analysis by OECD (2009) suggested that there is a need to emphasise teacher quality over teacher quantity, and to align teacher development and performance with school

needs. The OECD further indicated that nations should develop policies that address a number of issues around teaching, including ensuring flexible entry into teacher education, continuous professional development for teachers, and transforming teaching into a knowledge-rich profession. Thus the formulation of the ETP/S was influenced by a complex and multi-layered set of interacting factors. Through a process of mediation by policy-makers, and education professionals, including teachers at the classroom level, these multiple system layers have shaped the opportunities for and perceptions of individuals acting within the system. Ball et al. (2012) also make the point that school context is important to the implementation or enactment of any given policy.

An ecological approach to research has been used in many areas (e.g. Sarason, 1996; Barab and Roth, 2006). Sarason (1996), for example, viewed schools as ecological entities. Barab and Roth (2006) also used an ecological framework for talking about curriculum. The increasing use of environmental metaphors and analyses suggests a growing interest in seeing human power and governance relations in terms of fragility, balance, inter-dependency, sustainability and care. The dynamic relationship between the four levels of the ecological framework is informed by debates about actors that attempt to reconceptualise the relationship between national, regional, local and institutional levels of governance and, in particular, the effects of higher levels on those below.

Weaver–Hightower (2008) expanded on the notion of 'policy ecology', which was defined as follows:

> A policy ecology consists of the policy itself along with all of the texts, histories, people, places, groups, tradition, economic and political conditions, institutions and relationship that affect it or that it affects. Every contextual factor and person contributing to or influenced by a policy in any capacity both before and after it creation and implementation, is part of complex ecology (p. 155)

This extremely complex definition is proposed by Weaver-Hightower to look beyond just the policy as a text, but also as a response to multi-faceted influences in society and on policy. Weaver-Hightower suggests four main characteristics in the analysis of policy making.

a) **Actors**: people who perform various roles in relation to the policy (i.e. for the ETP/S this may include policy-makers, ETs, Excellent Principals (EPs) and the Teachers' Union);

b) **Relationship among actors**: manifested in competition or cooperation (i.e. Competitions between schemes of service in the public service in Malaysia; levels of cooperation with the Teachers' Union);

c) **Environment and structures**: (i.e. structures involved in the MOE, including the SEO, the District Education Offices (DEO), Schools and other related agencies); and

d) **Processes** that impact the relationships among actors and between actors and the environment (i.e. issues related to the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level).

The policy ecology perspective suggests that research needs to take a more holistic view of policy and to go beyond the level of the individual teachers or perspectives when seeking explanations of how a policy works. In terms of this study, the policy ecology approach has led me to explore various facets of government policy, including policies for national economic development, and examine relationships between a range of actors with first-hand experience of the ETP/S, including policy makers, a representative from the TU, EPs and ETs. I argue that the ecological model provides an appropriate framework for exploring the complex dynamics of the global influences, the national educational and economic systems, local needs and the relationships between educational professionals and policy makers. This is part of a diverse effort to understand complex situations in the production of texts of the ETP/S, enactment at the school level and the evaluation of the program or in specific education policy-development (e.g. Weaver-Hightower, 2008; Raffo et al., 2010). Another element of this effort to understand the ETP/S involves the use of critical policy sociology (Ozga, 1987).

2.8   The evolution of education policy

As part of the policy ecology framework, the remainder of this chapter will explore the historical and political contexts from which the ETP/S has emerged. These include national educational and economic policies. This section will focus, in particular, on the relationships between policies to improve education in Malaysia and policies for national economic development. These are linked out of necessity because of the human capital framing of education policy.

The implementation of educational policies in Malaysia is based upon executive policy. All educational policies are formulated by the MOE and are implemented only after full

endorsement is obtained from the Federal Government. In introducing new educational policies, the MOE as part of the Malaysian government, has been required to address the government's objectives for economic development. There have been four phases in the evolution of policies in Malaysia which are:

2. Pre- Independence and early Independence (before 1957-1970);
3. The New Economic Policy (1971- 1990);
4. The National Development Policy (1991-2000);
5. The National Vision Policy (2001-2020).

Education plays an important role in helping the country to meet the challenges of becoming a developed nation (see Table 5). Specifically, education is perceived as promoting national unity, social equality, and economic development. Education is viewed as an instrument for promoting and strengthening national integration by inculcating a common and shared destiny among the different ethnic groups, removing racial prejudices and encouraging cultural tolerance, and establishing the use of a common national language, that is, Bahasa Malaysia. As an agent of social equality, the role of education is to promote social consciousness and social justice by providing equal educational opportunities for all students.

Table 5: Policy development in Malaysia

PHASE	DETAILS
1. Pre-Independence and early Independence (before 1957-1970)	Aim at national unity as highest stake
	Focused on 4 national types of school, strengthen curriculum, textbooks and language for instruction (MOE ,2006)
	National Education Policy enacted in 1961 based on Razak Report 1956 recommending the use of Malay Language as medium of instruction
2. The New Economic Policy (1971-1990)	Focus on fulfilling and practising the workforce needs of the country to align with national and social needs. Changing medium of instruction as English to Malay Language based on the National Education Act 1961. Establishment of fully residential schools
3. The National Development	Implementation of Utopian and incremental frameworks, specially the use of technology in public administration efficiency and education

Policy (1991-2000)	sphere.	
4. The National Vision 2020	In January 1991, the Malaysian government unveiled its Vision 2020, the year by which Malaysia would achieve the status of an industrialised and developed country in terms of its economy, national unity, social cohesion, social justice, political stability, system of government, quality of life, social and spiritual values, national pride and confidence (Mahathir, 1991). Towards achieving Vision 2020, the government has also identified strategies to meet the following nine challenges: (1) Establishing a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny. (2) Creating a psychologically liberated, secure, and developed Malaysian society. (3) Fostering a democratic society. (4) Establishing a fully moral and ethical society. (5) Establishing a mature liberal and tolerant society. (6) Establishing a scientific and progressive society. (7) Establishing a fully caring society and a caring culture. (8) Ensuring an economically just society. (9) Establishing a prosperous society (Mahathir, 1991, p. 2–4)	

Education is seen as a means for social mobility, which forms one of the avenues for economic redistribution and the restructuring of the Malaysian society. The education system has an important role to play in supplying human resources for economic growth. Human capital outcomes are currently widespread in driving education policy around the world (Walker, 2012). Much has been written on the role that schools play in the development of human capital (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, Walker, 2012; Ball, 2013). The architect of Vision 2020 indicated:

> In our drive to move vigorously ahead nothing is more important than the development of human resources. What we have between our ears, at our elbow and in our heart is much more important than what we have below our feet and around us. (Mohamad, 1991, p. 5)

The importance of developing human capital has become a major thrust of Vision 2020. Vision 2020 can be conceived of as a 'meta-policy' (Yeatman, 1990), which has impacted on a range of public policy domains in Malaysia, particularly in the education system. In response to the goals of Vision 2020, the MOE introduced the Education Development Master Plan (2006-2010), which is considered next.

2.8.1   Education Development Master Plan (2006-2010)

The Education Development Master Plan 2006-2010 (EDMP) is linked with the chronology of the ETP/S as it increased quotas for ETs (see Table 2a).This blueprint has outlined important aspects of policy implementation to cater for the needs of teachers and students. The aim of this Master Plan was to provide outlines of the policy focus and strategic action plans and indicators that were designed to ensure a high quality and relevant national education system. This policy document pays special attention to the history, gaps and achievements in the Malaysian education system. The main approach of this EDMP 2006-2010 is to deliver quality and equity in education that will strengthen national schools, bridge the education gap and enhance the teaching profession by promoting excellence within educational institutions through the establishment of education clusters. There are 6 (six) strategic thrusts underpinning the EDMP:

(i)   Nation building;

(ii)   Developing human capital;

(iii)   Strengthening national schools;

(iv)   Bridging the education gap;

(v)   Enhancing the teaching profession; and

(vi)   Accelerating excellence of educational institutions.

In respect of this framework, the major focus of my doctoral study is the development of a human capital (strategy ii) and enhancing the teaching profession (strategy v). The aims of strategy five (v) include developing approaches to enhance the teaching profession to mould future generations, by upgrading Teacher Training Colleges into Institutes of Teacher Education, raising teacher qualifications to degree level (the goal of an all graduate profession), and improving the systems for teacher selection, services, placement and welfare.

This EDMP was designed in relation to the major policy of the country, the 9th Malaysia Plan (hereafter 9MP). Within the 9MP, National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) were introduced and education was a key focus area. The Education NKRAs were intended to provide a platform to improve student learning outcomes across Malaysia's school system and to enable access to quality education for all students. With regard to improving students' learning outcomes, the NKRAs targeted four areas: Preschool enrolment rates, High Performing Schools, Literacy and Numeracy Screening (LINUS) program, and the New Deal for Head Teachers and Principals. Under this policy, education was allocated vast sums of money to close the gap in school performance between rural students and urban students, a significant inequity in Malaysian education.

The government's quest to improve the quality of teaching and learning is also articulated in the Education Development Plan 2006–2010 with a pronouncement that:

> The Ministry of Education's policy is to elevate the teaching profession by increasing the quality of teachers, advancing teaching as a career and improving the welfare of teachers. The Ministry of Education's goal is to make the teaching profession one that is respected and highly regarded in accordance with the trust given to the teachers to carry out their roles in nation building. (Education Development Plan 2006–2010, p. 106)

The EDMP (2006-2010) also signified its support for the ETP/S in which a drastic increase of quota allocated for ETs has been approved. Table 2 of this chapter indicated that the 2600 quota approved in 1994 had increased to 9374 new quotas approved in 2006. The introduction of this Blue Print has contributed to the significance of the ETP/S in Malaysia.

2.8.2   Government Transformation Program

The Government Transformation Program (GTP) was introduced in April 2009 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia. The main aims of this program were to undertake systemic reforms that enable the Malaysian government to deliver their services more effectively, transforming the country into a service-based economy. To achieve this, the GTP provided a focus on 12 main pillars, named the 12 National Key Economic Areas, in which education features prominently.

Education is defined as a core driver of Malaysia's economic activity that will directly contribute towards its economic growth by improving productivity and human capital

development (Performance Management and Delivery Unit, 2010). The Performance Management and Delivery Unit or PEMANDU is dedicated to providing quality education and "improving teacher quality in the education system is a top priority" (Jala, 2010, para 16). Talks of transforming education to improve the quality and outcomes of education in Malaysia culminated in the articulation of standards for teachers. The Malaysian Teacher Standards (MTS), launched in 2009, established 'high competency' standards for the teaching profession and sought to increase the status of teachers in Malaysia. A policy of economic reform, known as the Economic Transformation Program (ETP), unveiled in Malaysia in 2010, further aspires to transform the country into a service-based economy and to shift the nation towards the middle and high-income salary brackets by 2020 (Goh, 2012).

The decision to improve teaching quality stems from the challenges faced and the great responsibilities that education in Malaysia carries, from pre-school to higher education, to assist the development of skilled human capital for the socio-economic development of the nation and to realise the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2020 (Kachar, 1997; Bunnell, 2002; Abdullah, Rose and Kumar, 2007; Bajunid, 2012). As quality teachers have become a focus in the Malaysian setting, the ETP/S has indirectly impacted on the GTP. ETs are characterised as quality teachers in the system, who contribute toward quality teaching in order to enhance student learning outcomes. They are also seen as catalysts for improving teaching more generally.

2.8.3   Tenth Malaysia Development Plan (10MP, 2010-2015)

> The Tenth Malaysia Plan houses the aspirations of both the Government Transformation Program (GTP) and the New Economic Model (NEM), premised on high income, inclusiveness and sustainability. It charts the development of the nation for the next five years, anchored on delivering the desired outcomes for all Malaysians. The Tenth Plan sets the stage for a major structural transformation that a high-income economy requires. The Plan contains new policy directions, strategies and programmes that enable the country to emerge as a high income nation ...
>
> Prime Minister, Malaysia

The Tenth Malaysia Plan (10MP) was tabled in Parliament in June 2010. This document outlined the Malaysian Government's intention to revamp and improve the education system (10MP, Chapter 5) through a renewed focus on the development of human capital. What we

see here is a vernacular expression of a globalized education policy discourse (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). This contemporary development plan document acknowledges the slow career progression of teachers in the country and discusses the importance of rewarding quality teachers through better career advancement and through motivating and encouraging teachers to contribute to enhancing quality outcomes for students. The 10MP asserts that the slow career progression of teachers will be addressed, which resonates with the central focus of this study. It should be acknowledged that the issue of career progression is complex in Malaysia, because of the sheer scale of the teaching profession, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 3. As in all countries, teaching in Malaysia is a mass profession with budgetary implications.

Additionally, low salaries, limited opportunities for promotion, heavy workloads, lack of freedom to make decisions, and students' disciplinary problems all contribute to teachers' quitting the teaching profession (Mattox, 1974). For those who stay in the profession, the majority may go through their entire teaching career with only one or two promotions (Tenth Malaysia Plan, p. 210). The 10MP indicates that the Time-Based promotion policy means that teachers typically take 10 years (which has been reduced to 8 years) to progress from beginner to the next promotional stage. This is due to government structures that are highly bureaucratic and promotions can only be offered when there are vacant positions. Government policy reviews therefore have explored new ways of rewarding teachers within a mass profession through a special allocation for a limited number of (ETs) in the system.

The 10MP document suggests that 'fast-track' promotion offers would be based on competency and the performance level of teachers. Automatic fast-track progression was opened to all teachers at all stages of their careers, instead of being based on an application system. The targets indicated in the 2010 document were to be fully realised by 2015. The 10MP focused on the quality of both leaders and teachers in schools, with the goal of improving student learning outcomes. This broader initiative is reflected in the ETP/S, which is associated with the fast-track promotion of quality teachers.

These policy documents reflect the Malaysian government's commitment to education within the national agenda, given that there is an entire chapter in the Plan dedicated to the education system. Consequently, the Malaysian government aims to produce a first world talent based worker in order to attain their goal of becoming a developed country by 2020. Take for

example, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Finland, Australia and other developed countries, which are benchmarked in the education chapter of the 10MP. These countries have successfully attained global recognition for their education systems, based on their PISA results. The Malaysian government is keen to develop the national education system along the same lines as that of Korea, and build it to a comparable level of other big economies like the United States, China and Japan. Korea tends to be identified as a reference society for Malaysia. In part, the adoption of Korea as a reference society may be the result of the rapid development of the Korean economy and education system over the past 40 years. The references to Korea can also be seen as a part of the 'Looking East Policy' introduced by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in 1981. Currently examples from Korea and Singapore have been embedded in the Malaysian Plans, up to and including the 10MP. In the 1980s, the Singaporean state was constantly encouraging its citizens to adopt a Japanese-style of management (Ching and Jane, 1987), while neighbouring Malaysia was implementing its 'Look East' policy (Furouka, 2007).

The plan for financial rewards, career building and efforts to make the teaching profession highly competitive are indicative of the government's commitment to investing in teachers. In return, teachers were expected to produce good student learning outcomes. This is the implicit logic of the policy: invest in teachers, develop progressive career paths for them, and these moves will in turn improve the quality of teaching and lead to improved student learning outcomes. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, there are many (unexamined and unresearched) assumptions built into this equation and this logic.

An allocation of the equivalent of USD 53 million was dedicated to this program during 2010-2012. This allocation was dedicated to Nation Building, as the teaching profession is viewed as being responsible for moulding the future citizens of Malaysia, and as one of the most critical professions to drive Malaysia into realising the Vision 2020 goals. This belief aligns with the global policy view (a globalized policy discourse) that education systems can only improve by improving the quality of their teachers (Barber and Mourshed, 2007).

Some areas of focus within the education section of the 10MP closely relate to the goals of the ETP/S, namely, to improve the quality of teaching, to enhance policies for teacher promotion and in linking quality teaching to student learning outcomes. Additionally, the MOE launched the new Blueprint in 2013 that elaborates the mission of revamping education

in Malaysia. Both of these documents will be reviewed in my policy ecology study, as they focus on rewarding quality teachers with the goal of producing improved human capital for the country.

2.8.4 Malaysian Education Blue Print 2013-2025

In response to the 10MP, the MOE has planned to achieve its targets by hiring prominent figures within the field of education policy to draft the Blueprint. Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also Education Minister, launched the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) (2013-2025) in September 2013. It is argued again that quality teachers are essential to realising Malaysia's dream of being recognised as a developed country by 2020. Despite the challenges associated with realising these goals, the Deputy Prime Minister indicated that Malaysia has set herself an even more ambitious series of goals to be achieved by 2025 (Education Blueprint exhibition staged at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO, Paris) in its pursuit of becoming a 'world beater' with respect to education standards and benchmarks. Malaysia has come a long way in its efforts to continually improve the education system and, in aiming to meet the goals outlined by the Deputy Prime Minister; however, there is still a lot of work to be accomplished. I would note here though the elision in the Deputy Prime Minister's talk between quality teachers and quality teaching.

This newest MEB identified 11 important shifts for bringing Malaysia in line with international education standards. Teacher reform was one of the main thrusts of the Blueprint. The document outlined the fourth shift as requiring a Transformation of teaching into the profession of choice, suggesting:

> Why it is needed: International research shows that teacher quality is the most significant school-based factor in determining student outcomes. The quality of a system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. While there are certainly many excellent teachers in the Malaysian education system, a 2011 research study found that only 50 per cent of lessons are being delivered in an effective manner. This means that the lessons did not sufficiently engage students, and followed a more passive, lecture format of content delivery. These lessons focused on achieving surface-level content understanding, instead of higher-order thinking skills. This statistic is particularly challenging as an estimated 60 per cent of today's teachers will still be teaching in 20 years' time. (Executive Summary of MEB, 2013, p. 14)

Interestingly, this policy statement echoes a number of international reports about the significance of teacher quality; what we see here is a globalized education policy discourse. In this Blueprint, the MOE argued that they aim to develop teaching into a prestigious, elite profession that only recruits from the top 30 per cent of graduates in the country. It is assumed that high quality graduates, high quality teacher education, access to exciting career development opportunities, and a peer-led culture of excellence such as mentoring, and developing and sharing best practices will support reforms in the teaching profession in Malaysia. The MOE will offer better training for teachers from the time they enter their teacher education programs, through to the point of retirement (MEB, 2013, p. 15). Career development opportunities across several distinct pathways, with progression based on competency and performance rather than tenure, were also highlighted in the text.

The Blueprint stated that teachers will be offered support to focus on their core function of teaching from 2013 by reducing the administrative burden on them. Some administrative functions will be moved to a centralised service centre or to a dedicated administrative teacher at the school level. All teachers will be assessed annually by their principals, with input potentially being provided by peers. This assessment will be done using a new evaluation instrument that focuses on teachers' ability to deliver effective instruction in and out of the classroom. This role is helping students to learn more effectively.

Under this Blueprint, high-performing teachers will enjoy faster career progression. The very best teachers may even be promoted from appointment grade of graduate teacher, DG41 to DG54 (see Appendix 3) in a faster time period than the current average promotion time of 25 years. Similarly it refers to the fast track promotion of ETP/S, which has taken 8 years to be promoted in the next grade in a normal promotional period. However the length of service has been reduced to 5-6 years to get a faster promotion (see Appendix 4). Teachers who are struggling to meet the minimum quality will receive extra coaching support to help them get back on track. Teachers, who consistently underperform, even with the extra support, will be redeployed to other school-based functions such as administration, discipline management or co-curricular management. Over time, the MOE will gradually reduce the total cohort size of teachers through improvements in teacher time utilisation and productivity.

In expanding the ETP/S concept for other teachers and educational professionals in the MOE, the Ministry has designed a new approach. The MEB (2013) highlights the extension of

opportunities for teachers, including school leaders, and administrators in the MOE, who might wish to become master teachers or excellent teachers. The reform seeks to enhance pathways for teachers into leadership, master teaching and subject specialist roles by 2016. There are more tracks available for teachers based on their interests. For teachers who prefer a leadership role, there is promotional track for them; for those teachers who want to remain in the classroom, they will be under two categories of master teaching and subject specialist. This is similar to the ETP/S, which has been rebranded. Regardless of the pathway chosen, the commitment to investing in teacher development and in building an environment of professional accountability will be maintained across teacher careers. There will also be comparable opportunities for promotion across these pathways.

The policies addressed within this section, the Educational Development Master Plan 2006-2010; the GTP; the 10MP; and the Malaysian Education Blue Print 2013-2025, are all focused on reforming the Malaysian education system through a focus on quality teaching and quality teachers, with an anticipated effect on student learning outcomes. Additionally, these policies seek to improve the production of human capital for the country's economic development, with a view towards attaining first-world standing. The assumption here is that better quality teachers and teaching (and there is a distinction) will enhance student learning outcomes and thus lead to the improvement of the quality and quantity of human capital in Malaysia, in turn enhancing the development of the economy. This assumption is built into education policy in Malaysia today; it underpins the ETP/S as one important element of an overall education reform program, and the broader approach to improving career paths for all teachers.

2.9   Conclusion

This chapter has offered descriptions of the ETP/S, the concept of policy and the policy ecology framework adopted for this study. As part of the policy ecology, the chapter has provided an overview of the historical, educational and economic policy contexts which are relevant to the ETP/S. The development of the ETP/S has signified the importance of rewarding quality teachers in Malaysia through faster career progression. Underpinning this policy has been a government focus on improving the quality of both teachers and teaching to improve student outcomes and, ultimately the human capital of Malaysia.

This chapter has explored the complex, multi-layered contexts and relationships that affect and are affected by the ETP/S and related policies to improve teacher quality. My research goal is to understand these relationships and the issues associated with rewarding and motivating quality teachers within a mass profession, specifically in Malaysia and specifically in relation to the ETP/S. In particular, a goal of this study is to contribute to the understanding of how these rewards are designed and implemented with the goal of improving the production of human capital in the country.

> Policies related to teacher career paths pose a range of advantages and challenges for Malaysian teachers. Hashim (1999) states that, Changing times require that schools become learning enterprises for teachers and students. Today's teachers have to meet demands from various quarters as more concern is shown towards higher standards and improved performance for all students. (p. 48)

Within a centralised education system like Malaysia's, policies are made at the national level. All these policies are then implemented at various levels of the education system, culminating in the classroom. The devolution and re-contextualisation of these policies therefore, presents shifting challenges for teachers, particularly during the implementation/enactment of policies at the school level. The hierarchical chain of implementation almost means infidelity in policy enactment at the school site. One interest of the research is how a very top-down approach to policy production and implementation in Malaysian education affects policy enactment. The next chapter, Chapter 3, moves to examine the research literature and global practices associated with rewarding quality teachers.

CHAPTER 3:   LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I review two bodies of literature. One is concerned with international policies and practices associated with teacher career paths and the other with issues of teacher quality, a concept upon which teacher career path policies are based. In conducting this literature review, I discuss how the ETP/S has adopted a particular perspective on teacher quality, which does not rely solely on linking teacher quality with student outcomes. I argue that this conception of teacher quality is highly relevant to the examination of teacher career path policies globally and, more specifically, to those policies enacted in Malaysia. In Chapter 2, I described the contextual or ecological features of the Malaysian education system, including policies designed to reward quality teachers at the classroom level. In this chapter, I critically examine these assumptions in turn. Compensation and career path for teachers are closely related in the Malaysian context.

3.2   Teacher career pathways in other countries

A number of countries around the globe have developed initiatives to reward high quality teachers, or to provide career development for experienced teachers who wish to stay in the classroom. In this section, I outline international experiences and practices of such schemes, and evidence from their evaluations.

Table 6: Overview of career pathways for teaching excellent in various countries

Country	Year started	Brief background
UK	Established in 2004; came into effect 2006	A new career route for experienced teachers alternative to management and administrative posts. Its aim is to allow teachers to concentrate on using their skills to improve pupil's attainment
United States	1989	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) scheme aims to: • establish rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. • develop and operate a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet these

		standards. • advance education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools.
Scotland	2001,2008	Scottish Chartered Teacher Scheme • recognise and reward teachers who attained high standards of practice • benefits students by attracting and retaining effective teachers and by ensuring all teachers continue to engage in effective modes of professional learning
Australia (New South Wales)	2007	'Performance-based remuneration system' evidence of attaining increasing levels of knowledge and skills
Singapore	December 2007 December 2008	GROW - 'Growth of Education Officers through better recognition, opportunities and seeing to Well-Being gives teachers more recognition for excellence and commitment to their calling, more career opportunities and professional development Master Teacher career track in Singapore aims to: • influence policies, program and procedures (Master Teacher level 1) • encourages others in the school community to participate in the educational process to realise the child's full potential influence policies, program and procedures (Master Teacher level 2) • takes an active role in initiatives that influence policies, program and procedures in line with Nurturing the Whole Child.
Chile	2002	Certification of Teaching Excellence Program in Chile. The aim of this program is to: • increase teachers' salaries based on individual performance • retain good teachers in the classroom • foster peer mentoring and collaboration • social recognition and to increase their professional self-esteem
South Korea		Comprehensive approach to recognising teachers and all graduate teaching profession. • was piloted in 2008 • Master Teachers must have strong skills in both teaching and leadership • Master Teachers are expected to remain in a teaching role, but take on new responsibilities in professional development at the school and district levels • share their expertise with other, less experienced teachers and help develop curriculum,

	• instructional practices and evaluation systems • must have grade one certificate, 10-15 years of service • evaluated by search committee
Japan	• highly respected profession and highly paid • straight forward promotional path from the position of teacher to head teacher and then principal. However, within each of these paths, there are multiple salary grades based on performance and experience.
Indonesia	• teachers are required to seek training on a continuous basis if they are to retain their certification. • Better Education through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading (BERMUTU) Program • incentive of increased financial rewards

Source: Adapted from Hoque et al. (2012, pp. 5-6) and Ingvarson (2013, p. 4)

3.2.1   England and Wales

In England, various approaches for rewarding quality teachers have been developed. The Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) concept, which introduced a new breed of 'super teachers' on higher than normal salaries for classroom teachers, was first announced in 1995. The initiative was based on the premise that (ASTs) should be able to gain recognition and promotion without having to leave the classroom, for they were needed in the classroom to improve students' performance. This is similar to Malaysia's ETP/S. The UK government's White Paper envisaged ASTs working as exemplars of high quality teaching. It also acknowledges that teachers' need to be given the opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices (DFEE, 1997b, p. 45). The initiative developed for ASTs to share their 'exceptional skills', not only with teachers in their own school, but also with junior teachers in other schools.

The Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) was established in September 2006 in England and Wales. The scheme aims to offer a new option to management and leadership posts as the only way to promotion for teachers. It was expected that that over time, some 20 per cent of eligible teachers would be employed as Excellent Teachers (ETs). However, the expectation was not met: only 59 teachers in England and Wales had undergone assessment and fully

met the ET Standards by December 2008 (information from DCSF, 11.12.08). When the ET grade commenced on 1 September 2006, the DCSF Guidance stated:

> The ETS offers the most experienced classroom teachers a rewarding career route which is an alternative to posts that attract Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments, and Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) grade or leadership group post. (DCSF, 2007a, para. 6)

ETs and ASTs differ in two areas. ETs' plays their role in assisting other teachers within their schools. ASTs on the other hand, have an outreach function, in which they are not qualified to get TLR (Teaching and Learning Responsibility) payments. The reason for this is that they are not required to be responsible for developing a subject or a curriculum area, or have significant line management responsibilities. On top of that, ETs should have substantial involvement and specific responsibilities in the following areas as stated in *Excellent Teachers: Guidance for teachers, headteachers and local authorities, (England)* (DCSF, 2007a):

- participating in the induction of newly qualified teachers;
- participating in the professional mentoring of other teachers;
- sharing good practice through demonstration lessons;
- helping other teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment;
- helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils;
- undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process; and
- helping other teachers improve their teaching practice including those on capability procedures.

A short review of ETs in England and Wales has shown there are various approaches to rewarding quality teachers. ETs are one approach to retain quality teachers at the classroom level. There are also varying demands in relation to duties beyond classroom work.

3.2.2   National Board for Certified Teachers in the USA

Hutching et al. (2009) stated that in the USA certification for quality teachers is done by the National Board for Certified Teachers (NBCTs). This body is verified by the National Board

for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Certification from these Boards is promoted as the 'highest symbol of professional teaching excellence' (NBPTS, undated, accessed January, 2009). To become certified, teachers must have minimally three years' experience. Once this three years requirement is met, the certification process can begin, which may take as long as another three years. The NBCT certification process involves assessment conducted through assessment centre exercises, in the form of six essays, and portfolio entries (including examples of written feedback to students, a self-assessment of effectiveness and videotaped examples of lessons). These are assessed by a minimum of 12 teachers. The certification process costs more than $2,500 USD. There are scholarships and financial assistance with fees cover. Some schools/states/local boards provide assistance with the application costs, while others provide salary bonuses to those certified by the NBCT (Cavalluzzo, 2004). There are five core propositions of the NBPTS, which include:

i) Teachers are committed to students and their learning;
ii) Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students;
iii) Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning;
iv) Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience;
v) Teachers are members of learning communities.

The standards are developed and reviewed by teachers and relevant experts. Board certification for teachers is issued for an initial period of 10 years. It can be renewed based on a Profile of Professional Growth prepared and developed by the certified teachers over the years.

Following the concept of NBPTS in the USA, Goldhaber and Hansen (2009) suggest a correlation between NBPTS assessment scores for teachers and improved learning outcomes in schools. A number of studies show that NBCTs' students outperform non NBCTs students on achievement tests, with an even greater positive effect on minority students (Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor, 2007; Goldhaber and Anthony, 2004; Cavalluzzo, 2004). Furthermore, the NBPTS also help to change teachers' formative assessment practices (for example setting learning goals) and their pedagogy. Even teachers who start at a lower skill level are reported to end up with better teaching practices than those who did not go through the certification process (Sato,Wei and Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Yeh (2010) suggested that the NBPTS may identify teachers who are initially more effective than uncertified teachers. Studies investigating these effects have demonstrated the difficulties of relating teacher income to performance (Hattie and Clinton, 2008; Ingvarson and Hattie, 2009). Hattie and Clinton (2008) further argue that it is appropriate and worthwhile to question how one can differentially pay teachers, particularly based on some component of expertise, despite differential pay scales being a well-rehearsed practice in many disciplines and vocations. This method of evaluation of quality teachers and quality teaching has indirectly led to some dissatisfaction among teachers. This situation should encourage us to keep questioning and researching ways to address this issue (Hattie, 2010). The question before us is how might we develop research-based criteria for classifying excellent or outstanding teachers?

Another approach to improving the quality of teaching through the development of relevant policies in the USA has been seen in the attempt to link teachers' performances (however measured) with pay bonuses. Michelle Rhee was involved, somewhat controversially, in developing such an approach in Washington DC (Rhee, 2013). She was attempting to reform the rewards system based on the relationship between teacher classroom practices and students' learning outcomes, through a relentless focus on finding and rewarding high quality teachers, purging incompetent ones and weakening the tenure system that keeps bad teachers in the classroom. This is a more punitive approach than other programs of performance-based pay for teachers, but one which demands sophisticated research to demonstrate teacher effects and distinguish these from other effects on student learning. There is a measurement issue here. *The New York Times* (2011) announced that the system would abandon the policy after $56 million USD was spent on bonuses. It was found that 'bonuses had no discernible effect on the way teachers did their job or on students' test scores (*The Washington Post*, 2010). Darling-Hammond (2010) argues convincingly that such approaches uniformly fail and regularly create concern amongst all teachers. Teachers recognise the need for collaboration inside a school and its culture as a way to improve performances; they realise working together and collaborating, rather than competing with each other, as the way forward for school improvement.

3.2.3 Australia

The policy of Advanced Skills Teachers (AST) was introduced in Australian states' schooling systems in the early 1990s. As school education is the responsibility of state

governments in Australia, the scheme was administered by the state and territory governments, rather than nationally by the federal government. All states and territories presented the scheme as an approach for recognising and rewarding highly skilled teachers wanting to stay in the classroom. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) identified this as a shift from traditional approaches in promoting quality teachers to management positions to a skill-based pay system. The AST was not tied to a specific post or particular duties, though some AST said that, as a result of this recognition, they were sought after by colleagues for advice (Smyth and Shacklock, 1998).

There were some criticisms of the AST grades in Australia, particularly when such grades were first introduced (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1997; Smyth et al., 1997). Ingvarson (2008) identified that the AST initiative was not popular, due to a lack of clearly defined roles, and because of an apparent mismatch between the limited financial rewards and the demanding criteria for appointment as an AST (Smyth and Shacklock, 1998). This situation affected the number of teachers applying for the scheme, while psychologically, failure to be appointed impacted on teachers' self-esteem, identity as a teacher, and relationships with colleagues. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) concluded that the AST initiative failed to meet its aims, and ultimately lost credibility in most states. A number of reasons were identified for the failure of the AST initiative, including, according to Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1997) and Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004):

> • the lack of credibility of the system for assessing teachers' performances: (teachers put forward reports of how they met the criteria, and submitted referees' reports; they were then interviewed by a panel in their own school (portfolios of evidence, observations of teaching, and external assessors were not used); and
> • the inability of both unions and employers to conceive the idea of paying teachers more just for being better teachers, rather than for extra work. (Kleinhenz and Ingvarson, 2004, p. 34)

The state of South Australia still runs schemes for AST 1 and 2, and has tackled the weaknesses in the original assessment system. Their website describes the two roles as follows:

> 1. An AST 1 teacher is an exemplary classroom practitioner who is a role model for other teachers.

2. An AST 2 teacher is also an exemplary teacher but one who is able to take their skills, understanding and practices and use these to influence the practice of their colleagues thereby improving the learning outcomes for students. (Government of South Australia, n.d., accessed January 2009)

In South Australia, AST 1 involved teachers developing a portfolio to demonstrate that they have the skills, knowledge and experience to satisfy the criteria. The portfolio can be developed over time through performance management. In the AST1 process, there is line manager support, classroom observations, and a presentation to a panel that includes an experienced generalist peer evaluator. Other Australian states have developed alternative schemes; for example, Victoria introduced the 'experienced teacher' category with additional responsibilities in 2001 (Kleinhenz and Ingvarson, 2004).The assessment process described for this role is very similar to the original AST assessment. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2004) argue that it has very similar problems.

3.2.4   Chartered Teachers in Scotland

The Scottish Chartered Teacher Scheme was designed to recognise and reward teachers who attained high standards of classroom practice (Ingvarson, 2009). The scheme emerged in 2001 as part of an agreement between government, local employing authorities and teacher organisations. Policies such as the chartered teacher scheme aim to benefit students in two main ways: firstly, by attracting and retaining effective teachers in the classroom; and secondly by ensuring all teachers continue to engage in effective modes of professional learning. There is an assumption that there is a relationship between these and improved student learning.

The Chartered Teacher (CT) Grade was introduced in 2003 in response to the McCrone Report (Scottish Executive, 2000), which found that there were limited prospects for experienced classroom teachers, who wished to stay teaching at the classroom level and refused to seek management posts.. As such, it was designed to 'provide an alternative career choice to promotion into a management post' (CTS: Frequently Asked Questions, 2002). (This is the situation with ETP/S, the focus of this research study.) The Continuing Professional Development document (SEED, 2003), cited in Hutching et al. (2009), described the role of the CT in the following way:

> A CT will promote learning and will be committed to the development of educational excellence in the school and the wider professional community. (SEED, 2003, *unpaginated*)

The McCrone Committee proposed a two-tiered approach, namely Chartered Teachers and Advanced Chartered Teachers (ACT). It was expected that the CT would be achievable by most teachers. However, ACT status was 'advanced' in terms of a four year program of research and advanced learning to develop teachers' classroom practice. A combination of these two ideas, exemplary classroom practice and qualifications, was embedded in the CT Grade. The CT scheme was similar to the ETS in England in the assumption that the majority of teachers would be motivated to achieve it.

There were two options available for CTs in attaining professional recognition. The first is the accreditation route for an experienced teacher and secondly is the program route. The first route is based mainly on an assessment of evidence provided in a portfolio containing examples of current and recent practice. The second is the program route, which is based on completing a customised master's degree involving 12 modules over three to six years at a cost of £7000, although credit is given for prior certified learning. To be eligible, for either one of these two options, teachers must be fully registered with the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) and be at the top of the salary scale. The accreditation route has now been discontinued (Murray and Mathesson, 2008). There is financial support for teachers for the program route.

There were 716 CTs employed in September 2008 in Scotland, with equivalent numbers in primary and secondary schools. The majority of CTs are aged between 46 and 60 (GTC S, 2008). McMahon and Reeves (2007), who evaluated the impact of CTs in Scotland, revealed that there was an unclear remit among head teachers about the CTs and tensions occurred pertaining to salary differentials in which some CTs earned as much as Principals without having any additional responsibilities, a comparable situation with the ETP/S in Malaysia. However, CT's roles involved mentoring and supporting other teachers, through team teaching and demonstration lessons, and contributing to CPD. Another great concern about the ETS in England and CTs in Scotland was that some of these teachers did not discuss professional matters with their teacher colleagues, due to their colleagues' lukewarm responses about such appointments (Connelly and McMahon, 2007).

Additionally, the CT classification was linked to a substantial pay increase and, as such, is associated with performance pay (Scottish Executive, 2002). It aimed to provide greater incentives for providing evidence of professional learning, and also greater recognition of the value of accomplished teaching. CTs in recent developments have inculcated a reinvigorated approach to 21st century teacher professionalism, which is intended to "build the capacity of teachers, irrespective of career stage, to have high levels of pedagogical expertise, including deep knowledge of what they are teaching; to be self-evaluative; to be able to work in partnership with other professionals; and to engage directly with well-researched innovation" (Teaching Scotland's Future, 2011, p. 19).

3.2.5   Chartered Teachers Wales

A Chartered Teacher Program (CTW) was piloted by the Welsh Assembly in September 2007, which is similar to that of Scotland's in terms of options available with a taught program route and an accreditation route. The CTW was offered to teachers who wished to pursue leadership and middle management posts, which is different from the situation with CTs in Scotland, which only applied to the most experienced teachers who wished to stay in the classroom. The offer made by the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW, 2006) had benefits for both classroom teachers and for middle level leaders. Among its aims were:

- to enable teachers to choose a route that will allow them to stay in the classroom rather than follow a leadership pathway, and at the same time, one which structured professional development and professional study;
- to raise the status and public recognition of teachers who choose to stay in the classroom;
- to enable teachers to enhance their middle leadership skills and develop their own roles as middle leaders. (GTCW, 2006, p. 35)

In Wales, there were wider opportunities for further promotion for those promoted under the scheme. Hepburn (2009) reported that the GTCW believed that future promotion opportunities to leadership positions should not be closed to chartered teachers. The GTCW argued that because the differences between classroom teachers and school leaders is blurred through distributed leadership that the program should not only apply to those wanting to remain as classroom teachers.

3.2.6 Singapore

Singapore has developed two significant initiatives for rewarding teachers, including a leadership track and the senior specialist track (Ministry of Education of Singapore, 2005). The Senior Specialist Track develops specialists in curriculum and instructional or pedagogical design, educational testing and measurements, and research and statistics. It was stated that successful implementation of different career tracks is a difficult task and depends critically on whether the knowledge, skills and professional characteristics applicable for each career track could be identified and reliably assessed (Kelly, 2007). The nature of teaching work and educational administration is complex, ambiguous, and comprises many intangibles aspects, which makes it hard to identify and evaluate effective teacher characteristics and behaviour (Darling-Hammond et al., 1983). For example, Sclafani (2008) revealed that Singapore has the most extensive performance management system, providing bonuses equivalent to one or three month's salary, based on their rating on an annual evaluation for teachers. This approach is aligned to the goals of the system and enables the selection and retention of effective teachers in the system. For teachers who are interested in administrative positions, there is a leadership track, which offers an opportunity to take on leadership positions in schools and in the Ministry's headquarters. Various tracks were designed to suit the interest of teachers in Singapore. Additionally, the system also provided free tuition fees to prospective teachers, while studying to be teachers.

3.2.7 South Korea, Japan and Indonesia

South Korea is notable for its comprehensive approach to recognising teachers and they have all graduate teaching profession. Teaching is a highly respected profession and popular career choice for young South Koreans. Teachers are hired centrally at the metropolitan or provincial level based on their scores on competitive examinations. In comparison with Malaysia, South Korea offers a better career ladder for teachers because all teachers have the opportunity to be promoted to vice principal or principal, though the competition for these positions is very high due to South Korea's traditional emphasis on status. Promotions are allocated on a 'points' system, with teachers gaining points on the basis of their years of service, evaluation results and research achievements. Teachers can also earn bonus points for additional services, including teaching in remote areas or special education schools. The South Korean government was in the process of instituting a Master Teacher System, which was piloted in 2008. Under this system, teachers who have particularly strong skills in both

teaching and leadership may be designated Master Teachers. Master Teachers are expected to remain in a teaching role, but take on new responsibilities in professional development at the school and district levels. They are expected to share their expertise with other, less experienced teachers and help develop curriculum, instructional practices and evaluation systems. In South Korea, in order to be appointed as a Master Teacher, one must have a grade one certificate and ten to fifteen years of teaching experience. The screening committees in each province evaluate teachers in three stages; document screening; teaching capability observation and peer interview; and an in depth interview with the teacher. Master Teachers are given small research grants of $US 150 a month in addition to their normal salaries.

Teaching in Japan is similarly placed as a highly respected profession and teachers have traditionally been paid better than other civil servants. Entry to the teaching profession in Japan is highly selective, at both the program admission and the hiring phase. Only around 14 per cent of applicants (Ncee website, 2014) are admitted into initial teacher education, and of those who graduate, only 30-40 per cent find work in public schools. Those who do make the cut only do so after a rigorous set of school board exams and evaluations. As a result of this system, 98 per cent of classes   at the secondary level are taught by teachers who hold certification in the field or subjects they teach. Finally, the majority of Japanese teachers remain in the profession until retirement age. Japanese teachers are able to move up within the schools over the course of their careers, with the most straightforward path being from the position of teacher to head teacher and then principal. However, within each of these paths, there are multiple salary grades based on performance and experience. While some teachers may never be promoted to head teacher, they are able to see their salary climb from about $US 27000 to nearly $US 70000 over their lifetime. This salary increase take places over 36 steps; there are an additional 20 salary steps within the head position, and 15 within the principal position (Ibid, 2014).

In Indonesia, teachers are required to seek training on a continuous basis if they are to retain their certification. This process addresses the concern that teachers, once certified, might not actively continue to improve their skills. With funding assistance from the Better Education through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading (BERMUTU) Program, the structure and mechanisms for continuous professional teacher development are being developed. Instruction modules have been written to train teachers at the local school cluster

level and participating teachers will be accredited towards a university qualification. These modules will be linked with four progressive teacher profiles and count towards a progression on the teacher salary scale in the future. This process will ensure that teachers have ongoing in service training that is linked to their long term career development and advancement. The process is expected to be driven by the incentive of increased financial rewards. The creation of a promotions structure within Indonesian schools is critical. At present, the only executive positions within the school system are those who are principal, elected coordinators, and expert teachers (guru inti), who are shared between schools.

3.2.8   Malaysia

The main objective of the government in introducing the ETP/S promotional path was to recognise teachers who are truly outstanding and impressive in the subjects they teach or in their specialist fields without moving them to administrative positions. In this way, teachers who are highly motivated, skilled, experienced and have expert knowledge in a particular field can continue teaching in school to further consolidate the teaching and learning process.

The implementation of the ETP/S aimed to develop the selected teachers as role models to inspire and motivate other teachers to strive to raise the quality of teaching and learning in their respective schools. ETs are expected to be the catalyst for schools to improve their academic performance.

3.3   Defining career path linked with teacher quality and student outcomes

Lingard claims 'Of all school variables…it is teachers who have the greatest effect on student learning outcomes' (2005, p. 174). Santoro, Reid, Mayer and Singh (2012) advocated that the debates about what can be defined as 'quality teaching' and the role of teacher professional standards in determining and monitoring quality will no doubt continue to be important in many parts of the globe. Internationally, findings suggest that teaching quality is the most significant in-school influence on student performance (Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Hattie, 2003, 2009). The OECD (2005, p. 26) also recognised teaching quality as one central factor in improving educational outcomes. Consequently, education systems globally have implemented processes for improving teacher quality.

There are many factors that contribute to teacher quality and quality teaching. Darling-Hammond (2000) has argued that factors influencing policy adopted by many states in the USA regarding teacher education, licensing, hiring, and professional development make an important difference in the qualifications and capacities that teachers bring to their work. Subject matter knowledge is another issue addressed in relation to teachers and quality teaching. There is evidence that supports this assumption, but this is not as strong and consistent as one might expect (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Most studies show small, statistically insignificant relationships both positive or negative (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 44).

Research in this area is frequently undertaken from an economic perspective and is often quantitative. Researchers adopting an economic perspective have emphasised relationships between career structure, compensation, and teacher quality. Using three econometric simultaneous-equation models to examine links between teacher quality and teacher salaries of 500 school districts during 1999-2000 to 2001-2002, Lin (2010) revealed a positive and significant relationship between these two. She argues that although portions of the economic and education literatures are devoted to investigations of the issue (e.g. Figlio, 1997, 2002; Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin, 2004), no previous studies have examined the endogenous relationship between teacher quality and teacher salaries (Lin, 2010). Leigh (2009) found that a 1 percent rise in the salary of starting teacher boosted the average aptitude of the future teaching pool (students entering teacher education courses) by 0.6 percentile ranks. Gilpin (2011) investigated how salary rigidities affect teacher quality across teaching subjects and schools and whether high quality teachers can be compensated sufficiently to attract them into unfavourable schools, relying on idiosyncratic variations in compensation across adjacent districts within the same states. They suggested two main points,

1. Increases in lifetime compensation are found to raise the scholastic aptitude of teachers hired; and
2. Bonus/merit pay or additional school activity incomes do not seem to be significant in recruiting/retaining high aptitude teachers.

Successful policy implementation, as Young and Bell (2009) demonstrated in their study of 20 years of teacher improvement initiatives in Connecticut, therefore requires the careful building of political support and the involvement of stakeholders in the process.

71

The OECD report (2009) on evaluating and rewarding teachers has stressed the use of incentives to influence the quality and distribution of teachers. Incentives influence who enters and remains in the teaching profession (Hanushek and Pace, 1995). In recent decades, several monetary incentives have been developed to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Incentive for salaries related to merit, learning results, training, teaching in 'hard-to-staff' schools, or subjects with teacher shortages have been developed in most OECD countries (OECD 2007, 2009). Additionally, pay-related rewards linked to assessment and evaluation, either individual or collective, has been created as ways to recognise effective teaching (Vaillant and Rossel, 2012).

Some empirical work supports the notion that individualised rewards in teaching lead to dysfunctional and counterproductive teacher behaviour (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Jacob and Levitt (2003), for example, found evidence that incentives linked to student achievement on standardised tests led to cheating, including examples of teachers providing students with test answers. There is evidence provided by Cullen and Reback (2006) and Figlio and Getzler (2002) that some teachers employ various mechanisms, such as classification of students into special education, to exclude the test scores of low achieving students used for accountability purposes.

Although monetary rewards are seen to be able to attract and retain teachers, recognition and non-monetary factors also play an important part in the motivations of the teaching profession (Lortie, 1975; Odden, 2000; Andrews, 2006). Some studies show that recognition, which is not directly linked to income, might have important effects on the performance of teacher and ultimately, on students' learning (Andrews, 2006). Lortie (1975), in his classic sociological study of teachers, also spoke of the 'psychic rewards' of teaching.

Following this idea, Vaillant and Rossel (2012) suggested that the idea of non- monetary incentives are increasingly being used to reward effective teaching, with different countries developing initiatives to strengthen the non-monetary components of teachers' recognition. Some of these initiatives include providing teachers with training opportunities, professional development, as well as different forms of public and professional recognition and have been introduced by governmental actors, some by civil society, and others by the corporate world (OECD, 2009; Player, 2010).

Initiatives seeking to honour effective teaching deserve particular attention. In countries like Australia, the United States of America, Canada, Spain and the United Kingdom it is possible to identify numerous awards, all of them sharing the aim of raising the social value of the teaching profession. In most cases, a reduced number of teachers are recognised for their qualities and effectiveness in performance and serve as role models for all other teachers and society at large (The College Board 2006; The Teaching Commission 2006, Term of Reference of the Excellent Teacher, MOE 2007).

Investing in effective modes of ongoing teacher professional learning is regarded increasingly as one of the most effective means of improving student learning outcomes (Ingvarson, 2002). In his studies comparing the United Kingdom and the United States, Ingvarson (2002) argued that the UK performance system, was backwards and had little chance of achieving its aim; the US National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), on the other hand, pointed to a possible future and had the potential to radically change the way educators think about professional development and methods for assessing teacher performance. In a sense, as well, this US model can be seen to place the profession in 'control' of the profession, which has often been seen as a central trait of a profession.

This study will fill the gap in research in Malaysia by looking at the various complex and multi-layered influences involved in the production of policy texts of the ETP/S and how the various respondents viewed those policy objectives, as well as the enactment and evaluation of the ETP/S at the school level. In addition, according to Hutching et al. (2009) in her report about the perception of the ETs in the UK revealed that rewarding quality teachers requires a huge amount of money. Similarly Sutton et al. (2000) also noted the implications for government budgets of monetary rewards for quality teachers. That implication has often seen quotas applied to higher ranks and pay for classroom teachers, as with the ETs in Malaysia. Additionally, career based ladder or Performance Based Compensation Systems have budgetary impact for the government (Plucker et al., 2005).

Based on these three studies, it is reported that in reforming career structures for teachers, monetary or budgetary implications are a major consideration. The definition of teacher career path policy discussed thus far resonates with the theory that faster promotion may motivate and raise the quality of teachers and of teaching. The theory of teacher career path

policies as multidimensional and socially constructed concepts will be discussed in the next section.

3.4 Performance related pay or incentives in Malaysia

In Chapter 2, I discussed the development and implementation of policies related to teacher career paths in Malaysia and how these policies relate to performance pay as the government has introduced the New Public Management (NPM) in the system. The selection of teachers in the ETP/S has relied on assessments of teacher performance. The incentive to be recognised as an ET was to be eligible for fast track promotion. The aim of this study is to explore the tensions and issues associated with this policy of measuring teacher performance and creating links between teacher quality and student outcomes. The analysis will show that there is an implicit assumption in the policy that in recognising excellent teachers, the policy will have impact on quality teaching and thus improve student outcomes. The research reported in this thesis does not look at the empirical relationships between quality teaching and student outcomes (see Hattie, 2009); rather, it provides a policy ecology of the ETP/S. This might be seen as a precursor to subsequent research seeking to understand the quality teaching relationship to student outcomes and the links between quality teaching and teacher career paths policy. This would entail the deconstruction of assumptions built into the policy.

A review of micro economic theory claims that a well-conceived compensation system linking the evaluation of results and pay motivates employees to work for the attainment of organisational goals (Lazear and Gibbs, 2009). Organisations often use performance related pay schemes to provide a relatively low cost approach to rewarding employees, based on the actual contribution of the individual worker to firms' outputs (Murnane and Cohen, 1986, p. 4). In term of schooling, however, there are a range of complexities around measurement of the contributions of an individual teacher to student outcomes (Hattie, 2009). There is significant contention about whether one can accurately determine the contribution of individual teachers to the output of the school, especially to individual student learning. This complexity means that merit-based pay frequently does not work well in schools and is often a cause for complaint and dissatisfaction (Solmon and Podgursky, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2010).

In many countries, teachers make up the majority of those employed in the public service (OECD, 2005). The experiences of many countries were reviewed in the OECD report

entitled "Performance-related pay policies for Government Employees", which concluded that the effects of performance-related pay were most often over-estimated (OECD, 2005). The public sector borrowed the concept of performance–related pay from the private sector to enhance the motivation and accountability of public sector employees. There are issues of performance evaluation in terms of government employees generally, not just those in the teaching profession. In the 1990s, the OECD indicated that performance-related pay for government employees in managerial posts did not meet the requirements for the system to work as an effective incentives mechanism. The OECD, as well as Murnane and Cohen (1986), blame this failure on the difficulty of judging performance, not on the system design or operational problems. The OECD report, however, has put the effectiveness of performance related pay within the public service and positions within government led systems in doubt.

Apart from Murnane and Cohen (1986) and the OECD (2005), many scholars have discussed the various problems associated with introducing performance-related pay in relation to different types of work that employees conduct. For example, Holstrom and Milgrom (1991) argued that incentive pay systems could have undesirable effects on overall performance when the evaluated work was multidimensional, such as the work associated with teaching. They provide an analysis of how multi-tasking affects the optional design of incentive schemes (see also Burgess and Ratto, 2003; Chevalier, Dolton and McIntosh, 2003). Because of this measurement problem, incentive-based pay systems are likely to reward those who are able to succeed in achieving easily defined tasks or goals. Hence employees may be encouraged to divert effort away from other, possibly more important, tasks. Teachers possess multiple goals for their practices and their work is characterised as being multidimensional and complex (Lortie, 2002). As a result, the misallocation of effort caused by thoughtlessly designed performance related pay systems could have significant consequences for teachers and students. Indeed, Holstrom and Milgrom (1991) referred to the distortions caused by the use of incentive pay for teachers based on their students' test results as an illustration of such consequences. Darling-Hammond (2010) has argued similarly.

3.5 Teacher reform – defining key concepts of career ladder, career advancement, career path

Traditional approaches to compensating teachers are usually based on individual development criteria, such as length of service and levels of the teachers' education.

Firestones (1995) observed that these criteria also helped to protect teachers against the subjective judgement of administrators and gave incentives for younger teachers to stay in the profession. There have been criticisms about this approach recently, which have focused on the allegedly weak relationships between teachers' skills, teacher development, student performance, and teacher compensation. Although there is a strong argument that performance-related pay can function as a means to recruit, retain and keep more effective teachers and motivate them to deliver quality performance at the classroom level, many educators contest such programs due to limited evidence that they improve student achievement (Coleman, 1988; Darling-Hammond, 2010). On the other hand, Ingersoll (2001) has shown the negative effects of poor salaries on teacher turnover. Critics and supporters alike also warn against inadequate measures for evaluating student and teacher performance (Springer, 2009).

For most stakeholders, the primary purpose of educational reform in general and compensation reform in particular, is to help to ensure equitable access to quality education/teaching for all students. Pay structures that reward teachers on the basis of individual or group effectiveness (merit pay) are one strategy for accomplishing this goal (Odden and Kelly, 2002). Curtis (2010) states "the purpose of developing and implementing a human capital strategy is to drive significant and lasting improvement to overall student achievement. To do so, we must improve the quality of teaching and reduce the variance in teaching quality" (p. 10). This is the stance also adopted by Hattie (2009), who argues we need the best teaching practices in every classroom in every school in a system. He also suggests that this is a significant equity issue.

Defining teacher quality is difficult and not within the scope of this study. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the ETP/S is predicated on the assumption that teacher quality can be defined, assessed and promoted through incentives. However, it is helpful to know that definitions of teacher quality range from bare-bones approaches that rely solely on student achievement as measured by standardised test scores to complex portrayals of teaching based on rich descriptions of the work of teachers, including moral and ethical components of practice (Cochran-Smith, 2010). It is also difficult to define teacher quality because of the diversity of teacher preparation, assignments, and supports available in the contexts in which they teach (Cohen, 2010).

Regardless of the challenges inherent in the definition and measurement of teacher quality, there is visible support for the concept of performance pay systems, based at least in part on the observed weak links between teacher experiences and educational credentials and student achievement (Springer, 2009). At the current time, a number of research and evaluation projects are underway to assess the potential of pay for performance systems to make a positive impact on student achievement and to identify the characteristics of effective and ineffective programs.

Staged career path policies are seen as another useful tool in attracting good quality teachers into the system (Skyes, 1983). Good career path policies may also provide important models for recognising, developing and rewarding teacher expertise and providing differentiated responsibilities for accomplished teachers that feed directly back into school improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Improvements to the career ladder for teachers are one of the rewards introduced by the government in Malaysia to recognise quality teachers in the system, without replacing the overall salary schedule. The career paths for teachers are different from one country to another based on the local contexts. In the Malaysian context, there is an aim to achieve what the global context is seeking: quality teachers in the classroom, producing good (improved) student learning outcomes as an asset for the nation. Teacher career path policies are seen as a globalised problem and ways of resolving these issues require specific approaches that are suited to individual education systems. The concept of career paths for teachers is important in teacher reform policy to reward and motivate teachers (OECD, 2005).

Hart (1986) defined career ladder as an incentive plan widely considered in response to perceptions of decline in teaching effectiveness and as a method of employment retention. She suggested that reform to teacher career ladders also attempted to enhance the attractiveness and effectiveness of the teaching profession. Generally career ladders are aimed at a target population-teachers and potential teachers who are academically able, seek opportunities to progress, and might be most at risk of leaving the profession because they have multiple options or career and growth needs not met by the current structure of teaching. Rewarding quality teachers through various incentives, including monetary ones such as bonuses, excellent teacher programs or advanced skills teachers programs and through certification have been instigated in UK, Wales, Australia and US. Ingvarson (2013) draws on the experience of these three countries that have sought to reform career structures and

pay systems so that there is a closer alignment between career progression and increasing expertise. Kingdon and Teal (2007) suggested that there is some evidence in India of a positive relationship between teachers' pay levels and student achievement. This is cited as an early example of looking at the two way relationship: teachers are rewarded as their students perform better and such pay in turn elicits better student outcomes.

The early 2000s witnessed growing reforms focused on teachers in many countries around the world. These reforms recognised the important role of teachers and quality teaching for improving student learning and have changed major aspects of teacher workforce development, including teacher education, certification, professional development, teacher evaluation, compensation, and career advancement (OECD, 2004, 2005, 2011a; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2006). Countries around the globe employ various hiring policies and practices such as bonuses, faster promotion, retaining quality teachers at the classroom level and reducing administrative burdens for teachers. Under the centralised government system of Malaysia, the process of hiring and allocating teachers was done at the centre, that is, at the MOE level, and at State Education Offices (SEO). The system differs from those countries that are decentralising the process of hiring teacher candidates and have a better opportunity to choose and stay at schools for open positions and competing for hiring excellent teachers. This is similar to the OECD (2005) description that there were two main approaches to reward or design career structures for teachers, career-based systems and position-based systems. Akiba (2013) argues that teacher compensation and career advancement systems serve as a critical driver for professionalising teachers. According to her, generous compensation attracts highly capable candidates into teaching and career advancement opportunities retain them and capitalise on their talents for school improvement (p. xxxi). In Australia, career advancement as framed by the Australian Institute for Teachers and School Leaders (AITSL) is regulated by four levels or career stages accompanying advanced certification and in the future, potentially bonuses. Both career advancement systems aim for recruitment of highly capable teacher candidates and retention in the teaching profession through rewarding excellent teachers and professionalising the teaching profession.

As noted to this point, two broad kinds of systems have been employed in most countries to reward teachers, Career Ladder Systems (CLS) and Performance-Based Compensation Systems (PBCS). The summative ideas of each type of these systems are listed in Table 7 and Table 8 below. This is a framing of these two systems from a US perspective.

Table 7: Type of career ladder systems

Performance–Based Ladder	Allow teachers to take more responsibility as they demonstrate their ability to do so. Teachers may progress through a series of levels that may include novice teacher, career teacher, and master teacher (NASBE, 2002)
Job-Enlargement Ladders	Allow teachers to take increased responsibility for non-classroom- related activities. Activities may include curriculum development, supervising and mentoring beginning teachers, and service as professional development trainer or lead teacher (NASBE, 2002)
Professional Development Ladders	Determine advancement based on the amount of additional knowledge and skills teachers develop over the course of their career. Skills may be obtained through university coursework, professional development activities, advanced degrees, or NBPTS certification (NASBE, 2002).

Table 8: Performance-based compensation models

Skills-or competency-Based Pay	Works to measure and reward the knowledge and skills teachers develop over the course of their career. • Measured in the areas of depth of subject knowledge, expertise in instruction and curriculum development, or knowledge in areas such as guidance counselling or present outreach (Kelly and Odden, 1995). • Salary increases can be linked to the development of skills needed by the school district, licensure in additional content areas, or NBPTS certification.
Performance-Based Pay	Rewards teachers' performance measured against a set of standards developed by the school district. • Performance ranges from student standardised exam performance to teachers' additional responsibilities

	outside of the classroom.
	• Incentives for performance can be awarded to individual teachers or to groups of teachers.
Pay At- Risk Performance Awards	Require certain employees to put a certain portion of their base salary 'at-risk' until they meet established performance goals.
	• Performance goals can be set by the school district and may include completing advanced training or having teachers work together to complete a task that is of great importance to the school or district (Kelly and Odden, 1995)
Group Based Performance Awards	Encourages teachers to work cooperatively and to improve students' performance. Awards may be used for faculty and staff bonuses, or for curriculum development or faculty and staff professional development opportunities (Kelly and Odden, 1995).

Adopted from: Plucker, Zapf, and Mc Nabb (2005) (Rewarding Teachers for Students' Performance: Improving Teaching through Alternative Teacher Compensation Programs).

In his work on professional certification, Ingvarson (2013) argued that there is a challenge for developing systems for recognising and rewarding accomplished teachers operated by the teaching profession itself - a standards-based professional learning and certification system. Australia draws on the experience of several countries that have sought to reform teacher career structures and pay systems, so that there is closer alignment between career progression and increasing expertise as framed by AITSL. The issue is that at this policy moment these standards are not linked to pay structures. A standards-based professional learning and certification system has the potential to overcome major limitations in the traditional system.

3.6 Defining key concepts of master teachers, super-teachers, advanced skills teachers and excellent teachers

According to Lavely, Blackman, Bullock, Follman et al. (1990), there are five components to be considered for master teachers: expert pedagogy, test demonstrated subject matter mastery, roles and duties, professional activities, and student achievement. In addition, Kapel

et al. (1985) and Ibrahim et al. (2013) claimed that master teachers are the *crème de la crème* of teachers.

Sutton, Wortley, Harisson and Wise (2000) suggested that idea of identifying and rewarding individual teachers for their pedagogical excellence is anathema to many teachers and insults their professionalism, a position also argued by Darling-Hammond (2010). They noted that ASTs took most or all of the other duties suggested and ASTs would rather be outside the classroom than within it. They also suggested the AST program was found to be divisive and demotivating to all, but the handful of successful appointees. Taking into account perceptions from respondents, their study suggested that the workloads and unfair evaluation of selection made the program unpopular. The respondents in their study were also uncertain about how the ASTs would be selected and how they would be reassessed.

Reforming career structure and compensation systems for teachers involves complicated public policy, as teaching is a mass profession and so any changes to teachers' salaries have enormous budgetary impact. Given that argument, Ingvarson (2013) suggested that despite strong in principle support for ASTs by the main stakeholders, implementation is difficult in changing political and economic contexts. He compared these difficulties with problems in other countries, as they have sought to implement advanced certification schemes. In the Australian case, Ingvarson (2013) identified that in order to establish professional certification, there would need to be a stable and independent professional ownership of the certification. He asserted by giving an example from another OECD country highlighting that the work of teaching has been professionalised and associated with student performance. Thus he insisted that independent professional certification is one of the most effective approaches to professionalise teaching and accept and respect teachers as trusted professional partners. This was the situation with the National Board in the USA. This remains an issue in Australia: the profession still does not control career progression criteria and selection processes, he suggests. Nor is there a linkage to salary scales.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have critically explored the literature on teacher reform, particularly on rewarding quality teachers with the aim of promoting quality teaching and retaining quality teachers in the classroom. With regards to this study, the exploration of international career path policies and the chronology of policies promoting quality education in Malaysia support

both research *for* and research *of* policy (refer to section 4.3). This chapter has explored the dual contexts of international policies and the historical policy context from Malaysia. These contexts work to shape both the development of the ETP/S and the academic study of teacher career path policies in Malaysia.

The review of literature describes approaches to improve teacher quality and reward quality teachers around the world. This literature establishes the context of the dominant view that teaching quality is the most significant in-school factor contributing to student learning (Hattie, 2009) and the related view that enhanced student learning is central to producing top quality human capital for national economies (Hanushek, Jamison and Woessmann, 2008). The approaches to teacher reform and support for the improvements of teacher quality vary from one country to another.

The review of international policies for improving teachers' career paths in this chapter provides some international benchmarking and informs the international contexts in which the current teacher career path policy was developed in Malaysia (see research question 1.2). It offers insights into the variety of ways that other nations have chosen to provide incentives and rewards for teachers to improve their practice. As part of the policy cycle (see Chapter 4), policy makers often look to international approaches before developing their own policies. International benchmarking with regards to teacher career path policies not only provides insights into the standards by which other countries measure teacher quality and the rewards offered, but also offers some pointers as to which policies have been the most successful. Reviews of international contexts can thus be used in research *for* as well as research *of* policy. With regards to the research *of* policy, this chapter has explored the international context and the local historical context, both of which add to the ecological understanding of the policy.

Arguments around the advantages and disadvantages of rewarding and measuring quality teachers through their practices suggested that many countries used monetary and non-monetary rewards. In addition, a number of countries established bodies to certify teachers' qualifications and grant quality teacher status. The literature presented in this chapter has offered a context through which we can seethe good practices of other countries, some of which were taken into consideration when developing the characteristics of policy to reward quality teachers in the Malaysian education system (see research question 1.3). When

developing policy in Malaysia, policy-makers appear to be adapting approaches to measuring and rewarding quality teaching from other nations to suit the local social and political setting. The review of literature from the Malaysian context has revealed that the 'established knowledge' from various international policies were adopted and adapted to meet the needs of the teaching population in Malaysia. Economic and political pressures in the system were identified as key elements in determining ways to reward quality teachers in the system.

The motivations behind teacher career path policies in Malaysia are three-fold. They aim to promote quality in the teaching profession, reward and retain quality teachers and enhance their opportunities for career development. The policies described in this chapter, particularly the ETP/S, offer teachers new pathways for promotion and retaining them in the classroom. Unlike teacher career path policy in the US and Chile, the ETP/S does not provide any certification .The ETP/S can be seen to have the greatest similarity to teacher career path policy in UK, where their policy also has established a new career path to encourage experienced teachers to stay in the classroom. The historical contexts that have been outlined in this chapter have demonstrated that the Malaysian government has made repeated attempts to promote teaching quality up to and including 10 MP. This shows a level of priority for improving teaching quality in Malaysia, which constitutes an important backdrop for the ETP/S. Unlike the global education policy described in this chapter, the ETP/S is targeted to recognise, reward and retain quality teachers in the classroom.

CHAPTER 4:   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used in this study and provides detailed descriptions of the research focus, research questions and data collection (also see Chapter 1, Table 1). More detailed considerations of the research questions are offered, alongside a discussion of the research design. In particular, the chapter includes a discussion of how data collection was actually conducted, issues involved reflecting the Malaysian context, and the approaches used for data analysis.

Chapter 2 (2.5, 2.6 and 2.7) explained the methodological importance of the concept of policy and outlined the policy research framework. Policy, the policy cycle and policy ecology were also outlined in detail in those sections. Because of the international, regional and Malaysian contexts and factors surrounding the ETP/S, a policy ecology approach, developed by Weaver-Hightower (2008), has been adopted in this study. The policy ecology approach suggests policy exists within a complex system that reflects varied international, national, regional and local dynamics. Chapter 3 explained these various contexts in line with a policy ecology approach. The methodology and data collection methods outlined in this chapter are aligned with a policy ecology framework and are focused on data that will allow answers to be provided to the research questions that frame the study. Giving the policy ecology framework, these data will allow for an understanding of the multiple contexts situating the policy text production and implementation/enactment of ETP/S.

To summarise, the purpose of this chapter is to:

- expound the research strategy, including the research methodologies adopted;
- explain the methodological issues and approach taken in this policy research;
- elaborate how the research data are produced, managed and analysed; introduce the research instruments that have been developed and used in the pursuit of the goals of this study;
- provide an account of the ways in which I conducted this research to investigate the ETP/S in the Malaysian education system;
- provide an account of the approach adopted to data analysis;

- describe the ethical considerations of this research; and
- consider the issue of positionality of the researcher and how it relates to methodological issues, data collection and analysis.

4.2   Rationale for the research design

A variety of approaches have been used in education policy research, both generally in studies of teacher career paths and more specifically in research on performance-related remuneration for teachers. Both quantitative economic approaches (Figlio, 1997; Figlio and Getzler, 2002; Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin, 2004; Hanushek, 2006, 2013; Goldhaber, 2010) and sociological approaches, which tend to include a more qualitative focus, have been used to examine teacher quality and quality teaching around the globe (Stronge, Gareis and Little, 2012; Ingvarson, 2013).

Despite a wealth of research in the area of teacher career path policy and remuneration schemes (OECD, 2005, 2009, 2013), there has been limited research that particularly explores policy text production, implementation/enactment (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2011, 2012; Braun, Ball and Maguire, 2011) and evaluation of the ETP/S. Furthermore, little research has been undertaken in the area of rewarding teacher quality in developing countries. This is an interesting gap in the research literature, given teacher quality has been a policy focus for a number of school systems across the globe in the past decade.

4.3   Methodological issues in policy research

Policy analysis plays an important role in understanding government systems and practices in society. However, there are no specific methods for conducting policy research (Goodwin, 2011). Goodwin (2011) argues that policy research is an example of "established knowledge industries" (p. 167) for many people who are in the field of producing, assessing and interpreting policy knowledge for governments and other organizations. Thus, there are many ways to undertake policy analysis and many reasons for doing so.

Reasons for policy analyses may include research *for* policy, in order to contribute to the actual policy production process, and *of* policy, in order to contribute to the academic body of knowledge about policy and to contribute to our understanding of contemporary social life. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) differentiate between these two approaches, with analysis *for*

policy denoting research which serves to support the development and implementation of a particular policy, often carried out by government employees or researchers contracted for such a purpose and as part of the steps in actual policy production. Analysis *of* policy, on the other hand, suggests a more critical stance, in which the research purpose may be to investigate the policy at any point in its development and implementation, with the goal of reviewing from disinterested stances (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). This is the more academic study of policy, which aims to contribute to the academic field of educational policy studies, though as Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggest, perhaps it is better to see the research *for/of* distinction as sitting on a continuum rather than as simple binary. This study does research *of* policy in Malaysian education. However, in the concluding chapter recommendations are made for actual policy makers in education in Malaysia. In this way, drawing on my research study *of* policy, I move to a more normative research *for* policy stance, which is indicative of the continuum of policy studies.

4.4   Why qualitative research?

Qualitative semi-structured interviews are based in conversations (Kvale, 1996), with the emphasis on researchers asking questions and listening, and respondents answering (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). The semi-structured interview is guided by the researcher, linked to overarching research questions, but leaves space for new information and knowledge to be generated by the interviewee as well. It is similar to standardised survey interviewing in this respect, but unlike the survey interview, the epistemology of qualitative interviews tends to be more constructionist or constructivist in orientation with recognition that the researcher as interviewer and the interviewee are together constructing data (Merriam, 2009).

In terms of analysis of interview data, a thematic approach is used, that is both deductive and inductive. Thematic analysis is used across many fields and disciplines (Boyatzis, 1998), as well as in this study. A qualitative analytic method is used for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 6), which organises and describes the data set in rich detail. However, frequently such analysis goes beyond this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge inductively as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear, and Gliksman, 1997). The process involves the identification of themes through careful reading and re-reading of the data (Rice and Ezzy, 1999). It is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories of

analysis. This study used thematic analysis, incorporating the data driven inductive approach of Boyatzis (1998). Via thematic analysis, salient themes were identified, both as emergent from the data and also as corresponding deductively with those previously identified in the theoretical literature – a somewhat 'hybrid thematic' approach (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The epistemological positioning of thematic analysis is to yield insightful interpretations that are contextually grounded. It also used as a systematic approach to the analysis of data that involves identifying themes and patterns of cultural meaning, to support the coding and classification of data, in this study interviews and policy documents. Thematic analysis helps to identify commonalities, relationships, overarching patterns and theoretical constructs that may emerge from the data. The qualitative approach assumes participants and researcher create and co-construct their worlds (Merriam, 2009). Semi–structured interviews then can be seen to involve the co-creation of reality between the researcher and interviewee. Rapley (2004) notes that talk can reveal information about the person producing themselves as an 'adequate interviewee' and as a specific type of person in relation to this topic.

In that context, this research project will comprise the following key characteristics,

- The participants are placed at the forefront of the phenomenon of interest, so that understanding is developed from the participants' perspectives, not the researcher's (Freebody, 2003; Patton, 1990; Merriam, 2009; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984);
- The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984; Patton, 1990 ; Merriam, 2009);
- A joint deductive/inductive approach to thematic analysis was used. A deductive research process was used, where I co-constructed data to elicit themes and concepts for consideration against existing theoretical frameworks (Merriam, 2009) and an inductive research process was also used where the data could potentially generate theory;
- The research design was emergent and flexible so as to respond to the conditions of the project in progress (Merriam, 2009); and

- The data were developed into rich descriptions of the policy makers' views (Eisner, 1991; Freebody, 2003) and research findings were presented as a richly descriptive narrative (Merriam, 2009).

In selecting an interpretive method, I am conscious of the interpretive latitude that was ascribed to me as the researcher and that I needed to ensure the choice of qualitative research instrument(s) and collection and analysis of data were credible. Furthermore, I needed to ensure that findings were presented in such a way as to afford scrutiny and challenge (Freebody, 2003). Here, transparency in my descriptions of how data were collected and analysed will be important. The analysis and depiction of data, as well as researchers' declarations about the meaning of that data, are all interpretive processes. In other words, they are all processes that seek to understand and explain the meaning of what is being studied. Those studies that are specifically identified as 'interpretive' differ not in kind, but rather in degree from other kinds of research.

4.5 Data collection

The approaches, strategies and design of policy research are used in different ways and in different circumstances in different policy research projects. As noted by Ozga (1987), "the shape of study of education policy is determined by where it is studied" (p. 138) and by what issues are of concern. I have employed qualitative methods, including the analysis of documents and interviews with 'elites', or government policy makers as a means of data collection for this study. Typically, policy makers' views on specific policies, their attitudes and morale are measured by means of interviews, which allows the researcher to access the policy makers' perceptions as to how and why the policy was produced and whether the policy is meeting its objectives or not. It is appropriate to interview elites, namely senior policy makers in the ministry and government agency, to gain an understanding of policy and its intended purposes and of the contextual and other pressures involved in policy production and implementation. Such interviews would seem to be essential for this study to ascertain the views and expectations of policy outcomes of the current teacher career path policy held by senior policy makers. These interviews were central to understanding the ecology surrounding the development of the ETP/S policy, its production and reiterations as policy text and in implementation and enactment.

This study aims to develop a picture of the views and perceptions of the Senior Policy Makers (SPM), Excellent Teachers (ET), Excellent Principals (EP), and one Teacher Union (TU) representative, each of these groups having been involved with the ETP/S in Malaysia. In particular, the focus of this study is on their perceptions of the development and enactment of ETP/S and their evaluation of the policy, as it has been put into practice or implemented. The development of this picture will be accomplished through a data set consisting of semi-structured interviews and supported by the analysis of related policy documentation. Qualitative research methods will enable me to answer the question of how the respondents' views on this issue will enable my analysis of the production, implementation and evaluation of the ETP/S and in so doing to generate new knowledge. Chapter 5, 6 and 7 has indicated how the policy ecology adopted in this study has been established. The policy texts production of ETP/S has generated from historical contexts and the development of the policy. The actors interviewed in this study, their relationships and the environment and structures have been generated and processes that impact the relationships were discussed through chapter (see section 2.7 in greater detail).To understand the contexts and content of the policy, detailed textual analysis of policy texts central to the issues of teacher career paths in Malaysia has been undertaken, in addition to semi-structured research interviews.

Figure 4 below, explains the data gathering strategies. The upper boxes represent the participants involved in this study. A qualitative method is used in gathering the data through semi–structured interviews and document analysis. Data analysis employed a critical interpretive method. The analysis of policy documents was done inductively and deductively derived from major themes in the cognate research literature. Semi-structured interviews also used inductive and deductive methods for the derivation of major themes, using thematic and content analysis. In the next section, the data strategies will be explained in greater detail.

Figure 4: Data gathering strategies

Participants Senior Policy Makers (Teacher Administrators)

Participants Senior Policy Makers (Administrative Officers)

Participants Excellent Teachers

Participants Representative Teachers 'Union

Participant Excellent Principal

Participant Retired SPM

Qualitative Studies

Semi – Structured Interviews

Document Analysis

Critical Interpretive Study
Teacher Career Path Policy

ANALYSIS OF POLICY DOCUMENTS: INDUCTIVE +
DEDUCTIVE DERIVATION OF MAJOR THEMES
ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS:
INDUCTIVE+ DEDUCTIVE DERIVATION OF MAJOR THEMES

4.5.1 Identifying possible participants

This section will offer a discussion of data gathering strategies, which focused on identifying the respondents, recruiting them and the issues underlying these processes. As Figure 4 (above) shows, there were four plus two groups of respondents. The first four groups of respondents are Senior Policy Makers (Teacher Administrators TA), Senior Policy Makers (Administrative Officers) (AO), ETs, and also a representative from the TU. The other two emergent group are EPs and retired senior policy makers. The ETs were the 'carriers' of policy implementation and Teachers' Union representative was interviewed as another representative of the teaching profession. As will be shown, Teacher Union pressure was a factor in the aetiology of the ETP/S.

The SPMs were classified as 'elite' interviewees based on their status and administrative power in government agencies. This study explores elite SPMs' and ETs' views of the ETP/S in terms of policy text production, the enactment of the program at the school level, and their evaluations of the ETP/S. Those studying elites have developed many different typologies. Early classifications include C.W. Mills' (1956) economic, military and political elites and Nadel's (1956) social, specialized and governing elites, which link to this research. In

accessing and preparing to interview elites, gaining permission to interview these individuals required extensive preparation and creativity on the part of researcher, as well as the right credentials and contacts. My standing as a senior Malaysian public servant with experience in the Ministry of Education of Malaysian background afforded me access to senior public servants that probably would not be available to other potential policy researchers.

Through direct but open-ended questions, my aim was to elicit the respondents' accounts of their perceptions of the ETP/S. This kind of information would be very difficult, if not impossible to obtain through surveys; thus the semi-structured interviews were used for this purpose in this study. Such difficulties relate to the position of public servants in Malaysia, who sign contracts agreeing not to disclose how policies are derived and produced. This makes policy research quite a difficult undertaking in the Malaysian political context. Through interviews the respondents have the opportunity to express their experiences with and thoughts about the program. Relevant measures of such policy production, implementation/enactment and evaluation of policy programs are often collected using semi-structured interviews. The topic that I engaged with required further explanation regarding related issues, which survey data could not explore through surveys questions. Within each category, the following respondents were recruited:

Table 9: Respondents (by categories)

Categories	Gender		Race			TOTAL
	Male	Female	Malay	Chinese	Indian	
Excellent Teachers	4	2	1	5	-	6
Senior Policy Makers (Teacher Administrators)	1	1	2	-	-	2
Senior Policy Makers (Administrative Officers)	-	4	4	-	-	4
Teacher's Union	-	1	-	1	-	1
Excellent Principals	2	-	2	-	-	2
TOTAL OF RESPONDENTS						15

4.5.2 Recruiting respondents

The process of recruiting respondents was facilitated by my status as an 'insider' (see section 4.10), an employee in the Ministry. This status appeared to make contacting potential respondents and scheduling interviews relatively easier than it may have been for someone who did not have an 'insider' status. Preparing the lists of potential respondents and setting up interview sessions were vital elements to ensure that the right people were targeted to assist in answering my research questions. Rubin and Rubin (1995) note the importance of 'recruitment' or looking for subject informants. Their recommendations include initially finding knowledgeable informants, getting a range of views, testing emerging themes with new informants and choosing interviewees to extend results. In this case, the researcher also notes that some *ad hoc* approaches may occur during the research process with interviewees recommending others that should be interviewed.

Before recruiting interview participants, a thorough review of the academic literature, policy documents and personal backgrounds was completed. This task was very important in order to determine who to approach for interviews to enable the collection of quality data that would enable me to address and answer the research questions underpinning the study. The individuals who were approached to participate in research interviews, particularly those in the Senior Policy Maker categories, were selected in response to their access to information about the ETP/S and involvement in the policy process. Thus, the selected policy makers were those who are in positions of social power (their social position, status, role, institution, official role and so on) and can provide useful data and information. This is why I refer to them as elite interviewees.

All interviewees were recognised as key informants, with knowledge and first-hand experience of the ETP/S. Thus, the interview type in this study can be regarded as key informant interviews (Borg and Gall, 1989). At the beginning, there were four pre-determined categories and later, after the interview sessions took place, there were another two categories, which made a total of six categories of interviewees. The first four pre-determined groups were as follows: Senior policy makers (Teacher Administrators)

1. Senior Policy makers (Administrative Officers)(SPM)(AO)
2. Excellent Teachers (ETs)
3. Representative from Teachers' Union(TU)

The two new groups that emerged during the interview sessions were:

4. Excellent Principals (EPs)

The EPs were recruited during an initial visit to schools to get gatekeeper approval from them to interview their teachers. Both of them were willing to talk about the ETP/S and particularly to report on what was happened at the school level in respect of the ETP/S. They gave informed consent to participate in the study.

5. Retired senior policy maker

The retired Senior Policy Maker was recommended by one of the respondents in this study in order to get a clear picture of the ETP/S, as she was the person in charge during the formulation and production of the program in the MOE.

Fifteen of the 20 potential respondents, invited to participate in this study, agreed and were interviewed. Amongst individuals who I did not manage to interview were the Minister of Education and Deputy Minister, and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education. This was due to their tight schedules. Although I was unable to interview the Minister of Education or Deputy Minister, I believe that the responses offered by the Senior Policy Makers who were directly involved in the policy making of the ETP/S were sufficient to assist me to answer my research questions. As Fitz and Halpin (1994) suggest, ministers regularly rely on civil servants to 'reply' on their behalf, thereby capturing the ministers' perceptions of certain programs and government initiatives.

Within the group of interview respondents, there were ETs, a representative of the TU, and SPMs. There were five ETs who were involved in the enactment of the ETP/S at the school level. The positions of the ETs involved in these interviews ranged from the highest grade of DG 54 to Premier C, which has a salary equivalent to the State Education Director and Deputy /Directors in the Ministry of Education. All the recruited Excellent Teachers in this study were graduate teachers. All teachers interviewed in this study were directly involved in the ETP/S. The representative from the TU was also interviewed, as this individual was influential in policy terms in the Malaysian education setting.

There were three retired SPMs who were interviewed for this study. The selection of the retired administrators as interviewees enabled the collection of rich and transparent information about the issues being investigated. For example, one of the three education administrators was the person who initiated the ETP/S. Retired employees are often seen as a valuable source of information and have several advantages for the interview process (Weiner and Vining, 1999). The literature suggests (Gewirtz and Ozga, 1994) these people are much easier to access and have the advantage of usually having the time to participate in interviews. They are also able to speak without the constraints on them when still in powerful policy positions. The recruitment of retired senior policy makers not only enabled access to perspectives regarding the establishment of the ETP/S, but it also provided insights into the issues and challenges during the initiation of the program. Additionally, these retired policy makers were free to voice their opinion without being limited by government regulations. Walford (2011) further suggests that the retired elite may be more willing to divulge information not generally or publicly known. However, the downside is that they may be attempting to write themselves into history, and to ascribe meaning to their own action that is unjustified. In this study, the retired SPM shared information with no limitations regarding their views. One SPM commented on the government policy, stating that they no longer had to worry about agency politics, such as the government regulations about giving public statements or retribution and, as such, they may well be more forthright and analytic. In my case, the retired policy makers offered their perspectives on the period between the first proposal of the ETP/S and the approval of the program.

There were five SPMs who were directly involved with the ETP/S who were interviewed for this study. These SPM were positioned in different schemes and agencies. Two senior policy makers were Teachers Administrators (TAs) situated in the MOE and were recruited due to their knowledge and experiences regarding the ETP/S. One SPM was an Administrative Officer (AO) from the MOE, and also agreed to be interviewed in this study, as she dealt directly with issues related to the promotion of teachers in Malaysia. The other two SPMs were in the central agency and were thus responsible for approving any program or policy proposed by MOE and other ministries in Malaysia. I have categorised them as highly influential decision makers in the Malaysian public service.

This study was conducted in the state of Penang, in which the population consists of a multiethnic mix of Malays, Chinese and Indians. In this study, it was coincidental that most

of the respondents were Chinese. There are also ETs from Malay and Indian backgrounds working in the system. The selection of individual participants, within the criteria required by this study, was made by an officer in the State Education Department in Penang. The criteria that I requested included: ETs at the highest grades placed at the classroom level, who were influential, who were capable of speaking about the program and on behalf of ETs, and had vast experience. The officer from the State Education Department gave priority to those who met the criteria and held the highest grade positions as ETs. The officer from the State Education Department also focused on teachers of the science stream subjects. Additionally, status of the ETs recruited and ETs that made most contribution towards the education setting nationally and internationally were also among the criteria for selection. For example, the premier post C of ET in this study used to be the president of the Excellent Teacher Advisory Board in Malaysia and most of the respondents were those who held important posts in teacher organisations and were linked with the MOE and shared their pedagogical expertise in formulating curriculum in the country. In fact, one of the names on the lists of respondents was also a president of the State's ET association in Penang. In addition, all the selected ETs were those who were members of a panel for advising the curriculum division in the MOE. There were also involved in the advisory team in formulating the national examinations.

The suitability and availability of the respondents was taken into consideration by the State Education Department, which had knowledge of these respondents. The selection process did not discriminate or select respondents on the basis of ethnicity, but rather was based on their status, availability and capacity to speak about their position. From this perspective, their views on the issues were sufficiently broad and the respondents were able to give opinions from their different contexts. Their status and role in the education setting in the State, as well as the country, were among the criteria selected to be a respondents in this study to respond to my research questions. Selection of the research respondents by an official in the State Department might seem unusual as a way of selecting research interviewees. However, in Malaysia this is the only way to legitimately access such interviewees, and is perhaps indicative of a level of control that perhaps inhibits the conduct of critical research and specifically critical policy research. Nonetheless, the interviewees represented a good cross-section of significant participants in the ETP/S.

4.5.3   Interacting with interviewees

The process of interacting with the interviewees at the various stages of the research process is discussed in this section. Three months before the fieldwork, I started contacting the interviewees to ask for their consent to be interviewed. A letter of invitation to participate, an information sheet about the research including support of supervisor and evidence of ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at The University of Queensland, and an interview consent form were sent to selected potential interviewees (see Appendix 9). The initial approach was followed by several phone calls and emails to confirm the interviewees' consent and provide further opportunity for them to ask questions or request additional explanations about the study.

Face to face interviews were preferred because issues of confidentiality of information can then be addressed within the session. All interviews were conducted face to face, except one with retired SPMs who formulated this program. That interview was conducted over the telephone. Face to face interviews are expensive and time consuming, particularly with regards to arranging the dates and times. Establishing rapport was not a problem, as the informants from the SPM category were known to the researcher.

The new category of respondent was the category of EPs. Members of this category volunteered to participate in the study, following the initial meeting between the researcher and the principals, before interviewing the ETs in their schools. Both EPs involved in the research were attracted to the research topic and thus volunteered to give their views and perceptions about the ETP/S and the ETs at their school. These initial meetings with the principals were a courtesy meeting and intended as a formality prior to entering schools, however, they yielded additional participants. The negotiations and meetings with EPs thus indirectly produced a new dimension for the study, namely the leadership perspectives at the school level of the ETP/S and the involvement of ETs in schools.

The respondent from the Teachers' Union (TU) also generated a change to the intended research design. Initially, I had aimed to interview a number of people from the TU, but when I conducted an interview with the secretary general of the union, I was given a choice. She stated that I could either choose her as the sole representative of the TU in Malaysia or interview others and she would not participate in the research. Her rationale was that the different representatives of the union will have conflicting ideas because different categories

of the TU will represent a particular group of their teachers, however with her, she was representing the whole teachers' union in the country and, she argued, thus representing all teachers. While this may be viewed as a limitation of the study, that is, only one member for this category, this representative of the TU adds a broader knowledge and context to the study, as she is a highly influential individual and represented the national union of teachers in the country. It does, however, limit the perspectives from the TU explored by this study to that of one individual. As the analysis will show, it seems the TU was influential in the creation of the ETP/S.

4.5.4   The research 'instruments': Interview guide and interview process

The techniques used in this study were semi-structured interviews and a document analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that the best method for policy analysis is a critical interpretive method. Additionally, Gewirtz and Ozga (1994) have suggested that semi-structured interviews and document analysis are the best methods for obtaining responses from elite participants, such as those in the SPM categories.

An interview guide was prepared as a means of ensuring all the necessary topics were covered during the interview sessions. Mason (1996) refers to semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interview as qualitative interviewing. Questions were developed from the key concepts and themes that emerged from the literature review, my own experience as a policy maker, and other related issues. The guide was not rigid; rather, it was flexible and the interviewees were given ample opportunity to give their views on the ETP/S and freely provide their perspectives about topics that were not included in the interview guide. The list of questions was not only a reminder for the researcher to ask particular questions, but also to help give some structure to the interaction. The purpose of the questions was to keep track of the interviewee's talk, to follow-up and to work with them, and not strictly limit the talk to a predetermined agenda. The interview guide began with broad opening questions and then narrowed the focus to specific topics. The guide, at the same time, assisted with clarifications when needed and helped respondents to find answers when discussing difficult issues. Their responses became my source for subsequent questions. The interview guide was also constructed against the backdrop of the questions underpinning the research.

The use of the guide differed from one interviewee to the other. With some respondents, I worked closely with the schedule, glancing at the list for a suitable 'next question' when I

could hear their responses coming to a close and when I did not want to follow-up with anything further. Because of this flexibility in handling the questions, I did not ask the same questions in the same way in each interaction. Each interview, however, covered the same broad themes outlined in the interview guide, either through the interviewee or researcher raising it as a subject for talk. This was the central rationale of semi-structured interviews that enabled the collection of contrasting and complementary talk on the same themes or issues.

Although the questions were constructed and distributed before the interview sessions, the researcher still gave the interviewees room to express their views and give suggestions on the current ETP/S. Through this communicative session, I gained additional insights and was able to formulate new questions that were taken up in following interviews. Thus the research interviews might be seen as a developing, iterative approach.

This study has adopted the interview technique as a way to enable previously hidden or silenced voices to speak (Rapley, 2004). Teachers' voices are not often heard in respect of policy in the Malaysian system. The aim of using semi-structured interviews was to gather various views and perceptions from research respondents on the issues related to the ETP/S. Using semi-structured interview within this study allowed me to obtain opinions and information from subject informants and to capture the different viewpoints on the issue of teacher career path of the teachers associated with the ETP/S.

As Sekaran (2010) indicates, in-person interviews are suitable for adapting and clarifying issues, and ensuring that responses are properly understood by repeating or rephrasing the questions. Powney and Watts (1987) also agree that this kind of interview has a number of advantages, including that they are easier to manage, issues can be kept relatively confidential and their analyses are more straightforward in that only one person's set of responses are gathered at any one time. Hollaway and Jefferson (2000) conclude that face to face interviewing has become the most common type of qualitative research method used in order to elicit information and answers from research respondents. Indeed, the in person interviews for this study provided a calm environment for the interviewees to answer questions on the topic of their perceptions and experiences of the development, enactment and evaluation of the ETP/S.

The length of the interview sessions varied from one to two hours. The location for the interviews was an integral part of the interview process (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). As the respondents were located at various places such as schools, the MOE and the Public Service Department, their locations affected the time and cost of interviewing them. To ensure their time and availability to participate in my study, it was necessary to respect their preferred place to be interviewed. I used an audio recorder in order to ensure that important points were recorded, which may otherwise have been missed by note taking alone. One thing that should be noted here is that the use of audio recorder may affect participants and alter the ensuing conversation (Warren, 2002). The recording of the interview was agreed to by the participants as indicated in the informed consent form/letter (see Appendix 5, 6, 7, and 8). There were many places nominated by the respondents to hold the interviews, including in their house, school office, meeting room, ICT Lab, Physics lab and technical workshop, and even in a hotel room. These various places reflected the most convenient locations for respondents. The interview sessions were conducted according to their schedules.

I assured interviewees that full transcriptions of the interviews would not be made and that any extracts from the interviews that were transcribed would be used only for my own research/analytic purposes. Employment conditions for Malaysian public servants prohibited me from making full interview transcripts. There was negotiation with respondents allowing me to quote important statements that they have made throughout the sessions using pseudonyms. This compromise was necessary because of the employment conditions of public servants in Malaysia. These quotes provide insights into the context of this study. From an ethical perspective, this negotiation was upfront and allowed me to use certain important quotes in answering my research questions. As a result of the negotiation, however, some respondents asked me to cease recording and use instead note-taking in some of the sensitive sections of the interviews.

The audio recording proved to be important in my research (Patton, 1990). During the semi-structured interviews with the respondents (ETs, EPs, SPM, and TU, it allowed me the luxury of taking in volumes of information, while fully participating in the sessions. I asked their permission to record, as the public officers in government of Malaysia must abide by the appropriate public service regulations. Additionally, there was an understanding that the teachers and policy makers must abide by certain rules in the public service act, Public Service Disciplinary Action in accordance with the Public Officers (Conduct and Discipline)

Regulation Amendment (2002). This detailed the scope of acceptable practice for employees when making public statements regarding government policy and programs. The regulation prohibits an officer to make oral or written public comment that is "detrimental to any policy, program or decision of the government", or comments that are "likely to embarrass or bring into disrepute", in particular, make comment that identifies any "weaknesses" of government policies unlikely (Service circular, Public Officers (Conduct and Discipline, 2002, (P.U. (A) 246), p. 2358). Additionally, the dissemination of "any comment, information or explanation" must be approved, in writing, by the Minister (P.U. (A) 246, p. 2358).

Given the above regulations governing public servants, when interviewing policy makers, some of them discussed the difficulties associated with being frank about what was actually happened in the system. SPM (AO) 1 commented:

> I can tell you a lot of things and I think you are aware of this thing when you were in the Ministry and if you reveal what I'm telling you I think I 'die' (will be transferred out from the Ministry). As a government servant, I must follow what our political master had assigned to us.

During the interview session there were two respondents who asked me to turn off the recording when it came to sensitive issues. Understanding their responsibilities as public servants, who were bound by public service regulations, I respected this request. The process of being able to turn off the audio recorder somehow enabled the participants to be more 'authentic' (Rapley, 2004); however, it can sometimes construct the interviewees as different types of a people. This situation relating to the employment of public servants in Malaysia makes the conduct of research regarding public policy such as that in education difficult to carry out. It also has implications for government framed evaluations of policy implementation or enactment, particularly given the limitations and restrictions on critique of government policy production, policy and implementation.

Selected sentences, passages, paragraphs, and stories in response to the research questions were transcribed in accordance with the consent given by interviewees (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995). These statements appeared in the consent form and participants were reminded about this by the interviewer before starting the session. Throughout the interview sessions, the relationship between researcher and the interviewees was identified and documented. Although, in my role in the MOE I was subordinate to the elite SPM interviewed, for the

purpose of this study they treated me as a researcher. It was also important to find a balance between the interviewer's impartiality and the ability to empathise with the interviewees, which was vital in order to understand their points of view (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). I found the interviewees very supportive and willing to answer the questions as a person rather than as an 'insider' talking to an 'outsider' (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998, p. 166). During the interviews, I also brought up our common roles as public servants, which enabled everybody to share issues and build rapport based on common discourse and knowledge. However, as indicated, some of the employment requirements of public servants in Malaysia also impacted on the interview relationship and the data made available.

4.5.5   Policy documents

The documents that will be used throughout this research are publicly accessible. Documents refer to a wide range of written, visual, digital and physical material (Merriam, 2009). The documents that were analysed as part of this study were produced for reasons other than the research project and therefore do not interact as directly with the phenomenon of interest as interviews and observations do (Merriam, 2009). Data found in documents were "used in the same manner as data from interviews or observations" (Merriam 2009, p. 155). All documents to be used as a source for data require authentication and confirmation of accuracy (Merriam, 2009).

Documents such as government reports, government circulars, or government minutes provide the context and detail about the formal structures and processes which supported the existing policy of teacher career paths. Such documents helped me with understanding in detail, the objectives and significance of the policy that came into existence. Reviewing the Tenth Malaysia Development Plan (10MP) was an important source of data.

Table 10: Policy document analysis

Resources	Types of Documents	Types of Data	Category
Ministry of Education, Malaysia and other governmental departments	Officials reports and records about education policies for teacher career path/ advancement, Government Circulars and	Policy texts, official statements, figures, policy decisions, guidelines about teacher career path	Primary sources

	administration letter, books and related documents	policy	
NGOs	Letters to government, memorandums, statements, minutes from meetings, letter from education Ministry, articles concerning the education policy issues on teacher career path	Opinion, policy debates, information about policy implementation, policy interpretation, books, articles	Primary and secondary sources
University library	Theses, articles, books, magazines, newspaper cutting about teacher career path policy	Opinions, research findings, opinion and statement about significant issues	Secondary sources

4.6 Data analysis and interpretation

There is no standard approach to the analysis of qualitative data (Bryman and Burgess, 1994). In this study, it was proposed to progressively organise and analyse data from the start of data collection using Ball's (1994b, p. 97) approach for interview data analysis, where he suggests that analysis of interview data needs to consider the form of interview and the way the data or information has been produced. Inductive and deductive reasoning were applied in the data analysis. I used an inductive approach (Boyatzis, 1998) to analyse my 'raw' data derived from the interviews and document analysis. At the same time, deductive methods (Crabtree and Miller, 1999), working from theories drawing on critical policy sociology and themes identified in the research literature around policies for rewarding high quality teachers, were used to derive important themes or categories. Both induction and deduction are reasonable strategies and social scientists frequently make use of one or the other, or both approaches to analyse the theoretical arguments to determine which the researcher relies upon (Jaccard and Jacobby, 2010). Strauss and Corbin (1990) stated that the text selected for transcription should take into account the analytical contribution it will provide to the overall study (p. 31).

Figure 5 below illustrates the steps taken in data analysis.

Figure 5: Steps in data analysis
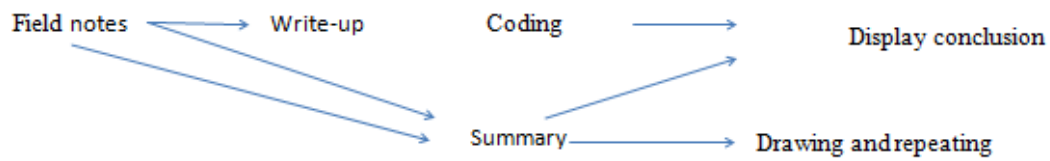
The inductive and deductive methods for examining semi-structured interviews have identified major themes arising from the interview sessions and document analysis. Throughout the interviews sessions, I noticed that a number of themes were emerging from the interviews. This is the point that data analysis begins at the very outset of data collection and is iterative from there, rather than there being a linear process of, first, collecting data then analysing it. For example, various interpretations and definition of 'excellent' and 'quality' teachers were often discussed from the first interview on. Throughout this process, the construction of new meanings generated new knowledge. For example:

Researcher: How would do you describe an excellent teacher?

ET3: Excellent teacher means you have to be far more excellent than other teachers doing something beyond an ordinary teacher.

Researcher: What is something that differentiates you from other ordinary teachers?

ET3: You must contribute in terms of being an expert in your subject area, a content expert and build up a model that can help improve student achievement.

Researcher: In the Tenth Malaysia Plan 2010, teachers are the central focus of the government to ensure quality education. What do you think?

ET2: I agree. The success of the country depends upon human capital development and my role as a teachers is to teach and give the best to the country, ensuring students are seen as people not only based on examination results.

The interviews demonstrated that the respondents in this study were well versed in their areas and provided deep knowledge to me as a researcher. In the interview process, the relationship between me (the researcher) and interviewees (the respondents) during the interview processes produced two types of data. The first can be considered as an 'interviewer-

interviewees data co-constructions', which involved the 'process of meaning making' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 10). The second involved finding out data or information from the respondents through debate and discussion in the interview sessions, where both researcher and respondents had knowledge about the teachers' career path policy in Malaysia. Kvale (1996) suggests that the "interchange of views" between researcher and respondents on a topic of common interest is useful for generating productive data.

These qualitative approaches were chosen to explore the participants' experiences with reference to the ETP/S. Specifically, the investigation outlined the participants' perspectives of their work in relation to the ETP/S. Such an analysis would have been more difficult to conduct using a quantitative research design. While quantitative research aims to explain phenomena and events by the construction of hypotheses formulated by the researcher, the selected qualitative approach described and enabled an understanding of the perspectives attributed by particular individuals or social groups to the events or situations of interest to the researcher. In the case of this study, the aim is to understand the ETP/S as part of initiatives in Malaysia to improve teacher career path policy set against broader policy goals both within and without education as part of policy ecology.

4.7   Data coding and thematic analysis

Table 11 shows the matrix used to perform the coding and categorization of the themes derived from analysis of the interview data. Open coding was used in the first instance, especially when analysing the interview transcripts. Holloway (1997) described open coding as a process of breaking down and conceptualizing the data (p. 84). Each of the ideas within the data was given a code and similar ideas were marked and labelled with the same code. The coding was used to identify the main concerns and perceptions of the interviewees and these were developed into patterns. These themes were obtained after the data were coded, a method identified by Creswell (2005) as being useful when analysing qualitative data.

The coding system was developed by the researcher. At this stage, the study did not use computer generated codes, but undertook the process manually through a matrix analysis. Table 11 illustrates the coding matrix.

Table 31: Coding matrix

Main category	Sub-category	Coding Material
(1) Policy texts Production	(1 1) Establishing the ETP/S	(1 1 1) Objective and characteristic of ETs (1 1 2) Defining quality teachers
	(1 2) Developing policy to improve the quality of Malaysian education	(1 2 1) Raising the quality and standard of teachers (1 2 2) Retaining ETs in the classroom

4.8 A framework for interpreting data

Table 12 outlines the protocols that were used for analysing the interview data based on the thematic analysis.

Table 12: Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. **Familiarisation with data**	Transcribing data (where necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. **Generating initial codes**	Coding interesting features in a systematic fashion for the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. **Searching for themes**	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential themes
4. **Reviewing themes**	Checking if the themes work in relation to coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis.
5. **Defining and naming themes**	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story that the analysis is telling, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. **Producing the report**	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

The six stages outlined in Table 12 were undertaken in analysing the interview data. The coding process involved recognising important moments in the data and encoding it. These were the stages prior to the process of interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). A "good code" is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon being researched (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1). Encoding the information organises the data to identify and develop distinct themes. During the coding of transcripts, inductive codes were assigned to segments of data that described a new themes observed in the texts (Boyatzis, 1998).

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the process of data analysis has a few stages, including the data collection period, where there are a few stages in data collection processes, including pre-, during and post-data collection; that is, the data identified during post collection, and the conclusions and verifications drawn before, during and after the data collection. To analyse the results of the interviews, I had to go back to my original research questions about why I undertook the interviews and consider the answers that would help me gain the best insights. Notes and interview recordings were used throughout the analysis process. Organising the material under these original headings was done to distinguish between direct quotations from the interviews and added impressions or conclusions. The process of analysing the data also considered other material that I sometimes did not anticipate while conducting the interviews, but incorporated these ideas into the summary results. Comparing views and findings among several respondents when responding to similar questions also triggered variations based on knowledge and background. Just as the 'positionality' of the researcher is important, as suggested in Chapter 1, so too is the 'positionality' of interviewees central to understanding their views. These useful findings helped me to construct new themes and categories to enhance the interpretations of the collected data. The new categories influenced the interpretations, as did my own experiences and the reading of the literature about the excellent teacher program in Malaysia.

4.9   Research ethics

Ethical clearance for this study was approved by the School of Education at The University of Queensland in 2011 and the researcher was bound to the ethics and ethical practices endorsed by the committee. I adhered to research ethics, which outlined the need to respect and keep the data confidential. Whatever the nature of the data collection method, the self-

esteem and self-respect of the subject should not be violated and, as far as possible, there should be no misinterpretation or distortion in the reporting of the data. These issues were particularly pertinent to my research, given the restrictions regarding public statements that are in place for public servants in Malaysia.

4.9.1 Ethics in obtaining the documents

There is a Malaysian government regulation that requires every research project conducted from overseas must get the approval from the Prime Minister's department before data can be collected in Malaysia. The regulations state that all foreign researchers and Malaysian nationals domiciled overseas must obtain permission from the gatekeeper before undertaking fieldwork. This was an ethical requirement for gaining access to official documents, particularly from government departments and institutions in Malaysia. I received permission from the Prime Minister's department to access the documents required for this study.

4.9.2 Confidentiality

According to Silverman (2006), there are a few things to consider regarding ethical safeguards in qualitative research, that is,

> Ensuring people participate voluntarily, ensuring people's views and comments remain confidential, protect them from harm and ensuring mutual trust between researcher and people studied. (p. 323)

In this study, this was achieved through the ethical guidelines, that is, through informed consent, so that the participants had a clear understanding of the research and that they could withdraw at any time without any penalty of any kind.

In carrying out these qualitative interviews, informed consent was an important element that presumed that the respondents would understand the intent of the research, as it was explained by the researcher and the information letter. In this study, the objective was clear, that is, notably to explore the policy makers' views on teacher career path policy, specifically the ETP/S.

SPMs are high profile individuals in the government, and consequently bound by the rules and regulations of the public service. In carrying out this research, participants' details were not disclosed. The confidentiality of the respondents is very important, especially when

interviewing the 'elite'. Many of those interviewed enjoyed considerable visibility in their communities and may be readily identifiable, even when their names are omitted from published reports. Some elite respondents did not require confidentiality, but requested they be given the opportunity to review any text before their position or organisational affiliations were associated with any direct quotations that were to be used in the thesis. As noted already, I was able to negotiate agreement with interviewees that, while I would not transcribe interviews, I could use selected excerpts in my data analysis and thesis write-up. This agreement rested on the confidence the interviewees had that I would respect their anonymity and confidentiality.

4.10 Positionality of researcher

As alluded to throughout this chapter and as has been referred to in Chapter 1, a primary issue in this study is the matter of positionality of the researcher, given the study's setting in the policies and politics of Malaysian education The researcher in this study is positioned as both an insider and outsider (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010) in the Malaysian context; this is my position as a senior policy maker on leave as full-time doctoral student. This section explores the effects of the researcher's positionality in terms of these dual roles at the time of gathering the data, therefore, and as such uncovers issues of positionality in qualitative research interviews.

Drawing from field notes and audio-recorded interviews, this study also explores two levels of identity work, with participants collaboratively managing and negotiating the interviewer's identities as both researcher and policy maker (Alvesson, 2010). Simultaneously, these roles affect not only the obtaining of access to the top policy makers in the Ministry and government agencies, but also the positionality of the researcher in performing both identities, that is, as the researcher *of* policy and researcher *for* policy, as academic researcher and as senior policy maker. The interviewer and interviewees constructed and co-constructed identities through the interview sessions. Here, we see interviewing as 'identity work' (Alvesson, 2010) and my positioning with dual identities as both insider and outsider. My insider position, derived from my employment in the public service, facilitated my access to senior public servants, but, at the same time, my current position as a full-time PhD candidate outside of Malaysia, situated me as an outsider. Here, there were both positive and negative effects of my insider/outsider position on the data collection process. My insider position facilitated my access to relevant policy documents, which were known to me through

my work. Access was also facilitated by my work relationships with senior personnel, and with the relevant policy elites. However, as a student my positionality was changed. There was a concern that senior public servants might very well treat me differently because I might expose processes of policy making and confidential policy texts. There was a potential tension here between the public servants' desire to protect documents and knowledge, and consequently protect the government, and the researcher's desire to find out and contribute to the body of knowledge, making these understandings publicly available. As a researcher who was formerly a policy maker in the Malaysian system, I managed to negotiate these tensions. For example, in getting access to respondents, I was able to go straight to their personal assistants and ease the bureaucratic process. Compared to conventional processes required by an outsider seeking interviews, my insider status gave me fast-tracked access, that is, there were no forms to fill in and the slow and sequential progression of appointments through various levels in the ministries or agencies was thus avoided.

That is not to say that the entire process was free of restrictions. I acknowledge that there were still impediments, that is, my position as a university student also generated certain impressions by the policy makers in relation to endorsing access to certain data. To share a quote from one officer in the Ministry, "Faridah, we have the data that you need, but with your position as a researcher I need to inform our big boss before giving it to you". This situates me differently when dealing with some officers in the agencies. However, my positionality as an ex-officer with nine years' service in the MOE and one year in the Public Service Department helped me throughout my data collection process. This tension was resolved as a result of my working knowledge and experience of the system and the good rapport I established with interview respondents as a policy maker/research student when exploring the ETP/S. Seen in another way, this is an aspect of the research *for* and research *of* policy distinction. The research *for* component of my research will hopefully encourage senior policy makers to participate and be open and forthcoming in research interviews.

My positionality as an insider to the interviewees facilitated this study. In the first instance, I did not have to obtain the permission from the Economic Planning Unit to interview the top policy makers as they were known to me, and based on that capacity, I eliminated one step in the process of obtaining access to the interviewees. However, this meant that I did not know who my interviewees were for the categories of Excellent Teachers for the next stage of the process. The Deputy Director of State Education Penang made a list of Excellent Teachers

and provided a letter of permission and a letter of support to enter the school compound to interviews the selected teachers. Again this situated me in a very good position when dealing with the respondents, but then again these excellent teacher respondents were chosen for me by a senior policy maker.

4.11 Conclusion

This methodology chapter has outlined my approaches to the data collection methods and analysis that were used to explore the research questions driving this study. I collected data through targeted semi-structured interviews, including some interviews with 'elites' and through a document analysis of the major and pertinent policy documents, including the *Tenth Malaysian Development Plan*. This was necessary because, as outlined earlier in this thesis, my approach was a policy ecology one. I also raised issues regarding my positionality related to the data collection process, namely my simultaneous insider (senior Malaysian public servant) and outsider (Australian-based PhD candidate) positions. Reflections regarding my positionality helped develop a productive analysis of my data. My positionality as researcher also worked with respect to this research when attempting to work across research *of* and *for* policy. The possibility of the latter, addressed in the concluding chapter in the thesis, also encouraged participation by senior policy makers. The specific Malaysian context of the data collection was also considered, especially with respect to the restrictions on the public servants in terms of public commentary regarding government policies. This meant that I could record, and transcribe their statements for this research only, but the transcriptions could not be published in full in any publicly available format. Any extracts or quotations used for my study were required to be de-identified. In a sense, reflection on these complex methodological issues has added another dimension to the research findings. As I will suggest in the concluding chapter to this thesis, the conditions of employment for Malaysian public servants probably inhibit effective evaluations of public policies and their implementation. They also make research of such policies difficult.

CHAPTER 5:   PRODUCTION OF THE EXCELLENT TEACHER PROGRAM/SCHEME

5.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the *production* of the Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme (ETP/S) through an examination of data obtained from two major sources: interviews and policy documents. Interviews were conducted with various categories of Senior Policy Makers (hereafter referred to as SPMs), each with a different background of service, located in both the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the central agency of the public service. ETs, Excellent Principals (EP), and a representative from one teachers' union (TU) are among other actors interviewed for this study. All of these actors have firsthand experience with the ETP/S. This chapter aligns with and complements Chapters 6, which will focus on the analysis of data on policy *implementation/enactment*, where participants include ETs, EPs and a representative from the teachers' union. These participants provide their perceptions and first hand experiences of the ETP/S. Subsequently, Chapter 7, the final data analysis chapter, offers an *evaluation* of the ETP/S based on the data collected.

In this chapter, I offer an outline of the findings of qualitative data analysis exploring various actors' perceptions of the production of the Malaysian ETP/S. In particular, I explore the development, characteristics and aspirations of contemporary education policy in Malaysia, specifically in relation to teacher career path policies and teacher quality through an analysis of data concerning the development of the ETP/S.

Using semi-structured interviews and document analysis, particularly the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007), I describe the process of the development of the policy text and how it has been altered since the inception of the program in 1994. The chapter is organised around three main themes generated from the analysis of the interview data and document analysis. The first theme of this chapter focuses on the policy text production of ETP/S in the Malaysian context. The reports cover various concepts, including historical development of teacher career paths from 1994 through to the contemporary education system. There are factors associated with the production of the ETP/S. The notions of assimilation and aligning teacher career paths with other public service schemes are also suggested in the findings. Attracting and recruiting teachers was identified as another

associated factor in discussing the development of the ETP/S. A definition of ETs is offered through an analysis of the objectives and characteristics outlined in the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007). The next section of this chapter outlines themes discussed in relation to developing policy to improve the quality of Malaysian education. I explore issues of designing career structure for teachers, using both monetary and non-monetary incentives. These findings reflect this study's and country's focus on improving teacher quality by rewarding quality teachers. This is contextualised within the government's focus on economic and human capital development at a meta-policy level as in the 10th Malaysia Plans. 'Outsiders' and 'insiders' perceptions are taken into consideration to support the findings. Finally, the third theme of this chapter concentrates on professionalising teaching by retaining ETs at the classroom level, as well as responding to pressure from the TU.

5.2   Theme 1: Policy text production of the ETP/S in the Malaysian context

Elmore (2011) cautions policy makers against bombarding schools with reform after reform that are driven by political agendas, rather than research and professionally based and focused on functional and necessary change. He observes,

> I used to think that policy was the solution. And now I think policy is the problem. To policy makers, every idea about what schools should be doing is as credible as every other idea, and any new idea that can command a political constituency can be used as an excuse for telling schools to do something. Elected officials generate electoral credit by initiating new ideas, not by making the kind of steady investments in people that are required to make the education sector more effective. The result is an education sector that is overwhelmed with policy, conditioned to respond to the immediate demands of whoever controls the political agenda, and not in investing in the long-term health of the sector and the people who work in it. (pp. 34–35)

The production of the ETP/S policy texts occurred in the MOE in 1994. The policy texts were thus formulated at the national level by a government Ministry within Malaysia, not at the provincial level, where some of the administrative power for education, specifically schooling, lies. The analysis of the related documents and interviews suggests that there were some challenges and issues that occurred in drafting the policy texts. Certainly, as will be shown in Chapter 6, the structure of Malaysian education impacted on the implementation of the policy.

5.2.1 The development of the policy texts of ETP/S

Following a review of the development of current promotional strategies for teachers, the Malaysian government implemented changes that provide alternative fast-track promotions for quality teachers. This alternative career path was designed in response to the reportedly slow career progression of teachers in Malaysia. Government commitment and effort were directed towards acknowledging and rewarding those teachers who were identified as having 'quality'. A SPM (retired) explained the development of this initiative of the ETP/S in great detail:

> The Excellent Teacher program is a good development of teachers' career paths in Malaysia. This initiative and innovative program has existed for about 20 years, dating back to 1994, when the first concept of the master skill teachers was introduced. This later became Guru Cemerlang or Excellent Teachers. The first development back to the early 1990s did not involve massive numbers with comprehensive guidelines for the program. However, in the early 2000s the Ministry came up with a proper paper presented to the cabinet about the significance of the program.

This SPM had first-hand knowledge of the details regarding the inception and development of the ETP/S. She elaborated saying,

> The Excellent Teacher program was collaboratively developed by the human resource division and all departments under MOE. This was a concerted effort from various groups of Directors with teaching backgrounds, as well as close cooperation with the central agency in order to obtain the necessary approval for the comprehensive and innovative teacher career path to reward quality and expert teachers in the Malaysian public service.

In this statement, the SPM highlighted that the ETP/S policy text was not produced by one division in the MOE, but through cooperation from various divisions, and with input from various expert teacher administrators and administrative officers at various levels in the MOE. The ETP/S was initiated as a result of government recognition of the contributions made by ETs in the country; that is, teachers with outstanding personal qualities who demonstrate quality teaching and the ability to improve student achievement through their classroom skills and expertise. The ETP/S was introduced to give better career prospects for teachers who were able to deliver high quality teaching in their subject area. Beginning with rewarding EPs, the program was expanded to include classroom teachers.

As seen throughout the exploration of the policy texts in the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007), the Malaysian ETP/S can be referred to as an award for experienced and high achieving teachers (Hoque et al., 2012). The ETs are also referred to as both 'expert teachers' and 'master teachers' (Hamzah et al., 2010). That is, they are teachers who have high level skills within their specific subject areas. A goal of the program is to retain these quality teachers in the classroom.

An analysis of the interviews suggests that all respondents from the ET category defined the ETP/S as government recognition of their contribution to successful classroom practices. Additionally, this recognition is attained without the need for the school to promote these teachers out of the classroom to administrative roles in order for their achievements to be acknowledged and shared. Consequently, most of the teachers interviewed asserted that the ETP/S was a good move to retain quality teachers in the classroom and a new approach in rewarding quality teachers at the school level.

Examples drawn from participant interviews suggest general support for the initiative. ET1 and ET2 described the previous promotional track for teachers as limited to the school level. The promotion of teachers was only based on a vacancy in administrative positions and these were specific time-based promotions. ET1 explained the "promotion of teachers meant you have to do administrative work, I rather chose to stay in the classroom, although without a promotion". Similarly, ET1 said, "I don't really like to be promoted to administrative work because I love teaching very much". ET4 observed that "the government has recognised our contribution in the classroom" and "I feel honoured to be recognised". ET1 also suggested the "promotion of teachers, especially the ETP/S, can no longer be described as 'moving up and moving out', but could now be defined as 'moving up but *not* moving out'", a wonderful encapsulation of the *raison d'etre* of the ETP/S policy.

ET3 added that the ETP/S is an important initiative formulated by the government to cater to the career needs of teachers. She argued that if the government did not create this alternative route for promoting teachers, the slow career progression could be a problem, and many teachers at the school level would end their service at the top of the salary scale without having the opportunity to be promoted. A number of excellent teachers in the study (ET5, ET4, ET6) described the ETP/S as an opportunity for quality teachers at the classroom level to have a say in decision making at the school level. However, ET4 observed that the ET does

not have power to make any decisions, although they hold a higher post at the school level. ET6 explained, "I can see a lot of improvement is needed in the management of schools to enhance students' performance. However, as an Excellent Teacher, we are not given any chance to hold the administrative power at the school level".

EP1 suggested the formulation of ETP/S was in consonance with the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) to produce "Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, society and nation at large" (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2004, p. 4). The MOE program has been able to meet the demands of teachers in terms of promotional opportunities and retaining quality teachers in the classroom. EP2 added the ETP/S was implemented "at the 'right time and the right place' by recognising the contribution of quality teachers at the classroom level". This recognition of teachers was significant, with EP1 recalling, "The issue of slow career progression of teachers has been addressed by the government, in fact, it shocks me that the grade of Excellent Teachers is awarded at the same level as the State Education Director". From the introduction of the ETP/S, there has been equivalence between the grade and salary of a State Education Director with some grades of ETs at the classroom level. This is unique a situation globally. Japan for instance, teacher enjoyed higher salary compare to those who are working in education department.

Additionally, the analysis of the interview data suggests that almost all of the teachers viewed the ETP/S as being linked to quality teachers and improving students' outcomes. They suggested the ETP/S was not only important for rewarding quality teachers, but was also viewed as a way to contribute to improving the education system. They also indicated that such a program was still relevant in the current educational context. While all the respondents from ET categories gave positive feedback when outlining the benefits of the program, they also pointed out some of the negative aspect of the program. These will be discussed in Chapter 6, and include criticisms that the ETP/S became a pressing issue for teachers and the high expectation of the program became a heavy burden for ETs.

5.2.2 Factors associated with the development of the ETP/S

 The development of the ETP/S has also been associated with other factors that will be discussed in this section. Most of the participants in this study from the SPM category

suggested that the ETP/S was developed in response to political agendas, particularly, ministerial influences, such as those referred to in Elmore's quote at the start of this Chapter. However, other political agendas, such as workplace politics were also at play. The ministry, for example, faced comparisons of the rate of promotions for different schemes in the public service.

The idea for the ETP/S was initially borrowed from the medical scheme of service, that is, the promotional scheme for specialist doctors. The idea came after a comparison between the various schemes of service by the Central Agency, known as the Public Service Department (PSD) of Malaysia, of which MOE is one. This agency's role is to ensure the fair and reasonable application of the rules governing any ministerial proposals. For example, when there is a change in the remuneration system that benefits one scheme of service, all other schemes are consequently affected. This can be described as a form of professional assimilation within and across the public service of Malaysia. Any career path change then in any part of the public service is subject to close scrutiny because of the potential flow-on effects to other schemes of service.

The notion of assimilation is associated with the formulation and text production for the ETP/S. The term assimilation is reflected from the word 'borrowing', which sometimes has been criticised, with commentators at different times preferring alternative descriptors, including 'copying', 'appropriation', 'assimilation', 'transfer', 'importation' and so on (Phillips and Ochs, 2003, p. 451). For the purpose of this analysis, I use the term 'assimilation' to cover the whole range of issues relating to how excellent teachers compare against different groups of teachers in salary terms and with other public servants in Malaysia. From this situation, each scheme demands their rights to be treated like other schemes of service, especially in term of promotion and remuneration. In this case, a SPM (Administrative Officer 1) SPM (AO1) from the MOE indicated that during the preparation of the policy texts, pressure from the teachers' union, lobbyists and teachers themselves also contributed to the policy formulation. As a result of this comparison, the MOE developed a new concept of subject specialists to reward quality teachers in the system.

The interviews with SPMs and the TU indicated that there is a tendency in Malaysia for teachers to argue about other occupations' schemes of service in terms of their promotional opportunities. However, they also argued amongst themselves in what could be described a

form of 'professional jealousy'. A Pakistani study on professional jealousy has shown that professional jealousy among teachers has led to a push for competency based remuneration (Khatoon et al., 2011). In the Malaysian context, sentiments of professional jealousy were identified among teachers who demanded the privileges that the MOE had granted to other groups of teachers. As such, when one group of teachers obtained better promotional benefits and pay structures, the other group demanded the same. For instance, when fast track promotion associated with the ETP/S was introduced to graduate teachers in secondary schools, other teachers, including those working in the primary sector, were disgruntled by this situation. Consequently, the scheme was expanded to reward quality teachers in primary schools, the District Education Office (DEO), the State Education Offices (SEO) and the various departments of the MOE. Professional jealousy and allaying related concerns were thus factors in the development of the ETP/S.

5.2.3 Comparing and aligning teacher career paths with other public service schemes

Comparing and aligning teachers' career paths with other schemes of public service is another factor associated with the development of the ETP/S. Through interview data, it was suggested that comparisons of rates of promotion among other schemes of services were one of the main issues for the Central Agency in considering the approval of the ETP/S. There is limited budget allocation for every Ministry and this has to be taken into consideration when arranging all public service schemes in all ministries. According to the national budget report, the emolument of teachers is increasing every year. For example, the budget report for 2013 for management expenditure of the MOE indicated a rise of 13.46 per cent from the allocation of emoluments for teachers compared with 2012 (National Budget Report, 2013). The budget allocation for teacher emoluments also rose 10.38 per cent from the year 2011. Every year the allocated budget increases to cater for the salaries of teachers, including the promotional posts of Time-Based teachers, as well as the quota for ETs. It has been suggested that rewarding teachers in Malaysia is done within the confines of the education and national budget of the country. Given the large numbers of teachers, it becomes apparent that large amounts of money will be needed to be allocated within the budget for implementing new career paths.

There was tension between teachers and the MOE when teachers started comparing their remuneration with that of other occupations in other schemes of serve. A SPM (AO1) indicated,

> You know it was a great tension for us as policy makers when teachers started to compare what other service had especially in term of allowances and promotions. They should know their career prospect; their opportunities throughout their career development. They should not complain and start comparing with other schemes of service.

The suggestion here is that teachers should know their place and career prospects and not seek to go beyond these frameworks by comparisons with others. The tone suggests that teachers should not compare career prospects across the public service. However, a SPM (retired) had a different view. She explained the development of the ETP/S began when the government tried to accommodate teachers' demands for faster promotion pathways, and to bring them into line with other schemes of public service, thereby improving the promotional track. Having said that, she elaborated through a comparison with the medical profession:

> The adoption of the model of specialist doctors was taken in order to make teacher feel they have alternative career pathways that is not simply moving out from the classroom. Retaining quality teachers in the classroom was the main objective of the formulation of the policy.

Additionally, becoming a specialist required:

> Training and continuous development of their career, attending conferences to equip them with latest information and the ability and willingness to act as a mentor or trainer to other doctors.

She then explains how this was applied to the ETP/s:

> This concept was extended to the ETP/S. This can be seen in the terms of reference book of the Excellent Teacher program, which highlighted the same method and criteria for an expert teacher or Excellent Teacher.

While tensions arise when comparisons are made, decisions to approve all categories of public servants in the country are required from the various ministries. In other words, the government wants to be fair to all schemes of public service in the country based on performance and results. All government agencies are required to use performance indicators to demonstrate what they are doing as a basis for rewards, recognition and career

advancement in the era of New Public Management (Siddiqi, 2010). Unlike in the past, public servants are now required to fulfil certain performance expectations to be able to qualify for promotions and salary increases. This results-driven focus or performance orientation has been a leading feature of the public sector reforms since the 1990s. Here, we see the new public management at work in Malaysia with its focus on outcomes rather than inputs.

ETs in Malaysia have to undertake an annual performance appraisal in order to obtain an annual pay increment or a further promotion. However, Ingvarson (2013) argues when performance management systems are combined with competitive one-off bonus pay schemes, negative consequences for staff morale and relationships usually follow (p. 245). For this reason, one of the respondents, a SPM (AO1) from the MOE stated the development of this program at the earlier stage was effective because of small numbers that the MOE was able to manage. However, with the drastically increased quotas in the year 2006, the quality of ET recruited in this program became more complicated to process and manage. The quality of ET recruited in the first batch was the best in most respondents' view. The details of the program will be explained in the next Chapter 6 on policy implementation/enactment.

The complexity of defining quality for the purpose of the ETP/S is another important issue that has to be addressed. SPM (TA2) commented:

> In dealing with the term 'teacher quality' and 'teaching quality', complex issues are involved. The roles of quality teachers like Excellent Teachers contribute towards quality teaching is one factor, but there are more factors that should be calculated to the term, such as, the background of the students, student economic status, facilities at schools, leadership at schools and parents' involvement are those other factors that contributed toward quality teaching and student outcomes.

This quote picks up on the difficulty of defining excellent teachers solely in terms of student performance, given the range of factors, in addition to pedagogy, that contribute to student learning.

The data traversed here have shown that there were many complex factors contributing to the production of the policy texts of the ETP/S and also that there were many complexities in designing the program to reward quality teachers in Malaysia.

5.2.4   Defining Excellent Teachers (ETs)

There were numerous challenges related to the development and production of policy texts associated with the definition of 'excellent teachers' and the identification of these individuals. Texts on quality teachers and excellent teaching were reinterpreted and conceptualised throughout the policy formulation stage. Those responsible for the development of the ETP/S specifically focused on the attributes and skills that the teachers should have before applying to be acknowledged and recognised as an ET. This was noted in the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher (MOE, 2007) produced by the MOE. This document stated that fast track promotions were designed to reward those in the system who demonstrated quality teaching in the classroom, as well as exemplary practice outside the school. Taking this direct interpretation of the text into consideration, the findings of this research suggest that the definition of the concept of 'quality teachers' and 'quality teaching', as well as 'excellent teachers' and 'excellent teaching' was of importance. However, the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher (MOE, 2007) do not specifically address the issue of definitions, as there are several interpretations of these concepts. It is only by reading through the objectives of the program, that some of these definitions are clarified, for example, the reference to quality teachers is generally unpacked in the text to refer to qualified teachers who are able to enhance students' achievements. Quality teachers then are defined in terms of enhanced student learning outcomes.

While not specifically addressed in the MOE Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007) policy document, there was a focus on the analysis of student achievement to determine the quality of teaching. The ability of ETs in enhancing student achievement was regarded as an additional point in measuring quality teaching practices and consequently measuring teacher quality. For example, ETs in this study agreed that there was a link between the ETP/S and student outcomes. For those teachers, their ability to demonstrate quality teaching in the classroom had enhanced student outcomes. ET6 for example stated, "I was able to turn a 'D' student in my subject to an 'A' in the Malaysia Certificate Examination. Two ideologies are demonstrated here; first quality teaching is a way of attracting students to the subject taught, second the ability of an ET to turn a D student into an A student .This was a great achievement and I'm satisfied with what I have managed to do". Similarly, ET3 commented on her achievement in improving students' result in her subject of geography. However, she also argued that that there were other factors that

120

contributed to student outcomes, such as family background and the socio-economic status of the students, reflecting what the research evidence says. ET3 shared her experiences in working with disadvantaged students who came from lower income families. She recalled, for some students it was more important for them to help supplement their parents' income by working in fast food restaurants, rather than focusing on their studies. Additionally, ET3 suggested students undertaking part-time work found it difficult to concentrate on their school work.

This study argues that not all ETs are effective with all student ability levels. For example, Excellent Principal 1 (EP1) commented "having too many Excellent Teachers at one school in remote areas did not produce better results for students". Through his experience, he mentioned that, those ETs in boarding and in good schools which have selected the best students would have better chance to produce better results. It appears that EP1 believes that students in remote areas are less likely than other students to achieve at a high level. This belief raises the complexity of the interplay of a number of factors that may contribute to student achievement, such as socio-economic status, family background, and school locality and not related to the quality of teachers. Hanushek and colleagues (2005) suggest that while education policy focuses on improving teacher quality, most policies lack a strong research support basis for any changes. Other researchers suggest that research is not the only basis of education policy, as policy is also the 'authoritative allocation of values' (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010; Lingard, 2013).

Additionally, there was a suggestion that the worth of the activity (good teaching) of the ET, as well as the realisation of intended outcomes (high student results), should be considered in relation to measuring the quality of teaching. Good teaching is not the same as the achievement of high student results, nor does one necessarily entail the other. For teaching to be both good and successful in terms of student results, it must be conjoined with other factors, such as good teaching practices, students who are willing to learn, school facilities, and class size, which are well beyond the range of control of the classroom teacher (Fenstermacher and Richardson, 2005). A recent study has concluded that a large part of what it means to be an ET includes the individual attributes of the teachers; their ability to deal with complex human interactions and relationships; a concern for 'weaker' students; a commitment to student-centred methodologies; and a commitment to ongoing professional

development (Georgios, 2011). Such complex issues have contributed to the pragmatic policy approach underlying the ETP/S, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.2.5 Attracting and recruiting Excellent Teachers

In relation to defining the ETs in the Malaysian context, attracting and recruiting quality teachers is another important point that needs to be addressed. To ensure the ETP/S meet the objectives as stated in the policy text production, the process of selection of such teachers become a major concern as expressed by respondents in this study.

SPM (TA1) spoke about the quality of teaching applicants, suggesting that attracting quality university graduates, who had a deep interest in becoming teachers, would help to boost quality teaching and make the ETP/S more effective. Additionally, the Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin, who is also the education minister indicated,

> The main incentive to attract excellent students to choose this profession, he said, would be by providing an attractive pay scheme as well as providing a modern working environment. (Teachers' Union website, 2012)

He went on to say,

> Teachers' training institutions needed to step up their efforts to prepare high quality training programs. This included ... preparing competent educators and giving high quality in all aspects of teachers training. (Teachers' Union website, 2012)

The ETP/S also stresses the importance of effective teacher education courses. The Manual of Terms of Reference (MOE, 2007) highlighted the significance of and thereby encourages more quality candidates to apply for entry to teaching. The MOE has proposed in the manual that ETs at the school level have opportunities to enhance their skills through continuing their studies and attending relevant courses and training to upgrade their skills.

The fast -track promotion mechanism of the ETP/S has also recognised quality teachers signify the important position of teachers in the Civil Service and that they are equal with Senior Managers in the Public Service (MOE, 2007, p. 107). The Prime Minister made the following comment at an education conference introducing the initiative:

> The government was working on a better career package for teachers through several phases to improve teaching quality comprising raising admission standards,

and enhancing opportunities for professional development based on individual needs. This will enable the teaching career advancement to be based on performance and competence, professionalism, and a culture of excellence based examples set by colleagues. (Education Service Conference, 2012)

The fast-track promotion encompassed by the ETP/S has been said to have raised the standard of teaching in Malaysia (Utusan Malaysia, Thursday 30 Nov, 2006). Improvement was gauged through a focus on pedagogical content knowledge, as determined by the MOE. That is, preliminary findings evaluating the ETP/S indicated "ETs demonstrated effective teaching and learning compared to other teachers who taught the same subject", they "produced effective teaching modules", and these teachers became a "reference and source in teaching and learning in their subject area" (Utusan Malaysia, Thursday 30 Nov, 2006). Therefore, Ingvarson's (2013) suggestion is supported through this research, indicating that advanced skill teachers should not be recognised as 'generalists', rather they have specific and specialised knowledge and skills that enable them to teach effectively. For example, Malaysian teachers work in specialist fields like primary teaching, or mathematics teaching at the secondary level. Therefore, this focus on pedagogy by the MOE encouraged teachers to improve their pedagogical skills in the classroom. This in turn, identified those individuals who qualified for this fast-track promotion option.

In describing ETs as subject specialists, this does not confine their practices to classroom activities. Instead, their roles are expanded beyond classroom practices to promote the improvement of other schools in the district, state and in the country. The preliminary findings of a review of the ETP/S through all the respondents from ETs in this study found that "ET were coaches and a mentors to other teachers and able to use various approaches in teaching and learning compared when to other teachers", their lesson planning became "a source of reference to other teachers", and these teachers "frequently helped his/her school and other schools to improve through staff development program". These quotes, taken from the respondents, are very similar to the statement in the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher (MOE, 2007) in describing the MOE's requirement for teachers. This specialist group of teachers acts as mentors and trainers not only to other teachers, but is also frequently called upon by the MOE to for developing curriculum and discussions regarding the development of assessment for their subject areas. The sharing of their expertise was also beneficial to the individual teachers, as they are able upgrade their own knowledge and skills.

5.2.6   ETP/S objectives and characteristics outlined in policy texts

The objectives and characteristics of the ETP/S were outlined in various policy texts. In this section of the chapter, I analyse these documents in relation to the interview data.

In the table below, the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007) outline the program objectives.

Table 13: Objectives of the ETP/S

The objective of the ETP/S are to:
Recognise and acknowledge Excellent Teachers in their respective subject or area of expertise
Enhance/elevate the quality of teaching and learning
Set the Excellent Teachers as a role models to other teachers
Increase the teachers' motivation
Increase schools' excellence through sharing of experience and skills of the Excellent Teachers
Widen the prospect of promotional opportunities in educational service
Allow teachers to be promoted without having to leave their teaching job or be transferred to an administrative post
Provide opportunities for teachers to be promoted to a higher grade through a fast track promotion for successful candidates who are Excellent Teachers on (Personal to Holder Basis)

Source: Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher, MOE (2007, pp. 2 -3)

The policy text produced by the MOE outlines the objectives of the program, and therefore identifies the significance of the program, as well as defining what makes an excellent teacher. This program has been designed to retain excellent teachers in the classroom and to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the ETP/S also outlines the need to enhance teachers' ability beyond classroom achievements, to a wider context, namely the school and the nation. The latter part of the policy text mentions the ETP/S as one of the alternatives to the provision of better opportunities for teachers through fast-track promotion. Thus ETs in this context refers to expert teachers who can improve the quality of teaching

and learning in the country through mentoring and coaching and becoming a role model to other teachers.

Below is the table of characteristics that the ETs should have for them to be acknowledged and recognised as 'Excellent' at the school level.

Table14: Characteristics of Excellent Teachers

Characteristics of Excellent Teacher
Personality: An ET has a towering personality of high standard, presentable, strongly uphold teaching ethics of the profession and public service etiquette, concerned with students' needs and able to be a role model to other teachers.
Knowledge and Skills: An ET is able to master his/her subject areas of specialization and expertise and the contents thereof a point of reference in teaching and learning, has a good time management skills, able to produce resources for other teachers, able to identify and react to the needs of students able to overcome the problem and able to prepare and develop the strategies responding to the students' learning and knowledgeable, and skilful in information communication technology (ICT).
Outcome: An ET is a teacher who is able to increase the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning, in order to improve students' outcomes in line with philosophies of education.
Communication: An ET possesses good communication skills, able to formulate and demonstrate brilliant and effective ideas and able to convey messages in various situations.
Potential: An ET is a visionary and proactive. In respect of teaching, An ET takes the initiative, is responsive and innovative in the same respect.
Contribution to the development of national education: An ET is a teacher who can generate new ideas in his/her subject areas and expertise and shares and promote these ideas to increase the quality of national education.

Source: Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher, MOE (2007, pp. 2 -3)

In line with the objectives of the program, the above ETP/S policy text lists six characteristics that teachers are required to demonstrate before they are eligible to be appointed as ETs. In

the selection process, teachers are screened, shortlisted and identified as 'high potential educators'. The fast track promotion is based on characteristics that span from their outstanding personalities, qualities, positives attitudes and abilities, to their wealth of knowledge, skills and experiences. The titles 'Excellent Teachers' and 'high potential educators' are awarded to deserving teachers and reflect how remarkable and inspiring these individuals are. They are required to have a high regard for the teaching profession, its ethics and etiquette, and uphold the National Philosophy of Education as defined by MOE. As teaching is part of public service, all teachers must abide by the rules and regulations, such as Public Officers (Conduct and Discipline, 2002). Promotional board or panel interviews involved in the selection process will look at teachers' conduct before considering them for promotion.

'Excellent communication skills' refers to the ability of ETs to present themselves as good teachers, good colleagues and good employees within a school setting. In addition, 'High potential' and 'outstanding personality' are two criteria highlighted in the table above. These criteria are seen as a guide for the selection panels to examine and assess the teachers' personal characteristics. However, the terms used to describe personal characteristics are very subjective and hard to measure objectively. They go beyond professional criteria. In the case of ETP/S, the so called 'High potential' criterion is defined as a teachers who are 'visible' in their contributions to teaching and learning, have promoted their expertise and have demonstrated their ability to impact positively on student learning outcomes. The ability to improve students' results is a requirement for prospective ETs, who are seeking to be appointed under this fast track promotion. The criteria described as 'outstanding personality' can be said to differentiate ETs from other teachers. This criterion also seems to go beyond a professional criterion. Those with 'outstanding personalities' may have engaged in a range of activities to improve their teaching and to promote their skills, for instance, they may have presented papers at national and international level conferences or written and published papers about their subject areas.

Excellent communication skills, high potential and outstanding personality are 'professional' characteristic outlined by MOE to reward and select ETs in the Malaysian context. We can see the blurring of professional and personal characteristics here. In case of ETP/S, selected teachers are classified as competent and effective teachers. Competent teacher means they know their subjects, appropriate teaching methods for their subjects and curriculum areas and

the ways pupils learn. Effective teachers make the most of their professional knowledge in two linked ways. One is the extent to which they deploy appropriate teaching skills consistently and effectively in the course of all their lessons – the sorts of teaching strategies and techniques that can be observed when they are at work in the classroom. This element also has been assessed by IQA in evaluating prospective ETs. Both the competent and effective component that ETs have, are equally important in the selection process of prospective ETs. The question here is how do professional characteristics mentioned in the criteria add additional dimensions that demonstrate ETs outperform other teachers. There are some issues here in terms of the clarity of the characteristics for the selection of ETs. The selection criteria suggest that ETs are supposed to represent the crème de la crème of Malaysian teachers. For the first two rounds of the ETP/S, the criteria were used by the IQA, to evaluate whether these teachers had the necessary characteristics to be considered 'excellent'. With regard to evaluation, the evaluation forms to assess ETs are circulated to their peer groups, including during the interview session itself conducted by the senior officer from the MOE level for a higher grade of ETs (Premier Post C) (Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher MOE, 2007, pp. 2-3).

Based on the characteristics laid down in the objectives of the ETP/S and responses from all the respondents, this study suggested that there are very subjective elements in assessing ETs' personalities and other traits before they can be appointed under this fast track promotion. Whether the characteristics listed are specifically suitable for appointing ETs or are simply similar to the earlier notion of assimilating and formulating the policy in comparison with other schemes in the public service is arguable. The assessment of teachers is very similar to that in other schemes of services. The managerial approach is identified in the characteristics in the selection process of an ET, particularly with regards to criteria about the candidates' personalities and communication skills. The required characteristics of ETs in Malaysia are similar to the findings of Sparks and Lipka (1992), which suggested that teachers' personalities appeared to be important factors when selecting master teachers. Overall, such individuals must make a "contribution to the nation's education development" (Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher MOE, 2007, pp. 2-3).

The applicants are also expected to have additional attributes that extend beyond teaching and learning in the classroom, such as being able to keep excellent teaching records; contributing to the schools' excellence; and sharing their expertise and skills for the benefit of other

teachers to improve students' performance and learning outcomes. Creative and innovative teaching styles help students to think critically, solve complex problems, and master subject matter content rather than teachers simply imparting routine skills to their students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008). Embracing these attributes of excellent teaching indirectly impacts on students, as well allowing the MOE to be able to attract more quality teachers as part of this program.

The selection criteria also identify a number of additional attributes of ETs. These extra attributes incorporate multiple teacher characteristics, including personality, knowledge, skills and the ability to communicate. The complete program package came with lists of additional descriptions of 'quality teachers', such as quality teachers should be innovative and responsive to the current development of their subject areas, as well as make significant contributions towards the students, schools, and other teachers at national level. When describing herself, ET2 indicated that she was creative and innovative, was able to produce her lesson planning, and used various approaches to attract student interest in her teaching. Many of the respondents had similar responses. ET4 explained an "ET is an exemplary teacher, it means an ET should be knowledgeable and confident". These strict selection criteria outlined the ET characteristics for the so-called 'crème de la crème' of teachers, whose practices are of a level appropriate for fast-track promotion. On the other hand, it will be argued in Chapters 6 and 7 that these strict criteria have slowed the process of the selection. That is, the government approved quotas for ET are high, but these are not being met due to the demanding nature of the selection process. The cons of the established selection criteria have been criticised by many teachers, given the slow implementation process (see Chapter 6 for details). The evidence here also suggests the difficulties of defining excellent teachers.

5.3   Theme 2: Developing policy to improve the quality of Malaysian education

The Malaysian Government perceives the formulation of education policy as a means of promoting the prestige of the teaching profession by improving the welfare and quality of teachers and their careers (press statement from Corporate Unit Division, MOE, 2011). Consequently, the government's moves to improve the status of teachers by supporting the roles of teachers in society and acknowledging the heavy responsibility they carry in educating future generations. In turn, it is assumed this ETP/S approach is likely to attract better quality teaching applicants to the profession. Thus designing career structures through

monetary and non-monetary incentives paired with the discussion on Malaysian contemporary 10MP and the views from respondents of this study as insiders and outsiders are taken into account relating to the above theme 2.

5.3.1 Monetary and non-monetary incentives

There are numerous studies on teacher policy focusing on effectiveness of the teaching workforce. Career structure is one of the significant points highlighted in studies contributing towards that quality (Hargreaves, 1994; Kleinhenz and Ingvarson, 2004; OECD, 2005). Discussion about developing, attracting, recruiting and retaining quality teachers at the classroom level was a main agenda in various countries of the world, including the United Kingdom, Wales, Scotland, the United States, Australia, and countries in the Latin American and Asian regions.

There were different names and approaches to rewarding teachers in these various systems. Three main models of performance based reward system include merit pay, knowledge and skilled based compensation and school based compensation. There were various career structures designed to accommodate teachers as discussed in Chapter 2, namely Time Based promotion, filling up promotional posts when there is a vacancy and ETP/S was introduced to reward quality teachers at the classroom level.

All these monetary and non- monetary rewards offered by the government are aimed to develop, recruit, retain and attract more quality teachers into the system. This approach is one of the ways for raising the status and recognition of effective teaching. In recent decades, several monetary incentives have been developed to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Incentives for salaries related to merit, learning results, training, teaching in ' hard-to- staff' schools or subject with teachers shortages have been developed in most OECD countries (OECD, 2007, 2009). Additionally, pay related rewards linked to assessment and evaluation-either individual or collective-has been created as ways to recognise effective teaching (Vaillant and Rossel, 2012).

According to Vaillant and Rossel (2012), there is already sufficient evidence to suggest that income (an extrinsic reward) does not always provide the main source of satisfaction within the profession. In the teaching field, the issue is already under study and existing evidence indicated that, even though income is an important factor when choosing to enter an remain

in the teaching profession, teachers also assign a predominant value to other matters, such as recognition and non- monetary incentives among others (Kalnounis et al., 1985; Odden, 2000; Andrew, 2006). Lortie in his classic study spoke of the 'psychic rewards' of teaching. Furthermore, some studies show that recognition, which is not directly linked to income, might have important effects on the performance of teachers and, ultimately, on students' learning (Kaltsounis et al., 1985; Andrew, 2006).

Drawing from this research, non-monetary incentives are increasingly being used to reward excellence and effective teaching and different countries have developed numerous initiatives aiming to strengthen the non-monetary component of teachers' recognition. Some of these incentives, which include training opportunities, professional development, as well as different forms of public and professional development, and different forms of public and professional recognition- have been introduced by governmental actors, some by civil society actors, and others by the corporate world (OECD, 2009; Player, 2010).

Looking at these two arguments on recognising quality teachers, Malaysia has adopted both approaches, namely, monetary reward and professional development in rewarding ETs (Terms of Reference of Excellent Teacher MOE, 2007 p. 134.) Even though numerous initiatives exist and have been carried out for several years, the results and potential of these awards to link with teacher quality, quality teaching and student outcomes have not been adequately addressed by analysts and researchers. The literature on award experiences is scarce and the systematic analysis of concrete experiences is still very limited. This study reported that all participating ETs were satisfied and felt recognised with the government's reward. Thus, combining both monetary and non-monetary incentives in the career structure in the Malaysian context in ETP/S as suggested by this study, contributes to the literature regarding the recognition of quality teachers. The policy has accommodated both monetary and non-monetary rewards. The faster promotion provides a better salary and also the opportunity for ETs to attend relevant conferences and seminars.

5.3.2   The Malaysian Development Plan

In order to explore the sub-theme of raising educational standards, I introduce the Malaysia Plan. There are 10 Malaysia Plans also known as National Development Plans, which have

underpinned education and all other aspects of public policy in Malaysia since independence. These are outlined in the figure below and have been important in the agenda to raise the standard of teaching and learning outcomes in Malaysia. The figure compares the progress of the country in relation to its key education system focus. Political leadership and economic circumstances have influenced the structure of the respective MPs and their role in the progress of the country. These plans contextualise my analysis and recognise that the context has increasingly become global. This is necessary in a policy ecology study. The national development texts suggest the importance of education in order to achieve the objective of providing better education for all. It includes the recognition of quality teachers in developing the human capital in and for the country.

Figure6: The main educational foci of the Malaysian Plans (MP) 1970-2010

1MP-3MP	4MP-8MP	9MP	10MP
Focused on:	Focused on:	Focused on:	Focused on:
• Building the foundation • Educating people • Narrowing the gap	• Developing the nation • Towards skilled & knowledgable people	• Back-to-basics • Unity • Cultured society with strong moral values	• Transformation • Revamping education • System

As indicated in the above figure 6, different periods of time have outlined different priorities in relation to the educational foci of various Plans. From time to time, the National Development Plan stressed the importance of raising the standard of teaching. A continuous policy focus on improving the quality of teachers and quality of teaching has been evident in the texts of each of the Malaysian National Development Plans. In developing the Tenth Malaysia Plan (hereafter referred to as 10MP), the Malaysian government used research from McKinsey and company (2011) to revamp the education system and focus on building human capital. In Chapter 5 of the 10MP, the slow career progression of teachers was specifically critiqued as a problem (10MP, p. 234). Consequently, it was recommended that rewarding teachers with faster career progression would motivate and attract the best talent into the

education system, thereby raising teaching standards. In so doing, they also indirectly committed to improving the quality of teachers. Interestingly, there was no reference to the ETP/S in the 10MP relation to teacher quality.

The next section reports ETs' and SPMs' view on the links between the ETP/S and the 10MP (10MP).

5.3.3 Raising the quality and standards of teaching in Malaysia

The ETP/S aims at raising teacher standards. One way to achieve these policy objectives is to introduce staged career pathways for teachers, based on evidence of attaining higher standards of professional knowledge and performance (Odden and Kelley, 2002). Malaysia's approach is unique in the sense that rewarding quality teachers through faster promotion of ETP/S and using the MOE Terms of Reference as a standard procedure to select ETs. ETP/S is similar to the Scottish Chartered Teacher Scheme (SCTS) in terms of rewarding quality teachers through fast track promotion, but different in term of certification. Regarding Scotland, Ingvarson (2009) argued both fast track promotion in increasing salary of teachers, together with certification provided by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) was a good approach, one which Malaysia lacked.

To explore the sub-theme of raising standards in Malaysia, I analyse data from two perspectives, the outsider and insider perceptions of the ETP/S. The insiders in this context refers to a group of people who are ascribed legitimate status by the government and are accordingly involved in meaningful consultation on a regular basis. The 'outsiders', on the other hand, refers to those who are unable to achieve such favourable status or position and do not become engaged in the consultation process. The outsider perceptions are identified as those of the ETs, EPs, and the Teachers' Union (TU). The insider perspectives include those of the SPMs working within the MOE and the Central Agency. In the process of policy text production, the government consulted various group of teachers including the TU. In a sense, this picks up on the different positionality of different policy actors.

5.3.3.1 *Outsider perceptions of MP and raising standards*

The Malaysian government used the ETP/S as a tool to raise the standard of teaching and teacher quality. A few of the ET respondents mentioned that the career development of

teachers was linked with the National Plans, particularly the 10MP for producing quality human capital for the country.

Therefore, an indirect goal of the ETP/S was to develop further Malaysia's 'human capital'. EP2 was aware of the relevance of the National Plan (10MP) and the importance of human capital development. However, in his view, education should not only produce human capital, but should also teach children about their role in society. Understanding the content of each development plan and teaching philosophy is important. It was endorsed by the country and disseminated and communicated by the MOE, state, district and school levels. Dissemination of content in the National Plan has shifted teachers' understanding about the country's focus in formulating policy.

Interestingly, most ET and EP respondents shared similar views in relation to the relevance of linking the 10MP with the teacher career path policy. They indicated that the 10MP focused on developing human capital for the country and was a significant point for teachers at the school level. For the SPM, teachers were the means used by the government to train and produce quality schooling products that would help the country achieve fully 'developed' status by the year 2020. However, ET1, ET2 and ET5 highlighted a significant point that the roles of ET at the school level went beyond that of producing human capital, that is, they also need to nurture the student to become good human beings. This complex task and expectations of ETs were revealed during the interview sessions. This was similar to EP2's views that ETs at school level must equip themselves with both pedagogical content to produce good student outcomes and at the same time aim to inculcate good values in their student citizens.

As well as developing effective citizens, the role of the ET at the classroom or at the school level was to impact student outcomes in their schools. Relatedly, the ETs in this study emphasised the need to maintain and improve their teaching skills in their subject areas. ET1 was aware of the importance of quality in his teaching. From his experience, apart from being involved in coaching and mentoring other teachers, his content knowledge was constantly being updated. Similarly ET3 and ET5 could see the need for continuous improvement in their teaching skills. ET3 indicated, "I think with the grade that government has given me and the title that I carry, teaching and learning becomes my core business". ET5 described his role as an ET in the school is a 'trust' bestowed by the government: "It is a trust and I will

carry it with respect, not disappointing the government's expectations, and making sure my effort is equal to what government is paying me". From his experience, ET5 presumed that maintaining and improving quality was a priority. Similarly, ET1 indicated, "With the title of ET that we carried, people expect a certain standard of teaching quality. This make us work harder".

They recognised the importance of maintaining and improving their teaching skills because of the title they carried and the role expected of them. I now turn my focus to insider perceptions regarding the 10MP and raising teaching standards in Malaysia.

5.3.3.2   *Insider perceptions on the MP and raising standards*

Schattschneider (cited in Malony, Jordon and Mc Laughlin, 1994) used the term 'insiders' as a group of people enjoying the same set of privileges and access to an advanced intelligence on the thinking of decision makers and outsiders who know very little. Thus, when asked about their views on the development of teacher career path policies and their links with 10MP, all insider interviewees shared similar views. SPM (Teacher Administrator TA1 and TA2) and SPM Administrative Officer (AO) (Central Agency CA1 and CA2) expressed their beliefs that the career development of teachers is related to the needs of the nation, particularly the contribution of education in developing human capital in the country, especially through quality teachers and quality student learning. This link between quality teachers and the production of human capital was also outlined by the Deputy Prime Minister:

> We are aware that teachers are a main asset in any education system. Quality teachers will construct a quality education system, thus generating quality human capital. (Teachers' Union website, 2012)

They suggested that the development of human capital begins with good quality teachers in the system and able to enhance student learning outcomes. SPMs (TA1) commented on the ETP/S:

> With this career path you are informing teachers they must do a good job before being rewarded and it is a plus point not taking them out of the classroom. If the previous policy, once you have been promoted you must go to administrative posts. We have to retain experts in the classroom as many as we can. By retaining them in the classroom it managed to increase students' outcome.

SPM (TA1 and TA2) also argued, however, that quality teaching is not the only factor that contributes to student achievement. Other contributing factors include school leadership, teachers, students, school resources, parental and community support. This view was supported by the other two SPMs from Central Agency.

SPM (TA1) has expressed in detail her view on the issue of raising standards. She commented,

> As for me, the development of teacher career path is long overdue and other developed countries have done [it] and realised the importance of it … there are not many opportunities for teachers to get promoted but with the new development of Excellent Teachers Program, quality teachers are recognised. I think it is a good move, provided the recognition of teachers promotes the best delivery service[1]. The government has designed the Excellent Teacher Program to motivate and recognise the teachers' excellent contribution in enhancing student achievement in the classroom.

SPM (TA1) explained that a reform of teacher career paths was long overdue, a view also expressed in Chapter 5 of the Malaysia Plan (10MP). The SPMs, who came from teacher administrator backgrounds, however, were of the opinion that quality teachers had a more direct impact on student achievement. A view supported by numerous researchers (see for example, Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Hattie, 2003, 2008). SPM (TA1), through her vast experience as a policy maker in MOE and a teacher at various schools, also mentioned that there were different results produced by quality teachers when compared to other teachers. She commented:

> There was a study done how effective teachers and non-effective teachers have impacted students in formative years, the early years of the kids is very important and in Mc Kinsey and Co reported in 2007 and 2011 stressed the importance of quality teachers in relation to student achievement.

She added that the ETP/S has developed a new standard to reward quality teachers, who possess extraordinary attributes and characteristics. She also compared the ETP/S program with those in other countries, for example, through her own research trip to benchmark Finland, Japan and neighbouring country Singapore, she learned that these countries stress

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1 Delivery service refers to public service slogan regarding the expectation that we 'deliver on time'.

the importance of quality teachers during the formative years. Thus, the ETP/S is aimed at motivating more teachers to increase the teaching standard in Malaysia.

Policy makers, such as SPM (TA1 and TA2) from the MOE, seemed to have more knowledge about the text production of Chapter 5 related to revamping education in Malaysia in the 10MP compared to the SPM (AO). This is most likely because they were directly involved with input to the documents. The other two SPMs from Central Agency observed the two SPMs (TA1 and TA2) had first-hand knowledge of the documents. As insiders, they were directly involved in the Teaching Lab, which contributed to the production of the text in Chapter 5 of the 10MP.

While most respondents indicated there was a connection between career path policies and the 10MP, only one respondent from the SPM category, SPM (AO1) from the MOE, disagreed. For her, the ETP/S was a separate issue from the National Development Plan. She indicated that, the urgency and the perceived need to review teacher career pathway was not connected to the 10MP. For her, the changes in policy cycle occurred through external factors such as pressure from outsiders such as the Teachers' Union (TU) and other political influences, thereby impacting on the policy formulation in the MOE. A TU representative indicated:

> This Excellent Teacher program is an opportunity that the quality teachers will grab rather than the time-based teachers. The career path of an Excellent Teacher is able to attract young dedicated teachers in the system because of the package much more attractive. However, I would like to stress here that Excellent Teacher in the system should sustain their quality at the same time improves skills that they had, for me as a representative of teachers' union quality teaching that Excellent Teacher demonstrates is uncompromised.

The TU representative refers to her 'uncompromising' support of the ETP/S in relation to producing quality teachers. When asked about her statement, she elaborated saying that she was not in favour of the program as all it did was fulfil quotas, the essence of the program should be about *quality* teachers. She added that the development of the ETP/S was much better in comparison to the existing time-based teacher career paths in 2011, when this research interview took place. She presented a view of teachers as 'agents of change' in developing human capital in the country, which aligns with 10MP. However, as a TU representative she also emphasised that "the quality of teachers is uncompromised and if you

are not performing you better leave the profession". Research indicates strong support by teachers' unions for policy changes that reside within the issue of improving pedagogy (Kerchner and Koppich, 1993; Koppich, 2005; Fuller, 2010).

These pressure groups demanded the implementation of the ETP/S purely for the promotional benefits of teachers. Additionally, SPM (AO1) indicated that based on her vast experience handling the promotion of teachers in the MOE, she had concerns that there was sometimes extraneous pressure placed on the government by the TU. This pressure could be seen as detrimental and often such actions are deliberate in order to gain popularity among teachers for the government. From a management perspective, handling the promotion of teachers in the MOE, she observed that the program was initially designed and formulated according to the original objectives. Teachers and the TU, however, have made demands for the expansion of the ETP/S, to reward quality teachers beyond the classroom and that this has more or less affected the objectives of the program. For example, when graduate secondary teachers were awarded fast-track promotion, the TU advocated for other groups to be awarded the same, another example of policy assimilation.

This analysis has outlined different perspectives between outsiders at the school level and insiders from the central level in which the policy was produced and has been interpreted by the ET at the school level.

5.4 Theme 3: Professionalising Teaching

Professionalisation is viewed as a social and political project or mission designed to enhanced the interests of an occupational group (Hargreaves and Goodson, 1996). Thus the professionalisation of teaching practice is becoming more important as the government has set up a new standard for teachers to apply under this fast track promotion. The policy texts of the ETP/S responded to an increasingly diverse and discerning student population, issues relating to standards and quality and growing international comparisons. This study sought to inquire into the relationship between a number of factors that characterise the production of the policy text, including retaining ETs in the classroom and responding to TU pressure.

5.4.1 Retaining Excellent Teachers in the classroom

Teachers have different career aspirations. Some teachers prefer to be promoted to administrative positions within the school or to the district, state or ministry level. However, there are teachers who possess good skills in teaching and who would prefer to stay in the classroom. To retain their expertise and contributions to student outcomes, the government has created an alternative fast track promotion through the ETP/S. In the original Terms of Reference, the program was about retaining quality teachers in the classroom and also seeing these teachers become mentors for other teachers in the school. This original concept was extended to teachers in the district, state and ministry level.

While excellent teaching skills were needed to improve student outcomes, there was also an additional effect. This related to the ability of the ETs to modify a school's position through the advancement of the status level of that school. For example, a school with many ETs with high student achievement outcomes may be awarded the category of 'high performing school' by the MOE. ETs remaining in the classroom not only meant that they could work toward improving classroom achievement, but also more broadly assisting with the professional learning within their school and in neighbouring schools, or becoming trainers and mentors to other teachers in the state (see roles and responsibilities of ET as prescribed by the Terms of Reference of Excellent Teachers, MOE, 2007, pp. 18-20). Their contribution was further extended with the recognition of their expertise in the development of subject curriculum. ETs were frequently invited by the MOE to help the country in giving advice and sharing their knowledge and their subject matter expertise.

The concept of 'moving up and moving out' was a problem in Malaysia. The notion of high performing teachers leaving the classroom for promotion is something that many countries encounter. Many advanced countries have policies that reward quality teachers through similar fast-track promotion schemes that are designed as career paths for teaching excellence. Below is an overview of this similar concept of career path for teaching excellence in various countries:

Table15 : Overview of career pathways for teaching excellent in various countries

Country	Year started	Brief background
UK	Established in 2004; came into effect 2006	A new career route for experienced teachers • alternative to management and administrative posts • aim is to allow teachers to concentrate on using their skills to improve pupil's attainment
United States	1989	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) scheme • aim is to establish high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do • develop and operate a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet these standards • advance related education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools.
Scotland	2001, 2008	Scottish Chartered Teacher Scheme • recognise and reward teachers who attained high standards of practice • benefits students by attracting and retaining effective teachers and by ensuring all teachers continue to engage in effective modes of professional learning
Australia (New South Wales)	2007	'Performance-based remuneration system' • evidence of attaining increasing levels of knowledge and skills
Singapore	December 2007 December 2008	GROW - 'Growth of Education Officers through better recognition, opportunities and seeing to Well-Being • gives teachers more recognition for excellence and commitment to their calling, more career opportunities and professional development Master Teacher career track in Singapore • aims to influence policies, program and procedures (Master Teacher level 1) • encourages others in the school community to participate in the educational process to realise the child's full potential influence policies, program and procedures (Master Teacher level 2) • takes an active role in initiatives that influence policies, program and procedures in line with Nurturing the Whole Child.
Chile	2002	Certification of Teaching Excellence Program in Chile.

	• increase teacher salaries based on individual performance • retain good teachers in the classroom • foster peer mentoring and collaboration • social recognition and to increase their professional self-esteem
South Korea	comprehensive approach to recognising teachers and they have all graduate teaching profession. • was piloted in 2008 • Master Teachers must have strong skills in both teaching and leadership • Master Teachers are expected to remain in a teaching role, but take on new responsibilities in professional development at the school and district levels • share their expertise with other, less experienced teachers and help develop curriculum, instructional practices and evaluation systems • must have grade one certificate, 10-15 years of service • evaluated by search committee
Japan	• highly respected profession and highly paid • straight forward path being from the position of teacher to head teacher and then principal. However, within each of these paths, there are multiple salary grades based on performance and experience.
Indonesia	• teachers are required to seek training on a continuous basis if they are to retain their certification. • Better Education through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading (BERMUTU) Program • incentive of increased financial rewards

Source: Hoque et al., (2012, pp. 5-6) and adapted from Ingvarson (2013, p. 4)

Based on successful programs implemented in other countries, Malaysia has formulated her own initiatives to suit the country's needs. In a sense, what we have is a vernacular (Appadurai, 1996) expression of a broader global policy development. I draw on the concept of 'vernacular globalisation' (Appadurai, 1996), in exploring how global discourses of teacher career path policy are embedded in the Malaysian education policy field. Vernacular

globalisation refers to the ways in which all global pressures are mediated by the specific history, culture and politics of a given nation. In this way, the global inhabits the national and the local and is affected by them. For example, as a retired SPM indicated, the ETP/S in Malaysia has adapted specialist concepts from the medical services and benchmarking practices from other countries such as those listed in the above table.

Keeping quality teachers at the classroom level and awarding them promotional positions, with associated remuneration, does impact the government's budget. This can affect the decision making process. The government, particularly the central agency (Public Service Department and Treasury), took into account all their priorities within the various schemes under the public service, before approving the ETP/S. Education in Malaysia over the last 40 years has gone through a major a series of significant changes to further improve the quality of education in the nation (Lee, 1999; Aida Suraya, 2001; MOE, 2009). As this is thought to contribute to the development of quality human capital in the country, and therefore the country's potential for attaining 'developed' nation status, the central agencies have given priority to the fast-track promotion scheme for teachers.

The problem with the existing system was that it used time-based promotions for teachers, which restricted teachers' opportunity to apply for a promotion until they served a particular period of time. The changes proposed in the ETP/s would change these practices. The Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was quoted as saying about the ETP/S:

> This would give teachers a wide range of career development opportunities. They will have their progress evaluated based on their competency and not on the time they have been in service. (NUTP, 2012)

Additionally, the government addressed this issue by shortening the time frame to five years of service at the current level before individuals were able to get a promotion into the next grade. ET2 commented about the time-based notion saying,

> …many among my colleagues are time-based teachers, they were excellent and able to perform well at the classroom and their contribution was amazing to enhanced student learning outcomes. However, because they do not want to hold extra responsibilities and looking at the hard work the Excellent Teachers do, they choose to remain in the time-based track.

The ETP/S was formulated to encourage more quality teachers to remain at the classroom level. Due to the success of the ETP/S, the government has extended the option to the Time-Based Teachers. The program was recently launched early 2013 and it is called 'Fast-Track For Time-Based' teachers. It has been explained in the earlier chapter. Each year, the government advertises to promote this fast-track pathway to all teachers through MOE websites and distribute circulars to all state educations departments. This is to ensure that teachers receive appropriate information about the program.

Policy makers, both TAs and AOs in the MOE identified this pathway as a means of maintaining and improving teacher effectiveness and rewarding teachers for their excellence. This statement was refuted by one of the SPMs (AO1) from the MOE in which she stated,

> So far, I do not see any research in particular that relates to what the government has awarded teachers and what teachers give back to government. No study as far as I'm concerned, except an impact study on allowance of teaching math and sciences but after that no more. It was a sensitive issue I guess in the MOE.

Regardless, this was an extremely important goal for career development of teachers in Malaysia education system.

5.4.2 Responding to pressure from the teachers' union

While developing, implementing and evaluating the ETP/S, the MOE has had to respond to pressure from the TU. Both organisations have had a history of tension between them. A TU representative indicated:

> There was tension between the Teachers' Union in the early 90s and the MOE. This great tension did not benefit either party. What can I see from the situation was that the personality of the leader of the unions played a significant role in solving this matter. But now, the situation is different.

She goes on to suggest that the situation has changed somewhat:

> Now, the MOE takes into account our suggestions and we have yearly meetings with the MOE to discuss a lot of issues about teachers. This is the best situation for MOE and the teachers' union sharing information and knowledge about programs that the MOE wants to design or implement. I found it much easier to disseminate the new program that MOE developed through Unions. This is because we are teachers and we know what teachers want!

She adds,

> In my opinion our role as union representatives can elevate education to a new level, particularly around the issues of quality teaching and professional development, as well as economic fairness.

Consequently, despite any tensions between TU and the MOE, the TU plays a significant role in improving teachers' working conditions, including improving the professionalisation of teachers (Mausethagen and Granlun, 2012). Ozga and Lawn (1981) suggest this is a process of contestation, approval and negotiation. That is, unions can demand opportunities for fundamental restructuring of public education such as calling for reviews of job control and work rules, and demanding uniformity amongst teaching workloads and conditions, and focus attention on quality controls and increased productivity.

While there are no specific studies or research found in relation to the roles of TUs in the policy making process in Malaysia, there was anecdotal evidence that unions do play a significant role in policy setting in education systems (Kerchner et al., 1997). For instance, Ozga and Lawn (1981) outlined how the TUs and governments assert different agendas by using the concept of professionalism in different ways. Mausethagen and Granlund (2012) argue that although these social groups use the same terminology, there is still conflict and disharmony that may seem disguised, however, it is still present. They further argue that the teachers' unions are adopting an increasingly active approach in influencing and participating in the development of education policy. Additionally, Ball et al. (2012) described "unions as critics in their definition of policy actors, suggesting two particular aspects of TU 'policy work' which are important aspects of and contributions to *interpretation*" (p. 61). This study suggested that TU role is significant and influential in the policy text production in Malaysian context.

Interview data from a SPM (AO1) and a representative from TU suggest that the union has developed a relationship with the policy makers, thereby influencing decisions in the policy making process in the country. For example, the notion of rewarding quality teachers did not come from the policy makers' decisions alone. It was also the result of pressure exerted by the union.

Thus, the pressure from the TU who were the most influential pressure group in Malaysia 'threaten' government practices. The NUTP indicated in the media,

> The National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP) is confident the Government will address the woes and concerns of about 400,000 ordinary teachers and provide them with more promotional opportunities. (NUTP, 2012)

Additionally, such pressure resulted in a turning point for the government in relation to the ETP/S, encouraging them to produce better career track policies for teachers. Studies by Carter, Stevenson and Passy (2010) and Bangs, MacBeth and Galton (2010) highlight the myriad of factors that are involved in policy making, especially given that teachers' union are important political actors that seek to influence political decisions and increase their legitimacy (Mausethagen and Granlund, 2012). That is, the unions noted that teachers' promotional tracks were slower than for other services due to other schemes of service being much smaller in numbers. Consequently, the teachers' unions used that ground to fight for a better career advancement for the mass profession of teaching.

The NUTP also put the government under pressure in certain circumstances; for example, if the program or policy that they proposed got rejected. The representative from NUTP indicated that through surveys they found that most of the teachers would vote for other parties at elections time if the current government did not accommodate their wishes for better career advancement policies. This issue was acknowledged by one SPM (AO1), when she commented:

> You know the teachers' union is the strongest union in the country. They will definitely fight for their rights. If they cannot use the right channel by negotiating with the Ministry and Central Agency they will use the back door by meeting with the Minister or the Prime Minister. That shows how influential teachers' unions are in this country.

An example of this is outlined in a media report taken from the (NUTP, 2012), when a union representative spoke of the teachers' dissatisfaction regarding a pay rise not being awarded:

> She was allaying the 'frustrations and concern' of these teachers, who felt left out after the Government's announcement on Teachers Day that more than 2,000 principals and senior assistants would enjoy a pay rise, beginning early next year. "The irony is that instead of causing cheer, the announcement caused much concern and unhappiness in the teaching fraternity because the bulk of them have been left out," she told Bernama here yesterday. She said the union would seek an immediate

meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to highlight to him the grievances of the ordinary classroom teacher.

This example outlines the strength and influence of the TU in Malaysia. If they cannot achieve what they want through the regular channels and by negotiation, the TU will go straight to the Education Minister or the Prime Minister to explain their grievances directly. The Union's influence in the development of teacher career path policies is undeniable and played an important role in the stage of policy text production for the ETP/S.

As well as the above example, a SPM (AO1) shared similar experience based on her role in handling the program. She suggested, the influence of TU in influencing the decision making process was very strong. She speculated that, even some proposals concerning teachers' issues that were rejected at the MOE level, later became 'approved' following union discussions with the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analysed the views and perceptions of ETs, EPs, SPMs and a representative of the TU concerning the production of the ETP/S. The analysis was derived from their interviews and related policy documents. Several findings were obtained. First, the objectives and characteristics of the ETP/S have defined what the concept of Excellent Teacher means in the Malaysian context. Second, the interviews suggest that in developing policy to improve the quality of Malaysian Education, particularly focusing on rewarding teachers through fast track promotion, the government has raised the quality and standards of the teaching profession in Malaysia. This was the perception of those interviewed. The analyses of ET and EP perceptions found that almost all of them agree on the objectives of the ETP/S, namely to keep good teachers in the classroom. Two out of the six ETs differed on the concept of achieving a higher grade and staying at the classroom level. For these two ETs, they believed that they should be given an opportunity to be administrators and have certain decision-making powers at the school level. This indicates that some ETs questioned some of the Terms of Reference of the ETP/S produced by MOE to retain those subject specialists in the classroom.

Interviews with the SPMs (Teacher Administrators) indicated they had much more interest in policy production and guidelines than concern with issues of policy

implementation/enactment. This is common in the hierarchy of large departments and ministries. Their policy production focus has implications for policy implementation/enactment and reflects a division of labour within the system. Third, through the ETP/S, effort is being made by the government to upgrade the teaching profession and to align teacher career paths with those of other schemes of public service. This might be seen as a form of policy assimilation across the public service. Finally, in producing the policy text of the program, pressure from the TU has made a significant contribution to realising the ETP/S in Malaysia through placing political pressure upon the government. Thus we can see a mix of factors and pressures were involved in the production of the policy text with implications for its enactment in different parts of the country as well as in schools. The 10MP also provided a meta-policy context for developments in the ETP/S. The data analysis in this chapter has provided answers to research questions 1.2,1.3, 2.1 and 2.3 as shown in Table 1.The next chapter focuses on the policy implementation/enactment of ETP/S at the school level.

CHAPTER 6:   IMPLEMENTATION/ENACTMENT OF THE EXCELLENT TEACHER PROGRAM/ SCHEME

6.1   Introduction

This chapter explores the views of the interviewees about how the Excellent Teacher Program/Scheme (ETP/S) has been implemented or 'enacted' (Braun,Maguire and Ball , 2010) at the school level. The exploration utilises Braun et al.'s (2010) definition of 'enactment' to reflect an understanding that policies are usually interpreted and translated by diverse policy actors as they engage in making meaning of official texts for specific contexts and practice, including interpretation and translation of texts. Policy enactment involves the creative processes of interpretation and re-contextualisation, that is, translating by reading, writing and speaking the text into action and abstract ideas into practice of the policy context (Braun et al., 2011; Ball et al., 2012). Enactment of the ETP/S, therefore, is analysed in terms of policy actors' perceptions and descriptions of the various interpretations, translations and practices involved in the process. Enactment is taken to be a superior concept to the concept of 'implementation', which seems to deny the agency of those who put the policy into practice (Ball et al., 2012). However at the end of this chapter, I argue that the lack of prescription and very open descriptions of the policy result in processes associated with the ETP/S more closely resembling a form of implementation, rather than enactment at the school level. Indeed, the ETs themselves wanted more prescription from policy makers.

All of the policy-makers, ETs, EPs and the representative from the TU involved in this study are key actors in the sense that they had first-hand experience of the ETP/S and were affected by the program in various and differing ways. Those at the MOE, state and district level were all involved in the design or enactment phases of the program. Actors at the school level, on the other hand, gave effect to and were affected by the policy enactment in that it altered their career paths. From the interview data, five major themes emerge concerning the views of these groups in relation to teaching quality and student learning when compared with the policy aspiration.

The themes are grouped into factors that facilitate the implementation of the policy as written and factors that impede implementation of the policy as it was written. Here I have adopted insights from Ingvarson and Chadbourne's (1997) study on Advanced Skills Teachers (AST)

in Australia. The factors that facilitate enactment include: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, quality leadership and management support. Conversely, factors that impede enactment were identified as the quality of selection, recruitment and appointment practices, the lack of clarity of job description, limited coordination between central and peripheral elements of systems and the lack of enforcement and empowerment through ongoing evaluation of the quality of ETs.

Ball's (1994) states that policies "do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed, or particular goals or outcomes are set" (p. 19). Additionally, Braun et al. (2011) indicate that putting policy into practice is a creative process, which is always contingent, complex and based on particular contexts and places. Consequently, the policy actors in this study are likely to have been confronted with a multitude of challenges that either enabled or hindered the enactment process, affecting the match or mismatch between the policy intentions and its enactment.

Changes in the role of ETs over time in Malaysia have been documented in Chapter 2 and set against developments in the economic and education policy contexts. Specific reference in this regard has been made to the MP 10 and to the Malaysia Economic Transformation Program and Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025.

6.2   Factors that facilitate the implementation/enactment of the policy

This section discusses intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, as well as leadership and management styles in relation to facilitating policy implementation/enactment.

6.2.1   Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

The ETs in this study described intrinsic and extrinsic motivators as important to those teachers holding the title of ET in schools (see Chapter 3, section 3.3 and 5.3.1). The discussion of career structure in Chapter 5 suggested that there were both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as a result of being selected and appointed as an ET. Fast track promotion with higher grades of employment, higher salaries and the opportunity to remain in classroom teaching were ideal conditions for these teachers. The intrinsic factors centred on the prestige of the title of ET and the associated recognition this title brought with it.

The ETs in this study said that they were very happy when the ETP/S was introduced by the Malaysian government and enjoyed the prestige and recognition associated with the title of 'excellent teacher'. For them the concept of 'moving up but not moving out' of the classroom was what attracted them to applying for the post of ET. They wanted to further contribute to enhancing student achievement in the classroom and to share their skills and knowledge with other teachers. Based on these premises, the main purpose of the ETP/S was nothing more than rewarding quality teachers who met the requirements and criteria of the ETP/S.

All ETs in this study reported that they were happy to stay in the classroom and not interested in administrative posts, which would involve moving out of the classroom. They were happy to teach students and contribute to enhancing their achievement. The ETs involved in this study indicated that they had intrinsic motivation derived from their personal interests in being a good teacher and the sense of satisfaction derived from fulfilling this role. ET3 commented on one of these intrinsic motivators stating, "I enjoy the recognition of my contribution in society". She went on to describe the feelings associated with her satisfaction in relation to her contribution in her subject area, especially when this was recognised by other teachers and leaders in the country. People comment, "You are the one that wrote a geography book. To me, this is recognition. I do not know them but they know who I am".

Acknowledgment of expertise and the contributions of ETs is another intrinsic motivator. ET3 indicated that she was proud of the contribution she has made to her teaching area and her ability to share her knowledge with leaders from all schools in Malaysia. She indicated this was more than enough to make her satisfied and happy with her job. She explained,

> There was one principal who, after I finished my briefing, came up to me and said, 'You are a very good teacher'. She did not know I was an ET. My former principal was sitting with me and she replied to the teacher who asked the question, 'Don't you know that she is an Excellent Teacher!' So, you know, these little things motivate me. The indirect recognition was something that made me feel valued in life.

As well as the intrinsic factors, a number of participants in this study mentioned a range of extrinsic factors that were motivating for them. Extrinsic factors also brought career satisfaction to the ETs and included salary, the actual promotion, and improved career pathways for teachers. These extrinsic factors are outlined below and indicate a significant link with intrinsic motivators, such as prestige and other factors such as student achievement.

One teacher indicated that, based on his experience, some of the ETs appeared to be only motivated by the improved salary. ET5 suggested, "Increasing the money teachers receive does not motivate everyone indefinitely. You see, some people, it is sad to say, once they got the position, that was it. They tended to forget all the associated responsibility". However, most of the ETs indicated they were motivated and appreciated the honour and recognition bestowed on them through the enacted policy that enabled fast-track promotion with higher salary.

The ETs in this study, while motivated by the high paid salary, still indicated that intrinsic factors were as significant. ET5 commented,

> Higher salary scale is a good motivator, but not the only important thing to consider. The teachers must also contribute as much as they can. I can see motivation depends on individual's motivation rather than increased salary, alone. So I feel the internal motivation is the most important.

We see here that teachers like ET5 stated that they wanted to contribute to enhancing student achievement in the classroom and to share their skills and knowledge with other teachers.

Given the already constrained education budget and high proportion of teachers going for promotion, it may not be feasible to increase teacher salaries substantially. Landman and Ozga (1995) suggest that "teacher education and training is vulnerable to the combined effects of financial stringency, devolution of budgetary control to individual schools and enhanced managerialism" (p. 176). Some research suggests that hiring better qualified teachers and paying them well is a more cost effective option for improving student learning than spending on reducing class size by hiring more unqualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Although lower student to teacher ratios have been widely viewed as indicators of quality of learning, research on the relationship between class size and student achievement suggests that this may not always be the case (Hanushek, 2002). These findings may be particularly relevant for the Malaysian context as the nation is moving towards developing a fully graduate profession. In 2014, however, the teaching profession in Malaysia includes both graduate and non-graduate teachers.

A large portion of the education budget in Malaysia is allocated to teachers' salaries. This leaves less flexibility for further increases in the sector budget. Therefore, any planned teacher reforms had to take into consideration these budget constraints. In order to control

budgets, governments must undertake various trade-offs in their decision making. For example, even though the teacher sector pushes the government to increase the number of teachers, the government cannot establish new posts without considering the budgetary impact. The OECD (2013) data do not establish a direct relationship between spending per student and the average learning outcomes across countries, once expenditure goes beyond a threshold level. What makes the difference beyond this threshold level is the targeting of extra funding on those schools and students in most need. Reductions in class size are considered the second most influential driver in the salary cost of teachers per student, after teachers' salaries (OECD, 2013).

Additionally, reforms to improve career and professional development opportunities (see Chapter 3) for teachers are likely to result in savings in teacher costs that could be achieved through increased teacher motivation and productivity (Darling-Hammond, 2010). However, findings from the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD, 2009) suggest that systems prioritising higher teacher quality over smaller classes tend to perform better. Here, the examples of Japan and the Republic of Korea are compelling. The school systems of these two countries, which show comparatively high levels of spending by educational institutions, tend to prioritise teachers' salaries over class size (OECD, 2012). Both countries report higher than average student performance on PISA (OECD, 2010). These savings would likely offset increased costs due to higher average teacher qualifications and teacher education costs.

Most of the ETs interviewed in this study gave positive feedback about the ETP/S. For them, the government has implemented a significant program that recognises their contributions at the classroom and school level. They viewed this promotion as a motivator, which comes with extensive responsibilities. ET1 made this positive statement regarding the policy enactment of the ETP/S. ET2 also expressed positive opinions regarding the program when she stated,

> I felt proud when the government recognised my contribution. It was a motivation for me to improve my students' performance as well as my own. It was an innovative approach in which I would strive to improve my teaching skills in the class and make my classes more relevant to my students. My students found my new approaches to my teaching interesting.

ET5 added,

> I felt very honoured. I always thought that when somebody gave you that title of ET, you must perform to the high expectations associated with the role. It was entrusted to me, so I needed to 'pay back' the government by sharing my skills with the students and other teachers at various schools.

Similarly, ET3 indicated,

> I take this appointment as recognition of my contribution to our society. I think it is an honour to be selected as an ET. I have to carry out this task through a sense of responsibilities, and not only because of the glamour of the title.

Based on the above responses, the development of improved career ladder appeared to be very important as a motivational strategy. The ETP/S offered extrinsic benefits and provided teachers with options within teaching, as well as more control over these options. It allowed teachers to make their own career decisions, and gave them recognition, status and prestige as ETs. This notion resides within Lortie's work (1975), where he indicated that extrinsic rewards combined with the intrinsic rewards, are seen by many teachers as central to job satisfaction (see Chapter 3 for details). It also provides options for diverse work responsibilities without teachers having to leave the classroom, and opportunities for career advancement and professional growth. In addition, it provides a framework to assist individual teachers in setting their goals for professional growth. Good career path policies for teachers may also assist them in the improvement of their teaching and learning processes. In this study of the ETP/S, there were many incidences of extrinsic rewards such as faster promotion with higher pay, which were identified as external motivators. The ETP/S also provides a venue to reward outstanding teachers who in turn provide exemplary models for beginning teachers and a framework to assist individual teachers in goal setting. Hence, career ladders also provide an avenue to improve the image of the profession and thus a means of attracting talented teachers to classrooms and keeping them there.

Teachers' career pathways in Malaysia have benefitted from the ETP/S. Teachers have been encouraged to meet the higher levels of performance as they progressed up the career ladder. Besides the extrinsic motivation that the ETs expressed in their interviews, the intrinsic motivation also provided them with a level of satisfaction with teaching.

When asked about opportunities for career advancement prior to the introduction of the ETP/S, respondents noted limited opportunities, which had previously led to frustration. The former policy landscape resulted in some skilled teachers leaving the classroom to take on

managerial positions such as leadership positions in the school or moving to work in the MOE. It could be argued that a career ladder that provides opportunities for teachers to grow professionally and be rewarded for their performance would help to retain qualified teachers in classrooms (OECD, 2009).

The opportunities associated with the ETP/S were found to have strong motivational effects in improving student achievement. ET4 indicated,

> I feel like the government should provide us with better career advancement. Not only the promotional grade, but also in terms of attending courses and participating in international conferences so that we can upgrade our skills and knowledge. I have to apply for scholarships and had to go to a conference with my own money.

The theme of motivation through the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S aligns with the findings of Firestones and Pennell (1993), who suggest that teachers may not be motivated by financial incentives and may prefer non-monetary rewards. We see this when the participants often spoke of the extrinsic factors in conjunction with the intrinsic ones. At the same time, we see the ETs reported a strong desire to earn more and have fast-track promotion through this program, while the increased remuneration was reported as having a limited motivating effect. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies (Heneman, 1998; Kelly, 1999). In this case, the higher salaries and bonuses paid to the ETs were earned through advancement through the promotional grade. This was reported as offering some motivation for teachers, who viewed this remuneration as acknowledgment of their hard work, rather than an incentive to work harder (Marsh et al., 2011). Yuan et al. (2013) suggest such incentive pay programs do not motivate teachers to make behavioural changes that lead to student achievement gains. Darling-Hammond (2010) further asserts that the combination of professional learning, support and incentives are important to improve school performance. Findings in this chapter also suggest that indirectly the program has had an impact by increasing the number of hours teachers worked and unfortunately also damaged teachers' collegial relationship with other teachers because of the sense of jealousy that the ETP/S favoured the ETs.

6.2.2 Leadership and management support

Leadership is an essential component in ensuring every program enacted at the school level is successful. Effective schools are often those in which leadership practices are focused on

improving classroom pedagogies; headship is seen as 'leading learning' (Lingard et al., 2003; Hayes, Christie, Mills and Lingard, 2006). Effective schools, teaching and leadership practices are important factors at the school level. As Darling Hammond (2007) suggests, "Excellent teachers deserve excellent leaders" (p. 17). Additionally, education leadership has been called the 'bridge' that can bring together the many different reform efforts in ways that practically nothing else can (DeVita, Colvin, Darling-Hammond and Haycock, 2007). Teachers are on the front lines of learning, but principals are uniquely positioned to provide a climate of high expectations, a clear vision for better teaching and learning, and the means for everyone in the system to realise that vision (DeVita et al., 2007, p. 4). Thus ETP/S in this context, required leadership support from various levels, namely school, district, state and MOE level to retain quality teachers in the classroom.

An objective of fast-track promotions under the ETP/S was to facilitate the enhancement of student achievement through supportive leadership environments. It has been identified that the performance of head teachers and principals has a positive impact on students' performance, although these effects on student performance are mediated and somewhat indirect (Hallinger and Heck, 1996), especially when compared with teacher effects. Enhanced teacher performance, however, can be achieved with good support from effective leaders (Elmore, 2000). Additionally, Hayes et al. (2006) suggests that strong leadership is essential for strong teaching, and that great support at various levels across layers of the enactment process will determine the failure or success of government programs.

The ETs at the school level were not only focused on teaching students in the classroom, but they were also involved in meetings, conferences and training sessions as part of their role. ETs in this study agreed that there should be guidelines and coordination of these activities between the various levels. In some cases, ETs had been asked to leave their classroom to attend meetings by a number of different divisions within the MOE. EP1 commented in relation to this practice, "Sometimes it was difficult to decide whether or not to let the ETs go for a meeting with MOE, SEO or DEO". A similar point made by EP2 when he explained, "This is an area that needs to be addressed by MOE. Strategies need to be effectively managed; we need our ETs in the classroom".

The ETs in this study reported that they were expected to be involved in many activities outside the classroom and these commitments were sometimes unmanageable. They

suggested that there is a need for close support and monitoring from the leadership at the MOE and SEO level, as well as the school level. Without proper planning, frequent meetings and workshops organised by the MOE, the SEO, and the DEO, the school administrators were reported to become distractions for ETs. Both ETs and EPs indicated that this was a grey area and that priorities needed to be made clear. They suggested coordination between various levels of the system may solve this problem.

It was also suggested that leadership should be devolved to the ETs. EP2 observed,

> The excellent teachers in my school have shown their efficacy. Their roles and contribution are undeniable. I would say they play an important role in the school. If we evaluate an excellent teacher, he [*sic*] must be excellent and we must use their expertise and skill. I also try to expose my Excellent Teachers to new experiences by putting them together with the school administrative committee. Why am I placing them here? To help the school and ensure their voices are heard. In other words, I involve them in decision making at school level.

Through the devolution of decision making, it is also likely that the administrative burden on leaders would be eased and schools could draw on the expertise of ETs. To do this, the leadership must be creative in 'exploiting' or make use of the skills of the ETs. For example, EP2 added,

> The more I have Excellent Teachers in my school, the easier my tasks become. I use their skills and encourage them to become involved in international project with their students. I do this through planned and letting the excellent teacher executed these plans. The role of the Excellent Teachers is therefore foregrounded, provided they carry out their responsibilities.

It was important to ensure that each group benefited from the expertise of these ETs.

6.3   Factors that impede policy implementation/enactment

As well as factors that facilitate policy enactment, there are also a number of factors that inhibit the process of enacting the policy as it was written. Issues related to recruiting, selecting and appointing ETs were identified by most of the participants in this study as inhibiting factors. They considered these practices as key factors that impede the enactment of the ETP/S at the school level. These include the lack of a clear job description for ETs; the lack of coordination between central office and the other levels of schools; a lack of

enforcement of the existing ETs; and a shortage of personnel to monitor quality and maintain the program.

6.3.1 Recruiting, selecting and appointing Excellent Teachers

The process of applying for the ETP/S in the Malaysian education system involved three stages. Initially, each candidate was required to complete an application form. The form was submitted through the principal or headmaster of the applicant's school. After these initial two steps, the Inspectorate Quality Assurance Division (IQA) of the MOE took over. At least two inspectorate officers from the State Department Office were involved in assessing each of the ET candidates' applications. This assessment included: all the evaluation of all applications for their attainment of at least 85 per cent or above in the High Performance Appraisal section for the past three consecutive years, as well as their eligibility in terms of the other ETP/S criteria (see Chapter 5).

The additional workload for teachers was reported to be an issue that interfered with the number of applicants for the role of ET. ET2 suggested, "The reason why the Excellent Teachers program was unpopular with many teachers from the time-based track was because they did not want to accept any more responsibilities". SPM (TA2) observed, "There were many good school teachers who refused to choose the Excellent Teacher option because of the strict criteria and long process of assessment before getting appointed as an ET". This statement was supported by ET1, ET2, ET3, and ET5. They acknowledged that among their peers, there were many quality teachers that were 'excellent', but chose to remain in the time-based option. ET2 commented:

> Now it would be competitive where some teachers would rather choose to be in the time-based stream than to be an Excellent Teacher because at the end of the day, someone will come and say, 'Why should I burden myself to be an ET? They may earn more money but they double their workload.

Yet another problem with the recruitment practices of the scheme was linked to the role of the principals in the recommendation process. Only the applicants recommended and approved by principals were forwarded to the district, state and MOE for further action. At this next stage, the district would forward these applications to the state education department before sending them off to the MOE. Those at the ground level, the schools, who were interviewed for this study, reported that five out of six respondents from the ET teacher

category were more satisfied with the assessment and evaluation made by the IQA than the individuals selected by the principals. Four out of six from the SPM category realised the important roles played by the IQA; two SPMs from Central Agency and the EPs also commented on the issue.

6.3.2   Monitoring quality: A shift from IQA to principals

The first two groups of ETs under the ETP/S were selected by IQA officers. According to the research participants, this process produced better quality ETs in schools than the following groups, who were selected by their school principals. The program was considered successful by the MOE and consequently, the quotas were increased. The increase did not take into account the limited availability of IQA officers, and caused a strain on human resources. A solution to this problem was to shift the selection responsibility to school principals. Apart from personnel limitations, the increase in quotas also raised two other concerns. According to the ETs, EPs, and SPM involved in this study, there was complexity in selecting ETs at the school level. The increased quotas approved by the central agency also meant that the strict criteria in the selection process and drastic increase in quotas slowed the process of selecting and appointing ETs at the school level.

The interview transcripts from SPM respondents revealed the view that the increased number of ETs approved by the MOE has resulted in an inferior quality of ET. To support this argument, SPMs (AO) explained that "the original concept of ET was somewhat questionable". ET1 and ET2 observed similar points of view on the issue. ET1 explained "The first batch of ETs that were selected and appointed by the IQA (MOE) were the best". ET4 agreed saying, "Yes, I think the pressure to fill the quotas meant the ETs were selected quickly, and sometimes this was not based on their skills and ability… I think those who were selected by the IQA were the best". ET2 was also concerned about the new selection process. She indicated, "the selection process I was involved with required me to be recommended by the school as an ET candidate. This differed from the new group where their procedures did not require this. They could apply straight away". ET4 shared similar experiences suggesting, "During my time, ET promotions had been proposed by the school not like now, you can apply without the school's recommendation". It should be noted that all of the ETs interviewed for the purpose of this study were selected in the first group, who were approved by the IQA.

Following this analysis, SPM (TA1) also reported there was a problem related to the selection of ETs at the school level, when in effect the role of the IQA was cascaded down to school principals. She commented, "I know of this problem. It resulted due to a shortage in manpower [*sic*]". ET4 agreed that the haste with which quotas were being filled during consequent appointment rounds brought about a lower quality of ETs in the system. He said, "Most of the time the situation is not good because the IQA cannot inspect them [ETs] properly. The government should not just appoint people for the sake of filling the quotas and attaining the numbers. If there is no quality, there is no point! So now we have ETs who meet the quotas but do not meet the quality".

Many participants suggest the questionable nature of the selection and appointment processes at the school level. However, in so doing they reported their opinion that the selection process from the initial batches of the ET was better than current practices. Another problem with the recruitment process was that preference was given to junior teachers. This situation was highlighted in the local English newspaper, *The Star* (2011), which suggested the recruitment and selection process of the ETs had sidelined senior teachers and given more opportunity to junior teachers. The commentator described the promotion opportunities as "scant" and stated "there were often too many takers". The unhappy teachers also commented to the newspaper making their dissatisfaction with this aspect of the ETP/S clear.

As well as negative feedback, this selection process has also drawn positive feedback from participants in the study. While it was reported to have sacrificed the quality of ETs, the selection process undertaken by the principals occurred more quickly than the selection process involving the IQA. SPM (TA1) commented,

> We must be cautious about the implementation process ... there must be a good process of selecting quality teachers to fill the quotas of ET so only deserving teachers will get the positions. The problem is how do we ensure this? ... The selection and appointment process is completed according to the objectives of the program.

The slow process of selecting of ETs at the school level was raised as a significant issue, with many respondents querying why certain quotas of ETs could not be filled. SMP (TA2) commented, "I recognise the slow nature of the selection process of Excellent Teachers at the school level. This is due to fact that strict and stringent processes imposed by the MOE were in place to select only quality teachers". SMP (TA2) explained,

> I have been asked by Human Resource Division to interview 10 Excellent Teachers for the premier post of JUSA C[2]. This was done at the end of the year whereas the vacancy existed at JUSA C for two years already and I'm not so sure that this group of 10 teachers will get JUSA C this year or next year. So this is a problem with the current ET policy. The processes take too long.

Furthermore higher grades of ET will require a higher grade officer from the MOE to conduct the interviews and oversee the selection process. SMP (TA2) commented,

> For those at JUSA C, they need the person at JUSA B or A to assess their application. That is, for example, the director of a division in the MOE is of an appropriate grade to evaluation their application. This slows the process of selecting an ET at this particular grade.

The concept of the grade of the ETs was identified by a number of participants. There were some ETs at the same grade as the state education director. This meant that the principal's grade was lower than the ETs. There was an issue of the 'chain of command' between the principal and the higher grade of ET in his/her school. It was a bit disconcerting when the ET in a school had a higher employment grade than the principal. This raises the question of whether the principal can assess the performance of the ETs in appraisal reports when s/he is of a lower grade, a highly unusual situation in the bureaucracy in the Malaysian public service. When EP1 was asked about this, he indicated that he had an ET in his school with a higher grade than him. He commented, "Regardless of how high the Excellent Teacher was in the grade ladder, that teacher should know their limits and their position within the organisation. It is like in a meeting if the chairperson is lower grade than you, you still have to respect the chair not the grade he or she has". EP2 shared a similar perspective when he commented,

> Look, for example, there were too many ETs in this state that are equivalent to my post. But remember, ETs do not have the power like the state education director has. The state education director has the power to transfer teachers if they are not performing, but ETs do not have that power. Put simply, the ETs should know their roles and limits.

Through the feedback from EPs interviewed in this study, we see that while they are not entirely happy with the situation, they do not face any problems in handling higher grade

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2 JUSA C is a premier post in the public service in Malaysia. This is equivalent to the grade of State Education Director. Other levels higher than the JUSA C include JUSA B and A.

ETs, as limits and roles are clearly understood. This harmonious situation was also expressed by ET1 who said, "I know my role and my boundary, although my grade is higher than principal in this school I still respect him as my boss". ET2 emphasised that, "we should know our roles. I always respect my principal as he will do my performance evaluation". ET3, who has a close working relationship with principal added, "I always work together with the principal and help her organise things at school and respect her decision". While ET4 suggested, "I don't see any problem with the grade that we hold in schools because we already know our roles". ET5 agreed commenting, "The principal plays his role as administrator in this school and I play my role as a classroom teacher, so there is no problem".

However, ET6 had a different perspective in which he indicated, "I wish the MOE could promote Excellent Teachers into administrative posts". In this instance, ET6 was referring to his current principal who, in his opinion was not a high performing principal. ET6 seemed to express some discomfort with his principal who, according to him, stemmed from an issue that his principal did not accept his ideas and sometimes seemed to go against him. Based on this situation, ET6 suggested, "I would like to recommend here in this interview that, the Excellent Teachers must also be given a chance to be a principal at school because sometimes Excellent Teachers can see what the principal cannot". In this case, the old bureaucratic process and the 'chain of command' of teachers has been revolutionised when the ETP/S was introduced at the school level. It seems the ETs were empowered to some extent by their promotion, but some may also feel that they are not able to maintain their position, while following more traditional promotional paths.

6.3.3 Quotas

The ETP/S encouraged more quality teachers to apply to the program, thereby rewarding more quality teachers through fast-track promotions; however, its enactment was problematic. The OECD (2005) reported that when funding is limited, governments tend to establish quotas for promotion. The implementation of quotas means that only a few teachers benefit and administrators may find it difficult to explain why others missed out (Chamberlain et al., 2002). The interview data in this study indicate that this is the case in the Malaysian context. While ET5 suggested, "Increasing the numbers, the quotas of Excellent Teachers at the school level without quality control was a failure", the EPs did not comment on the issue. Most respondents considered the enactment of the ETP/S, especially the

selection process, to be driven by the quotas, rather than ensuring quality applicants were awarded promotion. The ETs interviewed in this study agreed that there were complex processes involved in getting appointed as an ET. For example ET1 explained, "I had to prove that something that I've done in my subject area benefitted both students and teachers. I've been assessed on that". This was a long and complicated task. ET6 emphasised that, "I was recognised through my achievement with school results. My students obtained more than a satisfactory level in the Malaysian Certificate Examination. This was considered during the selection process". However, ET5 cautioned,

> There should be a proper way of selecting, not necessarily based on seniority. The MOE must select the ETs properly; not just because they fulfil the criteria of seniority, if not, we ignore the quality of ETs.

Additionally, the effectiveness of the quality control practices was also questioned. ET2 observed, "The other weakness is the monitoring of teachers. That is, they just tell you to be a good quality teacher and there is no quality control afterwards". Policy makers indicated the criteria in the program were clear and easy to understand and enact in order to get the best teachers in the system.

When the quotas were increased, ET5 suggested that there was a risk of cronyism when the selection process was devolved to the principal. He explained, "I can tell you it was a failure because as we know the headmaster usually has their own 'pet'". At the same time he also argued that the quality of work of ETs who had been selected by principals was not up to the standard of previous ETs and this has created disappointment amongst ETs interviewed in this study. ET5 recognised, "I have heard many people complain about the newer ETs. The teaching quality is no longer a priority. As long as you can please your boss, then you will be selected". He also expressed his disappointment stating, "It is very disappointing Faridah, that things like this happened. I know how hard Excellent Teachers work and yet there were so many complaints made against the selection process".

According to responses from ET1, ET2, ET3 and ET5, there were two types of master teachers prior to the introduction of ETs. The respondents indicated that they belonged to the first group of ETs and were of the opinion that they were hard-working, and passionate about their work. The second group, referring to those ETs appointed by the principal were reported to have questionable quality at the classroom level evidenced in many complaints made

161

against this group. With this group it was speculated that not all of those ET appointments that were made by the principals were of the same standard as the first group. Thus, ETs in this study explain that they belong to this elite group of teachers, so they claimed that this membership created a high *esprit de corps* and a sense of belonging.

Continuous improvement of the existing ETs was also deemed important to ensure the objectives of the program were achieved. Large ETP/S quotas raise questions regarding quality. This introduces the notion of the 'politics' of teaching (Hardy, 2012) in that government motivation for the implementation of such practices as funding for professional development is a socio-practice, related to the desire to keep the large teaching population happy with the government and consequently improve the chances of re-election. In the Malaysian context, teachers have always been influential in selecting the government of the day, as they are a massive sector of the population. Thus to handle this mass profession requires proper planning and strategy on the part of the government.

Another consideration is that of professional development. The process of selection and appointing the ETs is also associated with the provision of funding to accommodate training requirements to improve and upgrade the existing ETs knowledge and skills. When asked about government quotas, ET3 suggested,

> I think the issue is not just about the money the government has invested in the Excellent Teachers. I think investing in training and courses is more important. This has the multiplier effect, absorbing more teachers into the team, rather than just diluting is not likely to improve the standard of Excellent Teachers and the respect for them will be eroded.

Professional development considerations are important, as they will improve the quality of teachers and hopefully the quality of teaching.

6.4   Role of the government instituting ETs' roles at the school level

The government should have a major role in instituting and monitoring the program at various levels in the MOE, the SEO, the DEO, and at the school level. However, it was also noted that the state and district offices also have to demonstrate active participation, not only through coordination of the policy, but by showing initiative and ownership for ETs at all levels. Many policy makers also believed in a bottom-up approach. School principals, district

officers and state education officers were mentioned by all interviewees as important stakeholders.

Interestingly, most interviewees shifted the blame for workload and stress to their superiors in either the MOE or the SEO; or their colleagues such as the ETs. Analysis of these data draws attention to the need for a synchronised commitment from both groups to achieve an optimal result. Policy makers must understand that if they expect the ETs to cooperate with policy makers at the MOE and state and district officers, they themselves must be capable of understanding the problems the ETs face in schools. The ETP/S puts the importance of coordinating between people at the central level of any significant step towards improving the work levels of the teachers and hence promotes participation and partnership at all levels to meet the objectives of the ETP/S for teachers to be mentors and coaches to the other teachers at their school, district and state levels.

The government also needs to invest finances in methods that are capable of generating interest and willingness of teachers to apply for promotion to ET. Additionally, government resources are needed for ETs to participate in continuous professional development to upgrade their skills. ET1 commented, "To maintain the title of ET, the MOE should provide continuous improvement opportunities for teachers through workshops and the sharing of knowledge and skills among teachers". This concept was supported by ET2 and ET3. They shared similar ideas regarding the approach taken by the MOE and suggested that there should be new initiatives and methods to attract more teachers to apply for the position of ET. Most professions, it ought to be noted, require a certain amount of approved professional development each year for retention of teacher registration and right to practise. Such an approach could be applied to the ETs.

The ETP/S was actively hindered by a mentality that considers ETs were followers rather than leaders, even though they hold a higher post than, for example, some principals and some are equivalent in salary terms to State Education Directors. ET4 agreed, stating "given that ETs hold a higher post at the school level, most of the time they are in fact leaders in many school events". However, he added that the ET must still follow all the principal's instructions and directives. The legacy of the top-down approach in the bureaucratic process in Malaysia dominates the education system that contributes to a number of the problems discussed.

6.4.1 Lack of job description and coordination between central office and other levels of schooling

The interviews for this study have highlighted the idea of a discrepancy between the job description and the job expectations associated with ETP/S. A job description defines a 'position' (namely the position of ET in this study), which includes specific tasks, responsibilities, skills and knowledge. Job expectations involve those duties and responsibilities that management expects an employee to fulfil. In the case of ETP/S, however, these expectations are generally not formally communicated to the ET. When any ETs perform a particular job or task, he or she might not have a clear idea what is expected of him or her. This was a problem raised in the interview data. This is usually due to differences between the job descriptions and the expectations of the ETs' various employers, which may include the central, state and local administrative levels and school leaders. Whenever the difference between job descriptions and expectations is high, it will generate dissatisfaction, as well as increase role ambiguity (Ngari, Ndungu, Mwonya, Ngumi, Mumiukha, Chepchieng, and Kariuki, 2013). Defining specific job roles and responsibilities for various positions is very important part of the MOE's ability to successfully manage its employees and hold them accountable for their work. According to Gherman (1981, cited in Ngari et al., 2013), other factors likely to cause stress at work include role ambiguity or a lack of clear job descriptions, where a person is not sure of what or how to carry out a task. This was evident in the research interviews with ETs.

The Terms of Reference for Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007) provide some guidance. They suggest ETs should improve students' performance, act as mentors, and train other teachers. However, this document has left it up to the school to interpret the specific details of the role. Therefore, there is no limit to how much school leaders can ask ETs to do. The job description was left open to the school's interpretation, which is said to have led to self-regulation of the ETs at the classroom level. One clause in the Terms of Reference for Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007) clearly indicated that "the ET, from time to time, will need to abide with the order endorsed by MOE as well as other agencies under MOE, with the permission of their principal" (p. 20). Another clause stated, "Teachers should focus on lesson planning, teaching their subject and the development of their students" (p. 17). These open and less prescriptive statements in the policy text of daily tasks of the ETs at the school level leave significant question marks regarding the 'dos and the don'ts' for newly recruited

ETs. This issue was highlighted by ET1, who was the president of an association of ETs called the *Excellent Teachers Council of Malaysia*. He said that a report from all ETs in Malaysia through this association unanimously agreed that the lack of a clear job description resulted in ETs not knowing what their job priorities should be.

Additionally, disorganised programs at the district, state and the ministry levels have led to timetable clashes for the ETs and it has been difficult for principals to decide whether to allow the ETs to leave the classroom to attend programs initiated at these various levels. As well, the participants suggested there were too many programs developed at the various levels in MOE. EP1 indicated,

> We got too many letters from the MOE and state education department. The district education department and the school also have their own program that involves the Excellent Teachers. We cannot refuse to participate when we are sent an official letters from ministry and state education department. In this situation, it made it quite difficult to decide whether to let our ETs out of the classroom or not. As you would understand, if there is a letter from MOE we have to follow those instructions; there is no choice.

Realising this problem ET1 proposed the following,

> As this matter was highlighted during our annual general meeting, I think the government should create a unit to monitor all ETs in the country. Unlike the earlier stage of the implementation of policy whereby the number of ETs was small, now we have increasing numbers and the policy makers at the MOE need to establish a special unit for monitoring the ETs in Malaysia.

ET1 indicated that these programs should be monitored by a unit within the MOE. The issue of inefficiency could be resolved if all the programs were coordinated.

The additional tasks and non-teaching duties expected of ETs have required them to engage in more work. The reports from ETs in this study have echoed the findings of Ingvarson and Chourbourne (1997) in their study of the ASTs. In the case of the ASTs in Australia, the realisation that higher salaries that were supposed to reward the teachers' advanced skills, also came with an expectation for teachers to engage in additional work, has led to disappointment and the AST program has lost credibility and been brought into disrepute. Similar problems may be faced by ETs in the Malaysian context. The interviewees in this study raised the question of what ETs should be doing. In particular, what should the

expectations be for those ETs who are rewarded at the highest grade? Comparatively, the state education director at his/her grade holds significantly greater responsibilities than a classroom teacher, including looking after teachers, students and schools for the entire state. As the result of there being no specific job description and task assigned to the highest grade of ET, the subsequent practices have been left open to individual interpretations, which lead to self-monitoring, viewed in this study as a form of governmentality (Ainley and McKenzie, 2000). All ETs in this study indicated that there should be a specific job description for ETs, just like there are for other positions in the ministry. Without this clear description, there was a reliance on self-regulation in enacting this policy at the school level. In other words, ETs and those in the schools, the district, the state and the MOE, used their own professional judgement to determine how much responsibility ETs should have outside the classroom. This reliance on professional judgement without clear information from the MOE about expectations has meant that some ETs have pushed themselves to overload themselves with work. Further tensions can arise from the variety of expectations from the school and the different levels of the MOE.

For example, ET3 observed that principals were sometimes not aware of the job description of the ETs and assigned them to perform various tasks that were not related to their field. She commented "For example I teach the geography subject and the principal wants me to teach English".

As well as aspects of curriculum allocation, other ETs indicated that the nature of the allocated tasks were generally random and often not related to their expertise. For example, ET5 commented that, "There were a lot of *ad hoc* tasks that were assigned to the ETs as a result of their higher pay grade and title". ET4 gave one such example of *ad hoc* tasks, when he suggested he was involved in most of major events held at his school, including tasks like becoming a master of ceremony at school functions. The ETs indicated that, at times, these additional tasks became burdensome for them. ET4 indicated that he was often allocated clerical work at the school. He compares "you know teacher administrators situated in MOE, or SEO holding the same grade like me ... they had their own office and personal assistants to help them, we have to type our own, I feel like I want to change to administrative side, it is much better, you are paying me for what? Stapling the student examination papers or doing all clerical work",

When asked if they were able to ask for help from administrative staff, ET4 explained,

> Schools do not have enough supporting staff and I cannot use them. I have to do my own clerical jobs which I'm not supposed to do. It does not mean that we are holding higher grade with high salary, we have to do all these things…

The respondents suggested that the lack of a job description during the enactment of the ETP/S was one of the major problems for ETs in schools. The additional and unassigned tasks allocated to ETs sometimes resulted in ETs pushing themselves to do more work as a result of the intrinsic burden of feeling responsible as an ET. Consequently, this situation led to stress and tension for ETs.

This study views the issues of ETs self-regulatory behaviour as a form of govermentality (Foucault et al., 1991). Foucault referred to the relations between government interventions and political programs or styles of thinking. He argued that government is a vast and never-ending project of improvement. Governmentality is taken by Foucault to mean self-governing, the ways in which individuals do what is expected of them and, in some cases, develop expectations to do more than may have originally been required (Foucault, 1993;Miller, 1993; Rose 1993,1996; Osborne,1997). In this case, the implementation of the ETP/S requires both shaping the personal conduct of individuals ETs, so that they become civil and productive members of society (specifically the education system), and regulating macrostructures such as helping the MOE to produce human capital development through improving the quality of teaching. ETs also played a role in the 'social' contexts of schools, so that they enhance the life and capabilities of the students, teachers and school. In short, a lack of job description highlighted by the ETs in this study demands a politics of the body – the (self-)disciplines or self-regulation (governmentality in effect) applied to ETs at the school level, when there is no clear role description. The ETs as a consequence through a process of self-governing pressured themselves to do more.

The original goals of recruiting the best teachers and keeping them in the classroom did not always occur when the policy was enacted. It is therefore recommended that this barrier to policy enactment be addressed by policy makers at the ministry level. I will return to this issue in the final chapter of the thesis.

6.4.2 Lack of enforcement and shortage of personnel to monitor ET quality

The lack of ongoing enforcement of the required criteria and monitoring of the quality of ETs are two factors that have also created issues for those who are required to enact the ETP/S at the school level. After the appointment of the ETs, there is no follow up assessment or evaluation to monitor the existing ETs' progress and contributions. While it was anticipated that there should be regular checks on the ETs, such scheduled inspections could not be executed as planned due to the shortage of personnel in the inspectorate division. This problem was emphasised by ET5 who stated, "There is no quality assurance or review once the ETs were appointed". ET2 and ET3 argued "lack of inspection of existing ETs at the school led to low quality and performance".

Different expectations from policy makers and practitioners were highlighted here. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the program was approved within the scope of the national budget. The MOE was bound by budgetary constraints. The allocation in the budget was to pay for the teacher quotas, however, establishing additional personnel to monitor the ETs would also incur costs. This was a consideration which the practitioners at the ground level did not understand. The SPMs expected by giving the responsibility for selection to the principal, the issue of unfilled quotas would be solved. Knowing the issues highlighted by ETs, SPM (AO1) from the MOE agreed that without close monitoring of the existing ETs, there is no guarantee about the ongoing quality of their classroom and non-teaching practices.

A common complaint was that the MOE's job of monitoring ETs and their practices by the different departments, namely in state and district office, was entrusted to people already holding a full workload. The additional workload for these people resulted in the additional tasks being placed low in the priority queue, which meant the ETP/S was not coordinated or executed effectively. In essence, this was one reason why the EP initiative did not fully utilise the ETs' skills in their schools and thus did not achieve the objectives of the ETP/S. The ETs were busy delivering courses and sharing their knowledge and their expertise, which in turn meant they were called out of the classroom by the state as well as the MOE (see Chapter 5 on roles of ETs related to MOE divisions). To overcome this issue, ET1 suggested the following, "A special unit for monitoring ETs is needed for ensuring its implementation is not left to chance, so that the initiatives are not damaged, but meticulously planned and monitored". ET2 shared a similar point, "I think maybe there should be some monitoring, because we do not want the Excellent Teacher reputation to drop". SPM (AO) agreed with

this point, also suggesting that there should be a special unit to evaluate each of the MOE programs. There was a need to establish a special unit to control and monitor the ETs in Malaysia, like the establishment of boarding school unit or special education teachers division in the MOE. However, the proposal for the establishment of that unit was rejected by the Central Agency and treasury because of costs involved.

Lack of enforcement of competency level for ETs was due to the shortage of personnel at the school and state levels. Teachers and principals were in agreement on important aspects of teacher appraisal, including instructional practices, classroom management, student assessment, interpersonal relationships, lesson planning, and student achievement. Both teachers and principals viewed interpersonal relationships as the least important aspect of teacher appraisal, while indicating classroom management was the most important. EP1 commented, "The most important thing is how we manage the classroom and students. If my teachers can do that, I think it is enough to evaluate and manage classroom effectiveness".

From the above discussion, we see that the development of the ETP/S, with its increased quotas, did not successfully align with the availability of personnel to administer and monitor the quality of the existing ETs. Staff shortages were identified as an issue that impacted on the quality of ETs at the school level.

Thus through the discussion of factors that may have impeded the smooth implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level, it has been suggested that a substantial commitment was required from ETs and principals. For ETs, the lack of a specific job description has acted as an extrinsic and intrinsic burden. The issues associated with broad job descriptions have led to pressures on ETs to meet the expectations of those at various levels within the department and at the school level. There was a burden on ETs to support the development of curriculum and improve the practices of other teachers, but there were no specific criteria for how much of this work was expected in addition to their classroom roles. Finally, the ETs themselves have engaged in a form of governmentality and placed intrinsic burdens on themselves, which revolve around their own expectations of what it means for a teacher to be 'excellent'. Despite this lack of job description, it was acknowledged that ETs were required to meet, to maintain, and to improve their skills. Schools, Fullan (2001, p. 109) says, frequently struggle with a lack of coherence: "the main problem is not one of the absence of innovations but the presence of too many disconnected,

episodic, piecemeal, superficially adorned projects". Policy and schools according to Ball and his colleagues may escape from some policy imperatives, but policies do engage and hail teachers differently and hail different teachers (2012, p. 67).

This notion is similar to a central aspect of Foucauldian discourses of power concerning the ways in which policies work to 'form the object of which they speak' (Foucault, 1972, p. 118). Nonetheless 'meaning work' (or translation) is central to policy enactment and suggests a heuristic separation between interpretation and translation (Ball et al., 2011). The different aspect of this work and the ways in which it is enacted was suffused by relations of power. Power is recognised to be a core constituent of all discourses and one of the reasons why one participates in discourses (Foucault, 1971, p. 12). Following Foucault's idea of power, ETs were appointed at the school level and bound by rules and regulations produced by the MOE. The job description and job expectations of ETs at the classroom level indicated power relations between the manager and the employee. ETs have to follow the structure of the school, which determines the power- relations between the administrator and teachers. This is similar to what Foucault refers to as "a new kind of disciplinary power that could observe in the administrative system such as school" (Anderson and Grinberg, 1998, p. 335). The lack of job descriptions created dissatisfaction and tension among ETs in this study. A prominent strand of Foucault's governmentality theories that study networked governance beyond the state and is characterised by a critical focus on power and micro-practices was also identified through the interview data. The data suggested that there are relationships between power and control, between various levels of policy actors at various level of the implementation of educational policy in Malaysia. The MOE and Public Service Department (PSD) as a central agency hold strong power and decision-making capabilities in term of quotas, grades of ETs, their training budgets and decisions about other benefits. The interviews with respondents in this study found that there are tensions at various levels of the policy setting in Malaysia that have been made evident through the implementation of the ETP/S at the school level. At the micro level, in this case at the classroom and school level, ETs face challenging issues related to the ambiguity of tasks and roles. ETs reported that they felt this pressure, while carrying out their tasks at the school level.

The ETP/S also described the fast track promotion as producing quality teachers and enhanced student outcomes. The ETs, thus felt that the notion of 'quality' and enhancing student outcomes were other expectations that they needed to attain at the school level. In the

spirit of the policy, the original objectives of the ETP/S, ETs at the school level reported that they felt pressure and stress to maintain the status and improving the quality of their teaching. Thus, this study suggests that there are policy tensions in the enactment of the program at the school level.

Figure7: Knowledge poor-rich, prescription-judgement matrix, moving towards a 'knowledge-rich' educational future

The future of
KNOWLEDGE RICH

Education needs to be knowledge rich
including advanced feedback mechanisms in
which teachers and schools jointly develop and
share knowledge and receive systematic
feedback

1990
c) Informed
prescription

2000
(d) Informed
professional judgement,
the teacher as a
"knowledge rich"

National prescription

Professional

1980
b) Uninformed
prescription, teachers
merely implement

1970
a) Uninformed professional
judgement, teachers often feel
left alone and isolated from
the program

KNOWLEDGE POOR

The tradition of education
is often knowledge poor Education
systems have not managed to make
knowledge the central resource,
which teachers share, exchange and
jointly develop

Source: Luke, Weir and Woods (2008, pp. 85)

As evidenced in Figure 7, historically the 1970s might be seen as a time of 'uninformed professional judgement' in which external ideas did not easily find their ways into schools. The 1980s might be seen as a period of 'uninformed prescription' where teachers were required to implement standards and goals without significant input or capacity building. This moved to the period of the 1990s, which has been described as involving 'informed prescription' - a deliberate process to base policies and practices on the best research and

knowledge, but still involving limited input by the teachers, who were required to implement policies and practices without using their own professional judgement. The 2000s is seen as a period of 'informed professional judgement', which may allow for deeper developments in teaching and learning. In order to achieve these goals, teachers must be given opportunities to use their professional judgement, creative energies and ownership to enact policies and practices. Figure 7 is introduced to explain why the ETP/S is not described as the enactment of the policy as spoken about in contemporary policy literature (e.g. Ball et al., 2012). Rather, what we have seen is implementation, but implementation mediated by structure, not teacher professional judgement and informed professionalism.

The lack of informed professional judgment of the ETP/S is identified in this study through the interview data and data analysis. The MOE expected that ETP/S as formulated at the centre would be understood by the teachers at the ground level. However the policy actors who directly linked with the programs revealed that there is lack of coordination and unclear job description as discussed in the earlier section of this chapter. In one sense, this could be described as a lack of required information for schools and those involved in the enactment of the ETP/S. The ETs interviewed in this study suggested they were left alone and isolated from the processes of the production of policy texts and understanding the enactment of the program. For example, the policy actors interviewed for this study described challenges associated with the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S. All six ETs and two EPs interviewed agreed that certain roles were expected of ETs in their schools. This helped pave the way for formalised career ladders that provided differentiated roles. While there is differentiation in roles and responsibilities based on the categorisation of teachers in the career pathway, there was no specific job description for ETs at the highest post as discovered in this study.

Data also suggested that ETs were afraid to speak out about things that happened at the school level, as they saw themselves as only implementing and carrying out the ETP/S at the classroom level: a view of policy working in a one way direction from top to the school level. The lack of so called creative energies and ownership between actors at the MOE, the SEO, the DEO and the ETs at the school level is why I have argued what we have seen as evident in the data in this study is policy implementation rather than enactment. This is in line with Heimans (2013), who argues that 'enactment' as a concept seeks to capture complexity and

nuances and 'multidirectionality' in contrast with 'implementation', which assumes 'undirectionality' in policy practice from top to bottom (p. 307).

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has utilised Braun et al.'s (2010) understanding of the term 'enactment' as opposed to 'implementation' to analyse the practices of the ETP/S and relevant data. The chapter has suggested that the ETP/S, which offers faster promotion pathways for a select group of teachers, has generated tensions while being enacted at the school level. The interviews for this study indicated there were multiple challenges with the enactment of this policy. ETs reported that they felt the original objectives of the policy were not well translated to the school level. As a result of this policy translation problem, the ETP/S has demanded a substantial commitment from the ETs. For example, ETs have become burdened by additional tasks, which sometimes, paradoxically, take them away from the classroom (Sutton and Wise, 1999; Sutton et al., 2000). This has resulted, as the data indicate, from a lack of role definition, particularly but not exclusively at the higher levels. The ETs involved in this study repeatedly acknowledged that the lack of a specific job description was one important cause of their increased workloads. The analysis has suggested Foucault's concept of governmentality is a useful way to understand this self-pressurising through self-governance. Despite this lack of job description, it was acknowledged by all that ETs were required to meet, to maintain, and to improve their skills. What we have seen in some ways is a mix of a lack of informed prescription at the policy centre with in some ways a lack of informed professionalism at the school site (see Schleicher, 2008). This is why I speak of the implementation, rather than enactment of the policy at the school site.

Almost all the respondents revealed a common opinion, suggesting that the government should have a major role in instituting the program, implying that a top-down approach is essential. This approach would be more akin to traditional understandings of policy implementation, rather than the description of policy enactment offered by Ball et al. (2012). The interviewees saw a system-wide approach as being important across all stages of the policy cycle from text production through enactment to evaluation. Interestingly, much of the literature (for example, Lee, 1999) identifies the reverse, suggesting an independent and decentralised system of decision making in schools makes for a better system. It seems that the traditionally bureaucratic and top-down approach in Malaysia inhibits such developments.

Additionally, Lee (1999) argues that if decision-making were to be devolved from top to bottom then personnel at the centre must learn how to 'let go', whereas those at the periphery must learn how to 'take up' the subsequent responsibilities. This study shows that this has not been the case with the enactment of ETP/S in Malaysia. Indeed, in terms of enactment, those at the school level have not been supported in 'taking up' their responsibilities under the policy, while those at the centre have actually 'let go'. Problems in policy enactment were a result of this conundrum. This was deeply felt by the ETs.

In line with the decentralised implementation of the new curricula, the administrative organisation of the education system in Malaysia has also been restructured towards achieving Vision 2020. Education offices were established at district level and these offices were staffed with officers responsible for the placement of pupils and teachers in schools within the district, the supply of teaching and learning resources and whatever professional support the schools needed. Their role was to ensure that educational policies identified at the MOE were carried out at the school level and that complaints and needs at the school level were communicated to the MOE. Lee (1999) asserts that such decentralisation would imply devolution of decision-making, empowerment and enablement. Decentralisation of educational management can only be effective if schools are managed by personnel, who have a high sense of professionalism and enabled by policy makers to take up their responsibilities.

This study found that there was still considerable debate about the devolution of power to select ETs to the school level. The unclear job description for higher grades of ETs was one of the reasons the participants thought that the MOE should play a role in coordinating the program and their career development. But before school principals are able to take up the responsibilities of nominating and selecting ETs at the school level, they must be equipped professionally to do so. This situation of needing to train principals to take up these responsibilities has resulted from the selection of ETs being devolved from the 'centre' to the 'periphery'. Interestingly, the facilitating factors outlined in this chapter highlight the need for further and close engagement between the MOE, the State, and Districts with schools. This is because the unclear task descriptions and the complexity of the ETs' roles require them to be closely attached to all related divisions. However, there were dilemmas concerning the selection process. Reflecting on the bureaucratic processes of selecting teachers at the school level has highlighted its pros and cons. Stringent requirements by the

IQA in selecting ETs seemed to have slowed the process and the quotas of ETs were not able to be filled. When the responsibility was devolved to the principal, the process was more efficient in filling quotas, but was deemed by the teachers to be less effective, particularly in terms of quality. The latter also opened up the possibility of nepotism. This created dissatisfaction amongst the teachers at the school level. When we specifically look at measuring the quality of teachers, the research interviews suggest devolution has not worked; rather interviewees believed a system-wide approach was essential, yet as the previous chapter has demonstrated those at the MOE saw their responsibilities as simply developing the policy and its guidelines. The interviews also suggested the need for ongoing monitoring of the work of ETS. The data analysis in this Chapter focused on the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S has provided answers to research questions 1.3 and 2.3. Next, Chapter 7 will analyse the evaluation of the ETP/S at the school level.

CHAPTER 7: EVALUATIONS OF THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION/ ENACTMENT OF THE EXCELLENT TEACHER PROGRAM

7.1 Introduction

In previous chapters, I presented information about and analysis of the production of relevant policy texts and the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level. This chapter provides an analysis of the policy actors' evaluations of the implementation/ enactment of the ETP/S in Malaysia. The focus of this study is on the perceptions of the ETP/S by selected ETs in Penang, a number of policy makers, a representative from the TU and principals. The themes raised in the interview data and related documents highlight a number of significant points regarding the promotional tracks for ETs, which are linked to issues of teaching and teacher quality. The study builds upon two premises, namely: i) the *policy text production of ETP/S,* as discussed in Chapter 5 and ii) the implementation/enactment of the program that generates policy tensions that need to be evaluated. This chapter provides an overview of basic evaluations of the ETP/S by those involved in it and interviewed for this study. The first section of the chapter seeks to evaluate the intrinsic and extrinsic burdens that ETs face at the school level, which include: the scarcity of resources, impact of increases in quota and other related factors. Additionally, the evaluation of the quality of ETs is also raised as an important issue, particularly in relation to increased quotas and changing modes of appointment. This evaluation of the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S is set against the ecology surrounding the policy, which has been outlined in some details in Chapter 2 of the thesis. Here the various policies that framed and continue to frame the policy were documented and provide the backdrop to the analysis provided in this chapter.

The ecological approach to policy analysis, examining policies from text production to implementation/enactment pays attention to the ways ETs make sense of their circumstances, including the policies concerned. In other words, it highlights their degree of agency. Firestone (2014) in his recent study argues that the preference in teacher evaluation tends to be to measure performance for performance-based pay without an overarching theory of how the evaluation works. He applied two theories namely external motivation, which he described as economic and extrinsic incentives, and internal motivation, derived from psychology. He suggested that effective intrinsic incentives should not reduce autonomy and trust among effective teachers. Performance evaluations should provide teachers with useful

feedback and policy makers with information on the conditions that facilitate good teaching (Firestone, 2014, p. 100). Evaluation "involves the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs, personnel, and products…to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness and make decisions with regard to what those programs, personnel, or products are doing and affecting" (Patton, 2000, p. 426). At the end of this chapter, an evaluative account will be provided, based on the two premises noted above.

7.2   Extrinsic and intrinsic burdens

A limited number of Malaysian research studies were found to indicate links between teacher workload and stress. For example, one study by Ali (2005) found that the frequency of educational policy change was a factor that contributed to increased levels of stress among teachers in Malaysia. Another recent study about teachers' working conditions in Malaysia found that teachers report high levels of stress in relation to their work (Mukundan and Khandehroo, 2010). Similarly, I have found that ETs face extrinsic and intrinsic burdens or stressors as a result of their involvement in the ETP/S. The production of the ETP/S policy text, discussed in theme 1 in Chapter 5, has provided some level of prescription of the program. The objectives and characteristics reported in the policy text have influenced the responses of the ETs. Faster career progression and higher grades and salaries are included in the career structure, based on monetary and non-monetary incentives and have boosted ETs' motivation at the school level. Chapter 6 discussed the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of ETs and the reported tensions faced by ETs in this program at the school level. One major challenge highlighted in the OECD report (2005) was that there is often a lack of any clear job profile or framework for a teacher's work at school. This seemed to be the case for the ETs.

The issue of teachers who feel pressured in their work, especially during policy change in education does not only happen in Malaysia, but also in other countries. According to Vidovich (2002) in a case study of a Chinese school high school in Singapore, there was a clear consensus amongst respondents that they were feeling pressure due to changing curriculum policy. One of Vidovich's respondents complained that "it is stressful and challenging. Breathless is one word to describe it" (p. 11). As education policy has become more centrally important to governments in human capital terms, there has been a rush of policy changes and reforms that affect teachers' work.

The high expectations of schools, particularly around the issue of student achievement and the expectations for ETs to be high achievers in their subject areas were major policy issues. These expectations and the factors contributing to this situation need to be evaluated by the MOE. Some of these pressures related to workload were outlined by the participants. ET2, for example, explained, "I have to commit myself to teaching from day one when I was appointed until the day I retire". ET3 added, "My second priority after teaching and learning is to help the school in various programs to improve student achievement, and helping my principal". ET4 observed, "I have to do a lot of things at school, not only focusing on my subject, but ensuring my students are competitive at an international level. I do this for the students and for the school". ET1 commented:

I know of one Excellent Teacher, I think he fell and was unconscious for a few weeks on leave. Another Excellent Teacher was experiencing some sort of stress, and when the student results dropped, he felt so stressed and he collapsed too and was hospitalised. Many of them sign up for early retirement because they cannot cope anymore.

The above are extreme examples of heavy workloads and stress. One of the ETs questioned why the government did not clearly outline the expectations of the role and the potential for stress. This ET stated,

> Because of high expectations, I think most Excellent Teachers have set up self-imposed expectations because they do not know what the MOE expects from them, so they just work, and they work, and they work.

In other words, the lack of clear role definition for ETs saw the intensification of their work.

Research interviews also indicated the difficulty of ensuring teacher quality through a simple focus on student learning outcomes. ET1 observed there were some teachers who hardly went to class, but the student results were excellent. Measuring quality teachers through student outcomes is not straight forward and can be highly contentious. He commented,

> There is a teacher who hardly goes to class but the student results are excellent. I think this is because the students are very scared of her and they study very hard. So when they achieve the good results, they smile and say, 'See, she a good teacher!' But I am not so sure that we can measure success like that.

Assumptions were made by teachers and administrators at school about the ETs' abilities and skills and the workload they were able to undertake. ET1 complained,

> Excellent Teachers can do everything! When a principal gives a teacher a task to do, their response is that the principal should give the extra work to the Excellent Teacher. The comment being, 'They are the guru! They should do the extra work.' So at the end of the day, they become overloaded.

The expectations of others often went beyond the ETs' abilities and also extended their workloads.

Some of the additional tasks required of teachers stem from a lack of support staff in schools (OECD, 2005, p. 200). The ETs in this study identified a similar situation to that described in the OECD report. The overloading of the ETs, explained in detail in Chapter 5, shows how the shortage of clerical staff at the school level is an area that needs to be evaluated by the MOE. Schools are equipped with limited numbers of staff appointed by the MOE. The shortage of administrative staff and increased expectations of ETs have created a situation where the ETs become overloaded with work related tasks. ET4 shared his experiences about the burden this placed on the ETs and the feelings of powerlessness:

> Actually whatever level it is, we are only the implementer and can't make decisions. In my point of view, the government needs to decide whether quality or quantity of teachers is important. What does the ET want? If you want quality, how do you go about obtaining it? Okay, we get all the privileges, but then they want to take it back through increased workload. It is stressful. I'm not graduate teacher anymore but I was happy with my first appointment. There was not much pressure and not much work, and the starting salary was RM500 (USD $166).

ET4 was comparing the workload, rate of pay, and stress levels in the 1970s, when he was a graduate teacher, with his current role as an ET. He reports that the current job expectations are much more challenging and there is an administrative overload being placed at the school level. ET4 commented further:

> So this is the situation and sometimes we do not know what to do. As a result, we are so tired. Sometimes we have to staple our papers and often they are huge bundles, other time we have to type our own tests.

ETs are burdened with too many administrative tasks. ETs interviewed for this study reported that this level of administration meant that they could no longer carry out their core tasks. ET4 added,

> I can help student research in the classroom but who is going to type and photocopy it? It takes a lot of effort. I've got a lot of materials but who is going to help me with it? Then there is all the clerical work we have to do. So, you see it is not structured and you feel a little bit stressed at this post. But, I got used to it so it is okay. At this level you cannot complain and you must find something to motivate yourself.

ET4 also suggested that the workload situation would be different in the private sector or for teacher administrators at the same grade level in the MOE. For example, an officer at the ministry level is supported by a personal assistant and clerical staff. However, teachers at the same grade in school are not. ET4 had this to say:

> In the corporate sector, people are not doing all these tasks themselves. These people have assistants. I'm a DG 54 at school, that is equivalent to either a Director or Deputy Director, and yet I have to do all these clerical tasks and they have their own personal assistants helping them. We need help, too. That is why, sometimes I want to go to the administration side. What are they paying me for? Stapling the papers or doing clerical tasks? We are being paid for this [to teach].

> When he was asked about the principal's response to requests by the ETs for assistance, he indicated, "The schools do not have enough resources. It is pointless asking them for assistance".

ETs in this study reported that the workloads that they faced involved teaching and additional duties such as administrative tasks. ET4, for example, perceived the additional tasks as demanding more of their time than tasks closely related to teaching. Dunn and Shriner (1999) reported that teachers' involvement in other committee work (an aspect of their administrative duties) was the least enjoyable aspect of their work. Results by Chaplain (2008) also indicated that additional tasks and administrative tasks (e.g. paperwork) in particular are perceived as time consuming and contribute to teacher stress.

Chapter 1 reported that the teaching profession is part of the public service in Malaysia. This context has had a significant influence on the development of the ETP/S, resulting from comparisons of teacher career path policies with policies from other schemes of service. Again the grades given to the ETs, some of them at the grade of 54 and premier C, suggested that they should have been given the same privileges of others at the same grade in other

schemes of service or the same privileges as teacher administrators at the same grade within the State Education Office (SEO) or the MOE. These privileges included a personal assistant. (See Chapter 5 for a discussion about bringing teachers' career path at the same level as other schemes.)

SPM (AO) shared her perceptions regarding comparisons between schemes of service. She observed:

> The most important thing is to understand government policy. Teachers should know the structure and nature of teachers' work and they cannot compare themselves with other scheme of services. They should know how complicated the process of handling a mass profession can be, and what they can get as well as what they cannot get. But teachers seem to always mix up things and in fact we have heard they say things like, 'if there are no teachers, there will be no doctors'. We know that they make a special contribution to the nation and that they have the expertise to teach students and help them become engineers and doctors. We know that already.

From the various points of view analysed through the interviews, the ETs suggested that additional tasks and activities assigned to them have generated an extra workload that is burdensome and this needs to be re-evaluated by the MOE. Establishing a new unit at the MOE and at the state level to realign the structure of the MOE to the state level would help to reduce their burdens, as well as help ETs to focus on teaching and improving student learning outcomes.

7.2.1 Resource scarcity

In some countries, the doubling or tripling of government expenditure on education in recent decades has produced no measurable improvement in educational performances and, in some countries, has been accompanied by a decline in student achievement levels (Mourshed et al., 2010). This growing concern was explored by the Malaysian government. The scarcity of resources also was identified as an area that needs to be evaluated in the future. In the Malaysian context, low wages are no longer an issue as teachers are fairly well paid with high allowances (Abd Hamid et al., 2012). However, it is still difficult to budget for salaries for a mass profession, such as teaching. In this case the stakeholders' engagement in policy formulation and policy implementation is important to ensure the proper management of resources, but also to safeguard teachers because of the size of the profession.

Pressing issues in Malaysian schooling include how to overcome the "implementation gap" between national policy and local-level practices, but also close "the expectation gap" between the outcomes of education and what the various communities expect education to deliver (Noor, 2012, p. 100). Ball et al. (2012) illustrate that studies on policy implementation, as opposed to policy enactment, pay little attention to different positions taken by school actors in relation to policies. This obscures the differentiated nature of their responses to policy (Ball et al., 2011a). With the exception of school leaders, teachers are likely to be regarded as simple 'receivers' or 'recipients' of policy. This is particularly so in the Malaysian context. On the other hand, the present research provides a more nuanced picture than implementation studies of how ETs have responded to the ETP/S at the school level.

This study reported that the EPs interviewed held different perspectives and evaluations of the ETP/S. EP 1 suggested that the employment grades available to ETs should not reach the heights that they currently reach. EP 1 indicated that it would be sufficient for the government to promote ETs to a lower level and retain some money to be invested in school improvement. EP1 commented:

> There is an impediment in any policy implemented. What I would like to see is the improvement of students' outcomes through reduced class size. This is better than putting more teacher promotion posts. With a small class size, teachers can monitor and give their attention to all their students. Compare this with just giving the highest post for one Excellent Teachers where the impact is not really obvious. That is my opinion and observation.

The above observation raises interesting question of how best to expend money so as to enhance the quality of schooling and improve student learning outcomes. Rather than the government investing in one teacher by giving them the highest post, EP1 suggests that it would be better to consider other aspects, such as smaller class sizes to improve student outcomes. EP1 seemed to disagree, suggesting the highest grade given to school level ETs should be no higher than DG54, which is equivalent to the principal's grade in some categories of schools. Currently, it is possible for ETs to reach a higher grade than the principal, equivalent to the grade offered for the state education director. He observed that,

> Like premier post C, in my personal observation, it is undeniable that these teachers are excellent, but when they are already at this stage of premier C, they just keep

quiet and if we do not push them to use their full potential, they will not work at the parity of the grade given.

His argument has defined the roles and responsibilities carried out by the higher grades of school level ET. According to him, the position for ET that is equivalent to the grade held by the state education director was not reasonable, basically because the scope of the state education director's position was much wider than that of an ET. He further stated that there was often favouritism involved and this influenced the appointment of certain ETs to this high level on the promotional pathway. This was the perceived issue of favouritism or nepotism when appointments to ET were made at the school level.

There is a centralised approach to the allocation of resources under the ETP/S. The central budgetary process is dictated by all the ministries in Malaysia. The school, the district, and the state do not have money unless this is allocated to them at the ministry level. This has the potential to lead to a scarcity of monetary resources, as well as human resources such as allocation of quotas. The issue of providing higher grades for ETs was not something the EPs found logical or practical because of the limited resources. They would prefer the MOE to invest in improving schools through smaller class sizes, rather than giving the higher grade to ETs. Although the ET program seemed to impact on teacher quality and quality teaching in Malaysia, the limitations of the budget should be acknowledged by all teachers. Comparing and assimilating with other schemes of service in Malaysia in term of promotion and benefits is another concern raised in this study. It is interesting that the ETs in this study acknowledged that expenditure on teacher salaries and career paths had to be balanced against what would make the greatest difference to student learning. There is interesting future research to be conducted in this area.

7.2.2 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Developing policy to improve the quality of teachers through attracting and recruiting ETs (reported in Chapter 5 under theme 2), has managed to improve the career paths available to those high quality teachers who wish to stay in the classroom. My analysis of the views of various policy actors concerning production of the policy text suggested that the ETP/S was seen as a good measure to reward teacher quality. Those interviewed for this study suggested that the ETP/S enhanced human capital development in the country as outlined as a requirement in the Malaysia Development Plan (10MP).

According to policy actors at the school level, the devolved approach to recruiting, selecting and appointing ETs at the school level needs to be reviewed and evaluated. According to the ETs interviewed for this study, there is a need to revise the devolution of responsibility for awarding ET status to teachers from the central IQA to individual principals. These ETs reported their preference for the approaches used by the IQA to select the ETs. Furthermore, they suggested that there should be additional measures implemented to ensure that the ETs selected at the school level demonstrate a consistent level of quality teaching. They also thought there was a need for ongoing performance evaluation of ETs.

CPD and in-service training (In-SeT) are essential components in maintaining teaching quality (Mokshein et al., 2009). Each year In-SeT is allocated a sizeable portion of the recurrent educational budget and the amount increases each year. The proposed amount for 2008, for example, was RM 200 million (or USD 66$ million). Types of In-SeT include qualification upgrading courses, and knowledge and skills upgrading short courses, which take less than one year to complete. Despite the intention of the MOE to provide quality teacher training and in-service courses (SEAMEO, 2003), the teachers interviewed indicated a need for more professional development in different areas (cf OECD, 2009).

In response to this argument, several studies have found that if a teacher evaluation system is well designed, coinciding with ongoing professional learning and development, it can contribute to improving the quality of teaching and thus enhance student achievement (Looney, 2011). Looney (2011) pointed out that school-based assessments also measure teacher effectiveness and identify areas for improvement for all teachers in a school. Teachers are a valuable resource that a nation must count upon to mould and nurture its young children, its future citizens and workers. The quality of the teacher and teaching is directly related to school improvement and the quality of education provided (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2006; Hattie, 2009) (see Chapter 1 for more details). It was suggested by the respondents in the study that professional development is the main way to continue teachers' education and the best way to upgrade teachers' knowledge of curriculum, and incorporate new technologies and new teaching methods into their practices. Thus, the interview data generated from respondents suggested that there was a need for evaluation of continuous professional development for ETs, as well as the need for evaluation of the program by the MOE. The ETs in this study suggested the importance of having a higher degree such as a

Masters or Doctor of Philosophy, given their higher grade and their status as roles models to other teachers. ET1 commented,

> Excellent Teachers should possess a certain specialty through a Masters degree or PhD. They should also know about research methodology and they should undertake some research in areas identified by the government. This should include the publication of articles in various journals and contributions to our blogs or the Excellent Teachers' Council Malaysia. These papers would be reviewed by other experts at the universities.

ET2 had a similar point of view and suggested,

> As ET, I would expect to be given opportunities to attend courses so we can update our knowledge as a source of reference. So far, there is no structured program to do this, and I feel that there is no multiplier effect to ensure their knowledge and skills can help other teachers to an optimum level.

The Terms of Reference for Excellent Teachers (MOE, 2007, p. 30) stated that continuous professional development (CPD) of ETs included: attending short courses, conference and workshops; an attachment program, for example at a university; benchmarking program; sabbatical leave; on the job training; and coaching and mentoring. The opportunities for CPD have been stated in the policy texts, but most ETs in this study mentioned the necessity of this additional time for CPD. They stated that they were not being offered time outside the classroom to engage in CPD and, as a result, did not have the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and teaching skills at the school level. Additionally, all ETs were required to be aware of their conditional offer letter before being appointed as an ET. Paragraph seven of the offer letter stated, 'All Excellent Teachers can apply for full-time study leave to further their degrees to the next level of higher education'. The interviewees argued that ETs should be given wider opportunities to access CPD. ET2 commented, "Investing in training and courses is important and has multiplier effects for the ETs".

The approach used for ET professional learning was based on the notion of the 'specialist' in the medical services, as discussed in the analysis of the policy text in Chapter 5. ET1 commented, "At the very least, the Excellent Teacher should have a Masters degree, before they can become a specialist, just like the medial services". Additionally, the respondents suggested that ETs should be well-equipped with skills and knowledge to give them confidence when attending meetings or participating in discussions related to their areas of expertise. ET1 observed,

> Self- expectations and public expectations always become a priority for Excellent Teachers. Government expectations have also become a major concern for ETs.

Furthermore, he expressed concerns regarding the ETs' performance in relation to the MOE standards, suggesting additional training would help to improve their skills and enable them to meet the requirements that were set up by the government. He stated, "When the government gives the teacher a credit account, of course other people are expecting them to be able to perform".

ETs and EPs reported that it was often difficult to decide whether to attend training offered by certain organisations, as this was a decision that had to be approved by the school principal. ET1 suggested, if the training lasted for more than 3 months and the ETs taught an examination class, especially for form 5 students, the principal would not approve the teacher's absence from the classroom. This was the dilemma that the school level ETs faced. ET1 mentioned,

> As I'm teaching form 5 students and they are taking exams, I have to decline an invitation to attend an international conference, despite the pressure from the organisers who said, 'You are the tenth person to decline already; we want you involved in this program and we need people like you'.

Attendance at conferences was thought to indirectly improve and renew the ETs' knowledge base in their area. ET4 observed, "We need more time to improve ourselves and at the same time we are not allowed to leave the classroom". Most respondents from the ET category, reinforced this commentary from ET1. ET1 also indicated that comparisons were made between ETs as to what funding they received. He stated that ETs were complaining, saying: "If you are spending too much money on one person and the rest will say, 'No, you gave him money and let him do it. I want the same!'". This raises the question of professional jealousy at an individual level.

The issue of gaining opportunities to attend professional development activities was also expressed by the representative from the TU. She argued that CPD was needed to ensure quality teachers and was necessary to sustain the ETP/S. When asked about the program's potential to enhance quality teaching, she commented,

> Knowledgeable teachers are more confident in their teaching process and can deliver better lessons. Unfortunately, we often find that professional learning is

approved for the sake of spending the training budget allocated rather than focusing on the quality of the program and its teachers.

The MOE also provides full-pay scholarships for all teachers including ETs to take leave and continue their studies at the post-graduate level (for Masters and PhDs), either locally or abroad, in order to improve their knowledge and skills in areas related to teaching and learning in specific subject areas. However, one respondent indicated that while the MOE had committed to enhancing the quality of its teaching workforce, these specific opportunities were not always available to ETs. Opportunities are open to all teachers including ETs. Thus with limited allocation of grants, ETs have to compete with other teachers to be selected for these grants. Given the large numbers of teachers in Malaysia, ETs' chances of getting these grants are affected. Through the policy text production, the package for ETP/S included statements of various opportunities for CPD. However, when it came to the enactment at the school level, ETs were not given all of the promised opportunities. The objective of the program was designed beautifully and ETs were intended to be supported to undertake a range of CPD activities as a mechanism to maintain quality teaching and upgrade their skills to meet the objectives of the program, which indirectly enhances quality teachers, and hopefully students' performance. The reality, however, was reported to be somewhat different, with the levels of financial commitment and work commitments obstructing the ETs paths to engaging in ongoing CPD.

7.2.3   Reviewing the management structure

To increase the quality of ETs at the school level, the ETs in this study suggested that there should be a shift in the current structure of the MOE. There were three main issues identified in the Malaysian context that were similar to those highlighted in work by Ingvarson and Chadbourne's (1996) review of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) in Australia. Ingvarson and Chadbourne drew attention to a number of problem areas: a lack of rigorous standards and evaluation procedures due to bureaucrats with little commitment to teaching being given the responsibility of developing the procedures for assessing teachers; the grafting of the ASTs on to unchanged management structures; and the use of the ASTs as a vehicle for achieving too many agendas. The second issue highlighted by the authors had similarities to what this study has found through the interview data. In some schools, the ETP/S has created

a new hierarchy at the school level, whereby the ETs can be employed at a higher grade than the principal of their school.

The introduction of such high grades of employment for ETs created a drastic change to traditional administrative structures at the school level, when the ETP/S was introduced in the mid-1990s. However, those interviewed for this study insisted that this situation does not create problems at the school level in terms of the chain of command between the administrators and the ETs. It has, however, created tension in relation to monitoring the ETs on the ground. According to ET1, if we want the ETP/S to achieve its objectives the government, especially the MOE, should consider amending the current structure in the MOE and the SEO to include a unit to monitor the activities of the ETs, particularly as the increased quotas for ETs has resulted in a higher number of ETs in the state. In the early days of the ETP/S, there were limited numbers of ETs and it was manageable for the SEO to monitor ET activity. The coordination from the centre (MOE) and the state can help reduce and better manage the workload of those at the school level. ET1 also suggested the government should evaluate the suitability of the current structure of the MOE for monitoring the school-level ETs.

In addition to the monitoring of ETs, SPM (TA1) stressed that there should be an exit policy introduced by the government to ensure the non-performing teachers could be removed from the system. She suggested:

> I have mentioned 'exit policy'. This should be implemented if we want to upgrade the teaching profession. We need to walk the talk. We must be doing it to accomplish what has been achieved in Singapore and Finland. We should not say we are doing it and then hold back. Anyway, it is for children.

7.2.4   Evaluating governance and decision making

Research interviews suggested that improving the quality of ETs requires the cooperation of the MOE. Any decisions made by the MOE ultimately affect teachers at the school level with potential impact on students. The Malaysian education system is highly centralised, and the educational authority rests with the MOE. The growing importance and complexity of educational needs and participation led to the creation of two ministries of education by the Malaysian government in 2004. These two ministries included the MOE responsible for the primary and secondary levels of schooling, and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)

responsible for tertiary levels of education. This administrative restructuring not only resulted in changes in the organisation of the educational system, but also generated new policies, procedures, and regulations in terms of educational governance, organizational management, and leadership (Mokshein et al., 2009). However, the situation reverted to the original structure after the general election in May 2013, when there was a merger between the two ministries.

The dilemma between policy expectations and policy reception of the ETP/S has created concerns for school level ETs. Noor and Crossley (2013) agree, suggesting it is vital to ensure that the intentions of a policy are clearly expressed and good information is disseminated to those at the school level. This issue relates to what Lee (1999) describes as devolving decision-making. She indicates that when central agencies ('the top') devolve responsibilities for policies to either the state, district or school levels ('the bottom'), they need to learn how to 'let go', while those at the periphery must learn to 'take-up' responsibilities. But before school heads or teachers are able to take up these responsibilities, they must be equipped professionally (Lee, 1999) (see Chapter 6). Teachers need to be able to understand what is expected of them in order to properly execute the programs. This is an area for consideration and evaluation with regard to the workloads of the school level ETs that was highlighted in the previous chapter. High expectations without detailed job descriptions have created tensions in the lives of ETs. Based on his experiences as the ex-president of the Excellent Teacher Council Malaysia, ET1 has suggested there were many ETs experiencing stress as a result of holding the ET posts in schools. More clarity of role definition is required at the policy centre and in schools. There are echoes here of Schleicher's (2008) talk of the best systems working together 'informed prescription' at the Ministry level with 'informed professionalism' at the school level. The evidence from this research suggests this was not the case in Malaysia in relation to the ETP/S.

7.3 Disseminating Excellent Teachers' contributions for improving quality teaching

In order to respond to the issue highlighted in Chapter 5, about the spill over effect that the ETP/S had in the education system, disseminating information about their contribution is significant. The aim of disseminating ETs' achievements and expertise to other schools is to help teachers and other schools improve teaching and learning. Acknowledging the government has taken a good step in recognising and rewarding quality teachers through fast-

track promotion, ET1 suggested there was room for improvement in ensuring the effectiveness of the program. The information about the school level ETs was disseminated through Edu-Web by the Education and Technology Division (ETD) of the MOE. One of the objectives of ETD is to disseminate information on the reforms and developments in the field of education to teachers and parents (Ayob, 1989, p. 11-12). This is a portal used to promote the contributions of ETs, which have gone beyond classroom learning. Contributions of the ETs include helping rural schools and forming teachers support groups and coaching teams of teachers. So the concept of sharing knowledge and skills that the ETs have had been extended to other school in other areas. ET2 commented on this,

> We have done a lot of things including going to rural schools to help them with teacher support and mentoring teams. For example, in one school there is a teacher who is not very good at teaching physics, so we sent an ET to the school to discuss how to teach this subject and the various teaching aids she could use. She was very excited. As part of this process we are grooming her to be an ET.

Participating at the district level with the coaching and mentoring of other teachers; undertaking classroom observations; and encouraging other teachers were also part of the roles of ETs. ET1explains how this has contributed to classroom teaching and learning:

> We also sent an ET to a school to observe other teachers teaching. This was organized by the DEO and came about because of a need for good teachers to mentor other teachers.

Based on many activities and contributions of ETs at the school, district and state level, ET1 has proposed,

> One thing they should do is make a sector [unit] for Excellent Teachers and like sectors in residential schools. If you are not performing to expectations then the MOE will coordinate that. Parents also have complaints when the Excellent Teachers are out of the classroom, but who do they complain to when there is no unit taking care of such things.

The contribution of ETs, as discussed above, is a significant point that needs to be evaluated.

7.4   Political and union influence

Ball et al. (2011b) describe unions as policy actors and as 'critics', who contribute to policy work. As discussed in Chapter 5, the TU in Malaysia has been highly influential in respect of policy decisions in education. However, the MOE is often situated in the middle between

teachers' demands and serving their 'political master'. Teachers as part of a mass profession with a strong union have power, which is something the government, including central agency, has realised. The TU use various ways to influence political and policy decision making, especially using political influences to fight for their demands.

The influence of teachers is recognised in the Malaysian public service. As the largest professional group within the public service, teachers hold a large number of votes and thus have a strong influence in determining the government of the day. So indirectly the government will try to accommodate teachers' demands as best they can. SPM (AO1) commented on the work culture in the MOE, suggesting,

> What we can do is to control and argue. To change this work culture is really hard. I'm not sure whether the MOE can do this or not. This is because the MOE is huge in term of its implementation, and this work culture is immersed within it. Teachers view the promotional posts and the salary increments as something special. They are waiting for whatever betterment that you give for them. These are the two most important things that they fight for.

Drawing from that argument, the respondents also identified the issue of work culture that plays a significant role as highlighted by SPM (AO). In her perception, teachers maintain an old mindset about promotions, namely that they are something they deserve. In a similar vein, a study of ASTs by Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1997) described the former work culture as 'Old Mental Maps', stating that these old mental maps impeded the process of the ASTs in Australia. Assuming promotion and developing an understanding of new career ladders or pay systems based on knowledge and skills is difficult. In their study, Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1997) found out that the word 'promotion' was always used to refer the traditional career path into administration not to AST 1. The old mind-set associated with this work culture in the MOE is difficult to shift or remove (Fullan and Miles, 1992). The work culture according to SPM (AO) from MOE refers to the mind-set that suggests that promotions are the teachers' right and deserved by all teachers based on time served.

SPM (AO) suggests that within the work culture of the MOE, there is a mind-set that once one scheme of service attains improved benefits, other schemes of service believe that they are automatically entitled to the same benefits without the need to provide a good justification. The initial ETP/S design, for example, rewarded only those teachers who met the centrally-determined and measured criteria and was only open to classroom teachers. As

SPM (AO) indicated, however, "Once you give the benefits to certain teachers the other teachers will ask for it as well". Subsequently, professionals in a range of other positions in the MOE have asked to be included in the ETP/S. As a result, the policy that was originally designed to keep quality teachers in the classroom has been extended to include principals and teachers who have moved to positions within the MOE. These changes to the original policy show the powerful influence of teachers through their union on the government. This is the advantage of a mass profession in which governments of necessity pay special attention to meeting their demands, provided they comply with the designated rules and regulation.

Another pressing issue for policy makers in the MOE, especially the administrative officers, is that the ETP/S encountered a culture of comparison with other schemes of service within the public service. The SPM (AO) commented,

> If you choose teaching as a profession you should understand all the rules and regulations and opportunities in that profession. Right? If he [*sic*] knows from the beginning, at the time of applying for the job, that there are limited quotas for promotional posts then teachers should abide this. They are not supposed to use other influences to add more opportunities. This is an unhealthy approach.

She also suggested that the so called 'back door' mechanisms of gaining approvals for demands by swaying the decision makers was an unhealthy way to influence the government and to develop good policy. Especially given that policy makers in the MOE also have to consider other schemes of service with regard to their decision making. In her role in the MOE, SPM (AO) would have regular meetings with various unions. She suggested there was significant dissatisfaction from other schemes of service as well, when the government appeared to be always focused on teachers. She mentioned,

> Sometimes we heard other occupations were talking about teachers. When we had meetings with non-teacher unions, we heard them complain that whatever announcement that government made was always focused on teachers. They would say, 'Everything is focused on teachers. What is so special about them? Do you think other schemes of services are not contributing to the government?'

SPM (AO) from the MOE suggested that anyone who applied for a government job knew about their career prospects. She commented, "In one school, if there is only one principal's post and three deputy principals, then the rest will be ordinary classroom teachers. They have to understand that". No amount of lobbying and demanding change will alter this situation.

In her view, SPM (AO) suggested teachers should have a basic knowledge of their career development before they sign up or decide to be a teacher. She argued,

> One thing that I cannot accept is that there is group of teachers who like to demand what other groups of teachers get. For example, the headmasters have their Excellent Headmaster track; principal with their own excellent tracks; teacher administrators at various departments also want to have those privileges.

Being a policy maker at the ministry level, she agreed that the policy makers would deliver the best benefits for teachers. However, if the trend of demanding the opportunities offered to other professional groups continues, there will be issues with meeting all of their demands. SPM (AO) suggests there is no strong justification for the demands teachers were making to the special committee in the MOE:

> As I always say, if you want to demand something you should provide us with clear justification and be rational; not simply demand based on the privileges that other groups have and presume that they should automatically be treated the same way.

However, the TU representative interviewed for this study strongly suggested how important it is to consult the TU. She stated,

> The right to do negotiation with the MOE and teachers' union is extremely important. Unions are the teachers' representatives and we know teachers want more than policy makers do. By calling certain group of excellent teachers to share their views and opinion on formulating certain policy is not the right thing to do and it was not representative of the whole populations of teachers.

The negotiation process between policy makers, ETs and TU has flow-on effects for policy evaluation. One of the policy makers SPM (AO) acknowledged this situation and observed, "So indirectly, it makes the situation worse for policy makers who have to make the decision".

Other factors need to be evaluated with regard to the implementation of any program in the MOE that relates to teachers' political influence. SPM (AO) commented,

> Another issue is political influence. Sometimes we already know that some programs cannot be delivered. Teachers understand that. So that is why sometimes, through my experience, decision cannot be made because of this special relationship the teachers have in terms of negotiating improvements or change.

The pressure on policy makers in the MOE also comes from the TU. In the discussion of the production of the policy text (Chapter 5), it was reported that the TU played a significant role influencing the MOE's decision in relation to the ETP/S. The TU representative observed that there were tensions between the union and MOE before 2000. This was due to the union leadership; however, these tensions have subsided and a good relationship has subsequently developed between the TU and the MOE.

Based on her own observations, the TU representative expressed her belief that the first group of ETs were better quality that those of subsequent groups. As noted above, this was a view also expressed by the ETs interviewed for this study. She indicated that the second group of ETs was more about filling up the quotas. She suggested that rather than selecting candidates from the beginning, the IQA should have a reserved list of candidates who had failed in the first round selection process, and that the IQA should give this group of teachers priority rather than select new ones. The process of selecting ETs was described as a waste of time and money and much slower than necessary. Logically, to her view, the IQA should have the lists of teachers that had undergone the screening process for the ET. Those who are in the list but not eligible to be appointed should be given a second chance for the next intake of ET. The seniority of teachers should also be taken into consideration to ensure harmony in the schools. This is indicative of ongoing tensions between merit/time-based elements for promotion.

Additionally, the TU representative voiced her dissatisfaction on certain issues. Specifically, she was dissatisfied with the MOE only calling up ETs to give their views on certain subject matters. In her opinion, the quality of the ETs is undeniable, but the ETs do not have an overall perspective of the issues; they are looking at only certain parts of the puzzle. The union has the capability of representing the whole population of teachers and had the authority to speak and give view on certain policy implemented. She commented,

> I'm not blaming the policy or the program but the implementers at various levels should be aware about this matter [excluding the unions]. Unions have all the data and we have done the research. But if you call Excellent Teachers and Excellent Principal who do not have enough information and experiences compare to what union have, all the evaluation process involving teachers will not be proper. As a representative of union, I pledge the MOE to call and involve us to improve the system. The MOE and Teachers' Union should work together and this relationship is much better compared to the previous one which always created tensions between

Teachers' Union and MOE. Mutual understandings are very important to ensure the improvement to the system can be made.

TUs are powerful almost everywhere, so outcomes of reform efforts are generally diluted, blocked, or imposed unilaterally; "teacher unions worldwide strongly oppose performance based pay" (Lavy, 2007, p. 93). Because of their large numbers of members, distributed throughout all electoral districts, TUs are well connected politically and often closely tied to powerful political parties. For union leaders, promotional tracks incentives are especially threatening because they pose serious risks to their ability to mobilise members. This is where the tension occurs between the teachers' demands through the teachers' union and the MOEs ability to act on these demands. Evaluating positive factors of TU's influence over the MOE policy making is necessary to improve the enactment of the ETP/S at the school level.

7.5   Conclusion

Through an evaluative account of the implementation of the ETP/S, this chapter concludes that there were policy tensions in the implementation of the program at various levels. Overall, there is a heavy work burden faced by all ETs interviewed in this study. Furthermore, there is recognition that the scarcity of resources available to support ETs has triggered the various problems highlighted by this study. All the ETs commented that CPD played a significant role in maintaining their quality at the classroom. The representative from the TU, however, suggested that the government needs to focus on the quality of teachers and professional development, rather than providing unrelated or unnecessary training for the sake of spending budgetary allocations.

Second, the organisational structure remains unchanged at the MOE because of budget limitations. Perceptions of creating a new structure when a new program was introduced seemed practical to the school level ETs, but not practical to the MOE. SPM (AO) from MOE indicated it was likely that the new program would create redundancy and the duplication of functions from the states to the district and thus the proposed unit and tasks associated with the ETP/S would not be cost effective for the government. To re-structure and re-align all the functions of the MOE would require a detailed study and would need a comprehensive proposal before getting approval from the central agency.

The third argument from this chapter suggests that there are still tensions between teachers and the SPM in the MOE and central agency. In evaluating governance and decision making process, the problems encountered by ETs in the classroom level should be evaluated. For example, this chapter has described the dilemma between policy expectations and the reception of the ETP/S, including the concerns of the current school level ETs. Unclear job expectations from the MOE, the State, the District and the administrators in schools regarding the position description associated with the ET role also needs to be evaluated by the policy makers.

The roles and functions of ETs as mentioned in this chapter, and highlighted through the Edu Web in the country, have significant and multiple impacts on other teachers. Finally, the evaluation of the implementation of the policy indicates that the ETP/S has been surrounded by a struggle between the demands of teachers and their political influence through their union at the ministry levels. The data have also demonstrated how the multiple demands that resulted in the creation of the ETP/S have been significant in the evaluation of its implementation. The data analysis in this Chapter evaluating the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S has provided answers to research questions 2.4, 4.1 and 4.2. The next chapter will offer further explorations of the conclusions of all areas of this policy ecology study of the ETP/S in Malaysia.

CHAPTER 8:   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1   Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I summarise my research findings and discuss significant themes derived from the analysis. In particular, I provide a more detailed discussion of the qualitative findings of my policy ecology study of the production, implementation/ enactment and evaluation of the ETP/S (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively). I also note the contributions and limitations of the present study and conclude with suggestions for further research.

In the methodology chapter, Chapter 4, I outlined the significance of my positionality to the conduct of this research. There I noted that I was both an insider and outsider to my research topic. I was an insider because of my experience as a public servant in the MOE in Malaysia. At the same time, I was also an outsider as a doctoral student in Australia. This insider/outsider positioning provided me with good access to documents and interviewees, while also allowing me to take a more theoretically framed stance to both data collection and data analysis. I would argue that this has been most productive in the study and contributed to the veracity and insights of the findings.

This summative account of my research findings is done in two ways. In Table16 below I document in some detail the specific findings in relation to the research questions that underpinned the study. These findings have been dealt with throughout the thesis. The main account of the research findings in this chapter is dealt with in some detail below, where I consider four major issues that have resulted from data analysis.

Table 16: Documenting the findings in relation to the detailed research questions posed in Table 1.

Research question	Findings
1.1 What are the implications in the 10MP for teacher career path policy and educational goals?	1.1 10 MP confirms the continuing need of quality teaching and extends this beyond ETP/S and confirms commitment to achieving a full graduate profession.
1.2 When and why was the current teacher career path policy/career tracks policy developed in Malaysia (e.g.: 10th Malaysia Development Plan)?	1.2 A policy ecology approach has been used to outline the international and national historical and political contexts surrounding the development of the current teacher career path policy (see Chapters 3 and 5).
1.3 What are the characteristics of this career path policy?	1.3 Characteristics of the intended policy are outlined in Chapter 2, while the characteristic of the enacted policy are outlined in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.
1.4 What does this policy imply regarding the relationship between teacher quality and teaching quality?	1.4 There is an implicit assumption about the relationship between the two in the policy, without this relationship being explicitly addressed
2.1 What are the main purposes and goals of creating teacher career path policy?	2.1 To promote, recognise and reward teacher quality and quality teachers and retain ETs in the classroom (see sections 5.4.1 and 8.2.1).
2.2 What do policy makers and Excellent Teachers hope the outcomes from this policy will be?	2.2 Chapter 7 describes complex desired outcomes by both policy makers and teachers.
2.3 How do policy makers and Excellent Teachers view teacher and teaching quality in relation to this policy?	2.3 There is implicit acceptance of this relationship and understanding of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (see section 5.3.2 and section 6.2.1).
2.4 Do they see this policy as having efficacy? Has it achieved its goals?	2.4 Chapters 7 and 8 have explored the views of various actors in respect of the efficacy and achievements of the policy.
3.1 Do policy makers think teacher career path policies contribute to attracting quality teachers to the profession in Malaysia?	3.1 There is no evidence from the data collected that this is the case.
4.1 What do the policy makers see as the impact of this existing policy and how do they evaluate it?	4.1 Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 show that the views of policy makers, teachers and principals in relation to this policy and its impact.
4.2 What are the recommendations for changes to policy to improve teacher quality?	4.2 Chapter 8 (section 8.5) outlines recommendation

8.2 Overview of the thesis

In the context of broader historical, political, economic and social developments in Malaysia, the aims of this policy ecology research were to explore:

1. The development, characteristics and aspirations of contemporary education policy in Malaysia, especially in relation to teacher career path policy, specifically the ETP/S;

2. Stakeholders' views on existing teacher career path policies including specifically the ETP/S, its intent and efficacy;

3. Teacher career path policy and its contribution to attracting quality teachers; and

4. Current teacher career path policies specifically the ETP/S in Malaysia, providing an evaluative account based on the previous two aims, and make recommendations for possible ways forward.

While working to address these detailed research questions, four main issues have arisen in relation to this policy ecology study of ETP/S. These four issues have been highlighted across the three analysis chapters: the discussion and analysis of the text production of the ETP/S (Chapter 5), the implementation/enactment of the program (Chapter 6), as well as the evaluation of the ETP/S at the school level (Chapter 7), this study highlighted four main issues across the three analysis chapters. The key issues identified by this study included:

- The concept of 'moving up, but not moving out', which signifies the original intent of the ETP/S in Malaysian for promoting quality teachers, but retaining them at the classroom level;
- Issues related to the criteria for the classification of ETs (particularly teaching quality) as evident in various manifestations of the ETP/S;
- The budgetary impact of teacher career path policies as evidenced through the case of the ETP/S;
- Finally, the two-way 'spillover' effects of policies between teaching and other schemes of service, that is, policy assimilation, in the Malaysian public service.

In what follows, each of these issues and key ideas will be discussed in detail. Before turning to a more detailed consideration of these themes, I will comment briefly on what I have learned about the production of the ETP/S. The analysis has clearly shown multiple motivations for the policy. These factors comprised pressure from the profession, including the Teachers' Union, the desire to position ETP/S within the broader meta-goals of the 10MP and the overall push to improve schooling in Malaysia. Further significant factors that contributed to the development of the ETP/S included the budgetary implications of teaching as a mass profession, professional pressures, spill-over effects from comparisons across different schemes of service within the Malaysian public service, global policy pressures in respect of the concept of quality teachers, and broader national development goals. This study has implied that these contributing factors have resulted in the pragmatic policy decisions embodied by the ETP/S. The actual policy itself reflects the multiple pressures involved in its

gestation with implications for implementation, particularly given the multi-tiered nature of politics and policy making in Malaysia.

The multiple motivations for the production of the ETP/S have been made visible by the approach to policy analysis adopted in this study, namely a policy ecology (Weaver-Hightower, 2008). As such, the study has indicated the usefulness of this approach used in conjunction with critical policy sociology. The analysis has also demonstrated how the level of development of policy making in Malaysia and the professional standing of teachers impacted on the way that the policy was put into practice in the schools. I have referred to this as implementation rather than enactment (Ball et al., 2012), as the teachers and schools seemed to be demanding more prescription from the MOE, rather than using their professional autonomy to work with the potential flexibility that the policy made available to them. This is perhaps indicative of a school system in a nation at a certain level of economic and social development. As indicated below, it seems that effective school systems adopt both 'informed prescription' with 'informed professionalism', creatively suturing together top down and bottom up policy production and implementation (Schleicher, 2008). This study indicates quite clearly that this was not the relationship operating in the Malaysian system. Policy makers were most interested in producing policy, while it seems the ETs wanted more prescription from the policy makers regarding the role of ETs at the school site.

8.2 Key ideas of the study

As noted previously, there are four key ideas derived from the analysis of the data collected for this policy ecology study: the concept of *moving up, but not moving out* of the classroom; issues associated with the criteria for the classification of ETs; the budgetary impact of teacher career path policies as evidenced through the case of the ETP/S, and the two-way 'spillover' effects of policies between teaching and other schemes of service, that is, what we might see as 'policy assimilation', in the Malaysian public service.

8.2.1   The concept of 'moving up, but not moving out'

Before the ETP/S was introduced, teachers in Malaysia had limited opportunities for promotion. These opportunities were based on the vacancy of posts and time based promotion. Like a range of other countries, high quality teachers seeking promotion in Malaysia most often moved out of the classroom to administrative or leadership positions.

Realising that there was an issue with the slow promotion of teachers and moving successful ones out of the classroom, the government introduced the concept of rewarding quality teachers and providing them with promotional opportunities without having to leave the classroom through the ETP/S. This study has adopted one policy actors' description of the rationale for the ETP/S, who referred to this phenomenon, as *moving up but not moving out.* The description is contrasted with the previous (and dominant) notion of *moving up and moving out*. The *moving up but not moving out* aphorism most aptly captures the rationale for the ETP/S.

Until the introduction of the ETP/S teachers remained in the Time- Based promotional paths associated with being in the classroom, if they did not aim to be promoted into administrative and leadership work. Thus the MOE created a promotion lane for a select group of quality teachers, who chose to remain in the classroom and were able to meet the characteristics that the MOE required under the selection process for ETs. This study has unpacked the issue of how the original concept of career pathways for teachers was changed as a way of attracting teachers into this fast track promotional path and keeping them in the classroom.

The ETP/S was designed to recognise a select group of high quality teachers, who met specific criteria for promotion as excellent teachers but kept them in the classroom. The salary scales associated with the ETP/S, therefore, do not translate into changes for the broader salary scales for teachers. Rather, those teachers involved in the ETP/S are placed on a different promotional pathway to other teachers. A unique feature of this policy is that the promotional grades that are available for graduate ETs can be incredibly high, with promotions able to reach the equivalent of the grade Premier Post C, the same grade given to the State Directors of Education, as discussed in Chapter 3. Additionally, equivalent benefits enjoyed by other public servants who have reached these high grades (car, special benefits associated with the car, business class airfares, phones) are extended to the ETs at the classroom level. Globally, this is a unique approach to teacher career path policy

One of the issues with the ETP/S is that although the policy was ostensibly about keeping outstanding teachers in the classroom and rewarding them, there was a competing tendency to want to take them out of the classroom for other tasks. Central and State offices of the MOE want to draw on their recognised expertise in their subject areas and fulfill the goal of the policy, which is to use ETs as drivers of the improvement of the quality of teaching and

learning in Malaysia. The additional roles that they have been asked to fulfill include running professional development for other teachers and making contributions to policy and curriculum development. This study argues that the MOE appears to have taken the approach that the rewards for these ETs were so great that the system had to take them out of the classroom at times, almost to justify their salaries, despite the rationale for the policy being to keep them in classrooms. There is a paradox, as well as a policy and practice tension here. As discussed in Chapter 6 (section 6.4.1), we see here the tension between policy intended and policy as enacted.

8.2.2 Issues associated with the criteria for the classification of ETs

As this study has demonstrated, the measurement of teacher quality in the ETP/S was based on pedagogy and assessment practices at the classroom level, rather than on teachers' qualifications. There are opportunities for both graduate and non-graduate teachers to be recognised as ETs. I note, though, that non-graduate ETs must gain a degree in order to be eligible for promotion to higher grades and that Malaysia is working towards having an all graduate teaching profession by 2016. In other words, the measurement approach used in the ETP/S appeared to focus on the quality of teaching, rather than the quality of the teachers, an important distinction. Perhaps both ought to be taken into account when selecting ETs. This is the situation in Scotland as indicated in the Literature Review chapter. A central premise of the ETP/S involves the government providing a definition of the concept 'excellent' in rewarding quality teachers. Measurement of such excellence has raised a number of significant issues that were exacerbated when certification of ETs was devolved to the school level. ETs in the Malaysian context refers to a limited number of self-nominated teachers, who have been promoted through the government-identified 'fast- track' promotion scheme. The connotation of 'excellent' here implies limited numbers of teachers promoted to this prestigious classification. Further, given the limitations of budgetary resources, only a small number of teachers were selected as ETs.

As noted throughout this study, other education systems have instigated similar categories for teacher promotion, namely, Master Teachers and Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs). However, those comparable positions elsewhere have not had comparable salaries and benefits attached to them, which points to the distinctiveness of this Malaysian policy. The ET classified position in Malaysia appears to be unique in international terms, given their small numbers and the extent of the monetary rewards associated with the position. However,

the small numbers of teachers associated with the ETP/S suggests that this policy alone is not the 'solution' to improving schooling in Malaysia. Clearly, an aligned and integrated set of policies is needed for more far-reaching effects on Malaysian education, including the goal of an all graduate teaching profession in the longer term.

The practice of rewarding quality teachers to enhance teachers' professionalism and student learning outcomes has become a major policy focus around the globe. Performance related pay, certification, and increases in teachers' salaries are all mechanisms used to attract quality teachers and continuously motivate them to improve the education system and enhance student learning (see Chapter 3). Chapter 6 suggests that ETP/S has established a new form of performance measurement for quality teachers in the Malaysian education system. However, the question of how we appropriately measure quality teachers remains a pressing one, in Malaysia and elsewhere. We need sophisticated measures here.

Various approaches to performance measurement are used globally, with some countries using certification committees to verify teachers' capabilities before awarding them bonuses or increases in salary. Other countries review the contributions teachers make to the education system, with these being linked to quality teaching and the enhancement of students' learning outcomes. There have also been attempts to develop more sophisticated 'value-added' accounts of teachers' contributions to students' learning. Dinham (2013) argues that simplistic solutions have been offered for the 'problem' of teacher quality, including sacking poor teachers and offering performance bonuses to teachers whose students achieve at high levels on assessments. Through the analysis of policy texts, it was found that the formulation of ETP/S did not specifically or clearly identify the mechanisms that would be used to measure quality teachers. The general guidelines describing outstanding contributions of teachers at the classroom level suggested that only teachers who met these specific requirements of the MOE could apply for the ETP/S program. Student achievements are one of the criteria highlighted in policy texts, however, the approaches used to measure student performance were not described in detail in the relevant documents. Rather, teachers' performance was assessed by the IQA for the initial rounds and the responsibility was devolved to school principals, as the quota of ETs was increased beyond the capacity of the IQA to manage. Throughout the selection process measuring teachers' performance against certain criteria required much work. The lack of a clear definition of student achievement measures and measures of teacher performance is indicative of issues with the ETP/S more

broadly. The lack of policy prescription was ostensibly intended to grant space at the level of implementation at the school level. This situation, as the analysis has demonstrated, meant some non-comparability across sites of implementation regarding criteria for ETs and their work roles. These issues have grown as the responsibility for policy implementation has been further devolved; the move from centre to periphery has intensified issues of comparability and subjectivity. As the numbers of ETs increased, the first recipients of this promotion believed there had been a diminution in quality. It is interesting here how the descriptor 'excellent' seemed to signify scarcity in the minds of many, especially the first round of ETs.

The ETP/S was designed at the central level of the MOE and cascaded down to the State Education Offices (SEO) and District Education Office (DEO) with considerable implications for implementation with an almost disconnect between policy production and policy practice. Advocates of the program distinguish between this development of teacher career path policy and the existing career tracks, which they regarded as being solely for the benefit of the teaching profession in Malaysia. In other words, some respondents argued that teachers always get what they fight for because they are large in numbers and their Union is powerful politically. Nonetheless, the ETP/S has had some problems in relation to job prescription and the balance between making improvements within the classroom and within the system (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7). The ETP/S has improved career structures for some teachers in Malaysia, however, the extent to which it has had an impact in professionalising the entire teaching profession is an issue that needs to be explored in future research. The ETP/S sought to establish a new standard for rewarding teachers through a 'quota system' that enabled the system to motivate and reward select members of the teaching profession in Malaysia. Interestingly though, this quota system might not have achieved the expressed goals of the policy.

An ecological policy analysis of the production of the ETP/S policy texts has indicated that developments in new alternative promotional tracks were designed to reward quality teachers in the system and have been informed by global education policy discourses. Levin (2001) argued that educational change always involves a process of 'motivated criticism'. Thus, policy makers are prone to uncovering what is happening 'elsewhere' in education and other schemes of service, which results in policy 'borrowing' from other fields or countries, as was the case with the ETP/S, with the idea being borrowed from the concept of medical specialists. In this case, the analysis suggested that the policy borrowing was not only cross

national, but also cut across the public service. For example, ETP/S borrowed the concept from specialist doctors, applying this policy from the field of medicine to the field of education to reward quality teachers by identifying them as subject 'specialists'. Such policy borrowing is common in public sector policy development.

To unpack the ETP/S in the Malaysian context, it is necessary to understand it in comparison with the 'specialist' concept used in the medical profession. Specialist doctors need to undertake courses or further study to allow them to be recognised as 'specialists in their areas of expertise'. Certification of standards that were awarded to doctors enabled them to be promoted to the next level as a specialist with attendant increases in salary. Based on this scenario, a retired Senior Policy Maker, who was a respondent in this study, described in great detail the re-contextualisation of the concept of 'specialist' doctors to the concept of ETs for the teaching profession in Malaysia (see Chapter 5).

The MOE refers to ETs as 'subject specialists'. The loose definition of a 'subject specialist' was not restricted in the same way as the concept of specialist in the medical definition. That is, teachers who were selected for fast track promotion under the ETP/S were regarded as subject specialists and did not have to undertake any additional qualifications for eligibility. The issue of the measurement of the 'quality' of specialist doctors was clearly defined with doctors being assessed as 'specialists' through examinations and qualifications. Conversely, there is no clear benchmark to measure the ETs' performance, except the performance appraisals by either the IQA or the principals used to assess teachers (depending on the rounds of the ETP/S in which teachers were involved). The lack of a clear definition of 'excellence' was a flaw of the ETP/S. Teachers who were selected into this program were selected according to specific criteria prescribed by the MOE, and their extraordinary contributions to their subject area. Hence, no formalised certification or qualification was used to acknowledge, verify or monitor their expertise, as is the case in many other countries such as the National Board Professional Teaching Scheme (NBPTS) in the USA or ETs in UK and CTs in Scotland (see Chapter 3). In this way, the ETP/S differed from other international practices and the Malaysian medical service from which the policy was borrowed. Policy texts as discussed in Chapter 5 indicated that the primary purpose of the ETP/S was to retain quality teachers at the classroom level (see Chapter 5, sections 5.2.1-5.2.5).

One of the requirements for those teachers who have been recognised and rewarded as ETs under the ETP/S was that they were required to engage in mentoring for other teachers. This concept of mentoring and coaching was also borrowed from other schemes of service (i.e. from specialist doctors), and was highlighted in the selection criteria and characteristics of the school-based ETs. Teachers were required to meet specific criteria in order to be appointed as ETs. For instance, their contribution in their area of expertise must be not only to their students' and schools' improvement, but also be shared with all related divisions in the MOE. For example, some ETs helped in the Curriculum Division and Examination Syndicate, and contributed through their input to the improvement of the school curriculum or assessment tasks (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 5).

This study suggests that better selection criteria for eligibility prior to appointment would improve the clarity and function of the ET position. Ingvarson (2013) has argued that a combination of both certification and acknowledgement of practical accomplishments is ideal for classifying quality teachers. As such, a requirement of further qualifications may be useful for eligibility under the ETP/S. It is the situation in Malaysia now that all teachers (both graduate and non-graduate) are eligible for ET positions. However, there are different salary structures for each category and ETs from graduate and non-graduate pools are managed by different Promotional Boards in the MOE. Until the national goal of ensuring teaching is an all graduate profession is realised, the issue of certification for inclusion in the ETP/S is problematic.

Lingard (2013) argued that governments try to improve national systems of policy production by borrowing and re-contextualising various policies from different national contexts. Mohd Noor and Crossley (2013) concur, but suggest that governments cannot simply adopt policies from other countries without considering local factors such as social composition, culture, values, and beliefs. All policy needs to be contextualised or when borrowed, re-contextualised. The formulation of policy in education becomes an integral part of the wider policy formation and that is mediated by the history of the local and national political contexts (Lingard, 2000). Most research on education reforms, particularly in rewarding quality teachers, has been borrowed from other countries and adapted for local contexts. This adaptation process is similar to the notion of 'vernacular globalisation' as argued by Appadurai (1996).

The ETP/S program was designed around and based on major development policies in Malaysia (see Chapter 2), including a national policy that directed the country towards achieving 'developed' status by the year 2020. These policy drivers affected remuneration systems for public servants including teachers, who form a very large part of this sector, and were strongly advocated by the teachers' unions in Malaysia. Teachers' unions have been key parties to negotiations with state departments of education relating to salary increases and working conditions (see Bascia and Rottmann, 2011) for a perspective concerning teachers' unions and educational reform).

The national government, the MOE, the SEO, the DEO, and schools are complex structures involved in formulating, enacting and evaluating the ETP/S. The involvement of individual teachers adds further complexity to this program and its implementation. More specifically, the national government seeks to play a more strategic role in directing the education system to meet the imperatives of economic and global competition (Katsuno, 2013). In this regard, some other 'actors' assume greater responsibilities, but have less autonomy for carrying out national directives, that is, the need to strengthen international competitiveness of human capital development (see Chapter 2), especially given the national development plan as described in the 10MP (see Chapter 2). Consequently, more effective teachers are needed to change and lead this changed system of educational governance and accountability. Thus, a variety of measures, such as modifying the teaching profession through the ETP/S fast track promotion reform and linking teachers' salary scales with their performance through the strict selection and appointment possesses associated with the position of ETs, were introduced in Malaysia. Global developments in many countries (see Chapter 3, section 3.2 -3.2.7 and Chapter 5, section 5.3.1, Table 15) have reflected the shift to a merit-based pay system and changes in the salary structures. This study has also demonstrated how the lack of a clear role definition, particularly at the schools site, for ETs, has led to an unhelpful expansion of role expectations for them. This situation needs to be rectified.

8.2.3   ETs: raising the teaching standard and improving teaching quality

The ETP/S aimed to raise teaching standards in Malaysia, and consequently, improve teacher quality and enhance student learning outcomes. However, as pointed out throughout this thesis, the assumptions of causal linkages between these variables have not been the focus of sustained research. This assertion, both implicitly and explicitly in the ETP/S, is a good exemplar of policy as the 'authoritative allocation of values'. The creation of a new career

pathway for ETs is indicative of the government's efforts to raise the quality of teachers by rewarding those teachers who are recognised as meeting the 'excellence' criteria. Chapter 5 described in detail the production of policy texts associated with the ETP/S and highlighted the importance of certain criteria, mentioned and written in the manual or terms of reference of ETP/S, that teachers should possess before being appointed as an ET (see Appendix 2). Certain standards were set up by the MOE to ensure that only 'quality' teachers would be promoted into this fast lane. Such teachers were required to be outstanding and demonstrate quality practices at the classroom level associated with the improvement of students' achievement. This was considered the main performance measure for teachers to qualify for the position of ET. And we know the difficulty of connecting and correlating individual teacher practices directly and unequivocally with student outcomes, despite the fact that we know teacher practices are the most important in-school factor contributing to student learning (Hayes et al., 2006; Hattie, 2009). The study focused on the difficulty of measuring outcomes across the entire public service, a situation, of course, to which the new public management with its focus on outcome measures was a policy response.

The ETP/S has signified a new way of rewarding and retaining quality teachers in the classroom. Their skills and knowledge are important in developing students' skills and for mentoring other teachers. Additionally, the ETs' attributes of displaying 'excellent' teaching methods support schools by retaining these skills at the classroom level and supporting the professional development of other teachers. The ETP/S has had a significant effect on the country by changing traditional promotional tracks, which were previously based on the vacancy of posts and length of service to faster promotion rewarding quality and merit. Although the program has been able to articulate the qualities that are deemed to be important for effective teachers in the classroom, two problems remain. First, identifying individuals who have these qualities is difficult. The study found that there is no 'accurate' measure, with the MOE not able to identify effective ways of measuring these attributes. Second, once identified, the study could not adequately assess the efficacy of various policies to attract more teachers into this fast track promotion based on the limited quotas approved by the government.

At first glance, the ETP/S seems to have achieved its goal of rewarding and retaining quality teachers at the classroom level. This was evidenced by anecdotal reports of how the ETs took their teaching practices very seriously, and most ETs were extremely happy with the

alternative promotional track offered by the ETP/S. The ETs involved in this study identified the contribution and the recognition and rewards that they received through this promotional scheme as highly satisfying and the source of a great deal of pride. Additionally, they were intrinsically satisfied with their ability to provide a quality professional service to their students and their country. In particular, these ETs reported that they were happy to able to make these contributions at the classroom level, rather than be promoted to administrative positions outside the classroom. With the ETP/S, they could be promoted, but stay in the classroom.

Most respondents agreed that the measure of the performance of the ETs should not only be the achievement of students. Classroom management and the preparation of subject and pedagogical classroom learning activities based on a teachers' content knowledge were also significant to the ET context and related to the debate on the 'quality' of the ETs. The criteria for selecting ETs suggest that excellent subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge are also important for ETs (Hamzah et al., 2008). The findings of Goldschmidt and Phelps (2010) further show that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge has significant impact on student performance. Although the study of ETs is still in infancy in Malaysia contexts, the abilities of ETs according to Tsui (2003) suggest that these qualified and skilled teachers were able to foster engagement with students and planned their class well. In relation to that, Ibrahim et al. (2013) propose ETs in his study show their abilities, effectiveness at planning, facilitating and developing teaching materials. ET also recognised as a role model to other teachers disseminating their knowledge towards improving quality teaching in the Malaysian contexts.

8.2.4 The budgetary impact of teacher career path policies as evidenced through the case of the ETP/S

There are three pertinent points to be made regarding the budgetary impacts of the ETP/S. First, from an economic perspective of teaching as a mass profession in Malaysia, the ETP/S has had significant budgetary implications. Given the salary levels associated with the highest levels of ETs, the number of promotions had to be restricted, given budgetary constraints. Second, through global benchmarking and the pressure of economic imperatives, the Malaysian education system has been geared for reform in response to global competition, which requires substantial government investment in producing quality teachers. Third, the development of human capital is necessary for economic development if Malaysia is to attain

developed nation status, and such development is rooted in reforms and developments in the education system. I would note, though, that this economic development 'burden' should not be carried by the schooling system alone. The government initiatives suggest that attracting, retaining and rewarding quality teachers in classrooms support this national economic goal. The findings discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 show that economic incentives encouraged teachers to apply for ET positions. This result was consistent with many of the global practices for rewarding quality teachers mentioned in Chapter 3 (OECD, 2005, 2009, 2013). The ETP/S designed economic incentives to reward and encourage ETs to deliver quality practices at the classroom level. The importance of this factor was justified by Rice et al. (2009), when they stated that, "the role of wages as a primary driver for teachers' job decisions needs to be weighed alongside other factors. Money does matter" (p. 515). However, they further indicated that although wages were one factor that arguably could be used more productively to affect the quality of teachers/teaching, the challenge to provide high quality teaching requires multiple options that extend beyond teacher compensation. This is the position that this research would suggest applies to the ETP/S in Malaysia. Rice et al. observed   that "compensation-based reform may be necessary, but not entirely sufficient condition for improving teacher quality" (2009, p. 516). In this respect, Ladd (2007) suggested we look beyond a single factor in favour of broader policy packages. This research concurs with that observation: the ETP/S is only one reform policy that needs to be accompanied by others so as to improve teaching student learning outcomes in the Malaysian education system.

In the context of the education system in Malaysia, most of the respondents in this study reported that financial incentives are one of the most effective methods to engage teachers in implementing a new policy. According to the ETs in this study, they felt recognised and thankful to be selected under the ETP/S and enjoyed the benefits of faster career promotion and higher salaries. The quotas of ETs also need to be identified when discussing the ETPS. The MOE had established a quota for teachers who were appointed under this promotion lane with higher salary grades, which in some cases, were higher than that of the Principal. The quota system was introduced as a result of the government's limited funding to address issues of teacher promotion within the public service (OECD, 2005). As demonstrated in the background section of this thesis (see Chapters 1 and 2), the teaching profession in Malaysia makes up half of the total public service personnel. As such, the government had to limit the number of teachers appointed as ETs as a consequence of the financial considerations for the

public service, particularly given the likelihood of other schemes of service demanding similar changes to their career path policies.

The distinguishing feature of this approach to rewarding quality teachers breaks the traditional concept of the bureaucratic nature of the public service in Malaysia, where the principal was the highest salary grade in any given school. With the ETP/S, the principal is not necessarily the highest salary grade in any given school.

I have argued that the ETP/S and the 10MP (2010-2015) are related through their goals aiming to produce first class talented workers through the national system of education to further national development. The focus on improving the teaching profession in the 10 MP is an indication that the ETP/S was not sufficient or even intended to achieve this goal for the entire profession. I argue that it was an appropriate reform to reward and develop teachers' competence and performance, but pragmatic and economic concerns necessarily limited the scope of the ETP/S (Chapter 6, section 6.3.3 and Chapter 7, section 7.2.1). Indeed, the ETP/S demanded that ETs at the school level set their own goals in line with school goals that consequently conformed to local goals, that is, SEO and DEO, as well as MOE and national government objectives.

The implementation of the ETP/S and its enactment at the school level has generated various material effects. According to Ball et al. (2012), few policies are faithfully articulated in the process of policy enactment, which out of necessity almost always involve *ad hocery*, reordering, displacing, making do and reinvention at the school level. There are interactions and accommodations made to fit mandated policies, when they are implemented in local settings. Schools as institutions and teachers as policy actors can potentially affect policy in its implementation. Ball et al. (2012) refer to this process of rearticulation, translation and reinvention of policies as 'enactment'. Enactment here is used to contrast with the concept of 'implementation', which implies direct transfer of policy into practice, rather than multiple processes of translation and mediation.

The idea of rewarding quality teachers was realised when the ETP/S was taken up by the government of Malaysia in 1994. However, the analysis provided in Chapter 6 suggests that rather than policy enactment, as argued by Ball et al. (2012), what occurred in respect of the ETP/S was more akin to implementation. Any mediations in implementation occurred

because of the multi-tiered structure through which the policy had to pass, rather than so much mediation by teachers at the school site. Indeed, those at the school site actually required and expected more direction from the policy centre regarding how they would translate the policy into practice. This is indicative perhaps of the top-down policy approaches traditionally used in Malaysia and the lack of professional confidence amongst those at the school sites. There is also perhaps another contributing factor here, linked to the stage of economic and political development in Malaysia. Taking Foucault's notion of 'govermentality', I argue that there are power relations between the centre and the periphery. ETs at the classroom level are seeking advice and guidance from the MOE about their roles. Without such clarity of role definition, as this research has shown, the ETs have placed great demands upon themselves because of their own self-defined construction of what it means to be excellent. Lack of clarity of role definition has meant that the ETs have pressured or governed themselves with respect to workloads – an example of governmentality at work.

There was resistance at various levels to the policy. The Senior Policy Makers from the administrative side interviewed for this study indicated they were constrained in their decision making processes. These policy makers reported that they felt pressure from the unions as well as from various political parties, who were eager to maintain a supportive constituency (of teachers) that were more likely to vote them back into power. The representative from the TU, on the other hand, reported that the Union was pleased with the ETP/S initiatives and stressed the importance of ETs delivering best practice at the school level. She further highlighted the importance of selecting the best candidates for this promotional scheme. Her views appeared to be similar to those voiced by the ETs in this study, suggesting the need for a drastic increase in quotas from the MOE. Additionally, she suggested that the IQA selection process was better than the process of selections by the principal, as the latter process tended to decrease the quality of ETs at the school level. This view further supported a perception that the devolution of responsibility from the centre to the school levels should be met with a level of caution. As noted earlier, informed prescription combined with informed teacher professionalism would appear to be the necessary direction for effective reform.

This study reported in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that the formulation, implementation/ enactment and   evaluation of the ETP/S were all linked to politics and framed by the political intentions of government, politicians and ministers (Lingard, 2013). Various actors and factors were

involved during the policy cycles discussed. While conducting this study and the analysis of the data, I observed the values and ideology associated with the ETP/S to reward and retain quality teachers at the classroom level. For example, the ETs valued the ETP/S program and the opportunities associated with their promotion. They also valued their contributions to students' and school achievements. Additionally, their own ideas aligned with the ideologies of the ETP/S, and those ideologies that were embedded in the role of ETs.

According to the cognate literature, incentives for salaries related to merit, learning results, training, teaching in 'hard-to- staff' schools or subjects with teacher shortages have been developed in most OECD countries (OECD, 2007; 2009). Additionally, pay related rewards linked to assessment and evaluation has been created as ways to recognise and reward effective teaching (Vaillant and Rossel, 2012). With this in mind, non-monetary incentives are increasingly being used to reward excellence and effective teaching and different countries have developed numerous initiatives aiming to strengthen the non-monetary components of teacher recognition initiatives. Some of these incentives, which include greater training opportunities, enhanced professional development, as well as different forms of professional development, and different forms of public and professional recognition, have been introduced by governmental actors, some by the civil society, and others by the corporate world (OECD, 2009; Player, 2010). The latter include awards and recognition for outstanding teachers.

The ETP/S has adopted both approaches of providing monetary rewards and professional development support in rewarding ETs, which is similar to 'performance management' in the UK. Even though numerous initiatives exist and have been carried out for several years, the potential of these awards to improve teacher quality, quality teaching and students' learning outcomes have not been adequately addressed by analysts and researchers. The literature on rewarding quality teachers through pay for performance is scarce and still limited in Malaysia. This study reported that all ETs in this study were satisfied and felt recognised by the government's reward initiative. Thus, combining monetary and non-monetary rewards for improving teacher quality, as suggested by this study, appears to be an effective approach for offering recognition and therefore contributes to the body of literature regarding the provision of recognition and rewards for quality teachers.

8.2.5 The two-way 'spill-over' effects of public service policies

This study of ETP/S at the school level highlights the two-way 'spill-over effect' between the schemes of services in the Malaysian public service, which can be argued is a form of 'policy assimilation'(Phillips and Ochs, 2003, p. 451), a concept developed by this study. As teachers are part of the public service in the Malaysian government, they are always associated with other schemes of service in terms of promotional tracks (see Chapters 2, 5 and 6). Thus, fast or slow career promotional pathways among the various schemes of service in the public service are related to policy assimilation. The pragmatic approach of the government of Malaysia in formulating the promotional grades of the public service is unique. For example, teachers were granted faster track promotion than lecturers in public universities, who consequently benefitted from the ETP/S through the process of policy assimilation. All schemes of service are taken into consideration and researched before any new program or policy is introduced. Specific salary grades are allocated for graduate employees, as well as non-graduate employees. All schemes of service in Malaysian public sector were named based on the different coding of the title of the scheme of service. For example, teachers (DG), doctors (U), lawyers (L) were all classified with specific codes. However, the promotional grade codes were the same across the various schemes of service; for example, for entry level all grades of scheme of services started off with grade 41 and followed with other promotional grade, as discussed in Chapter 2. The speed of promotion was dependent on the numbers within the profession. That is, those in professions with smaller numbers had more promotional posts available to them and thus more opportunities for promotion. Comparatively, those in professions with greater numbers, such as teaching have had slower promotion opportunities.

Despite the difference in numbers, teachers compared their promotional opportunities with those in the other schemes of services. The ETP/S came into existence to cater for the massive number of teachers, but still only rewarded a select few. This study indicates that professional jealousy appeared not only across the various schemes of services, but also occurred within the teaching profession itself. For example, the ETP/S was initially only open for applications for graduate teachers in secondary schools, later non-graduate teachers became vocal in demanding such rewards, and consequently they also claimed similar positions and benefits to the graduate teachers. This professional jealousy extended to teacher administrators at various levels in MOE, who started asking for the same benefits.

Consequently, the ETP/S and associated promotional tracks were extended to teacher administrators and policy makers in the SEO and the DEO and other related divisions and agencies under the MOE. This situation of professional jealousy and policy assimilation reflects the structure and approach to salaries within the Malaysian public service.

8.3   Limitations of this study

There are a number of limitations associated with this study. These are listed below:

- This study explored the formation, implementation/ enactment and policy actors' evaluations of the ETP/S, with a specific focus on how these elements of the policy played out at the school level. The sampling of participating ETs was limited by the selections by one officer at the SEO. The small number of participating ETs decreased the level of possible generalisations of the research findings. However, this study, like many qualitative studies, did not am to generalise findings to all schools. Rather, the purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of a number of policy actors who had engaged first-hand with the ETP/S. As such, the findings from this study provide some idea of how policy actors view the ETP/S and the challenges that they have faced in implementing/enacting the program at the school level.

- The data collection was limited to relatively high grades of graduate ETs, that is, from grade DG 52 up to Premier C and did not involve lower grades of ETs (beginning with DG 44-DG 48). The respondents of ETs in this study belong to the first group, namely those teachers who have been rewarded with positions from grades DG 52 to Premier C. Additionally, respondents did not include other teachers and students to identify their views and perceptions of the ETP/S. While the inclusion of these other categories of respondents may have provided valuable data, the decision not to include them was based on practical considerations, as time and resource constraints made these interviews prohibitive to conduct.

- The data collection method for this study was limited to interviews and document analysis. The decision to use semi-structured interviews was founded on the belief that they would provide sufficiently rich data for the purposes of this study. As a result, it was decided that other methods of data collection were unnecessary. However, this decision meant that the data relied on the reported experiences of those involved, not direct observation by the researcher.

8.4   Contribution of this study

This study has provided a policy ecology (Weaver-Hightower, 2008) study of the effects of a specific teacher career path policy that links quality teaching with teacher promotions and increased remuneration. This study is significant in that it contributes new knowledge about career path policies for teachers, specifically in the Malaysian setting. I reiterate here that the ETP/S is unique in that it entails an entirely new promotional structure for a select group of teachers within the Malaysian school system. It is also unique in its levels of remuneration, that is, it allows the highest post of excellent classroom-based teachers to receive a remuneration package equivalent to the level of a State Education Director (Premier Class C). However, this level of remuneration necessitated strict quotas on the number of ETs at this level because of the budgetary implications. The descriptor, 'excellent', also suggests a scarcity of numbers. Only a selected few were considered to fill up the quotas allocated by the government. This reflects the exclusive/small number of teachers under the ETP/S, fewer than four per cent of all teachers in Malaysia.

The roles of the ETs identified through the analysis of policy text production, enactment and the evaluation of the program are new areas explored in this study. These areas of the ETP/S have not been previously studied in this way. Nor have similar policies in Malaysia or internationally been subject to this type of detailed policy ecology study. As such, this study addresses a gap in the literature about policies for rewarding and promoting teachers, while keeping them in the classroom.

The study explored intrinsic and extrinsic approaches to recognising and rewarding quality teaching as defined by the ETP/S. However, the study also examined a range of problems that have accompanied these rewards for ETs, such as the ill-defined expectations from multiple levels within the system. Additionally, tensions arose when issues of governmentality (Foucault, 1982) surfaced through the lack of job description, which relied on teachers' self-imposed expectations of what it meant to be an ET.

In the context of teacher reforms, particularly in rewarding quality teachers, a unique element of my qualitative study is that it has given a voice to a variety of research respondents. Interviews were conducted with 15 respondents, including ETs, EPs, Senior Policy Makers, and one representative from the TU, all of whom had first hand-experience with the ETP/S, either through its development or enactment and, as a result, were able to provide informed

personal evaluations of the policy. Through these interviews, an outline of the research themes emerged. The involvement of many different groups of respondents provided a range of complementary insights into the enactment of the ETP/S during the time of this research.

Previous educational research in Malaysia has primarily used survey methods resulting in the collection of quantitative data that has not reflected individuals' personal expressions of their views and experiences, specifically those regarding policy. The qualitative semi-structured interviews and document analysis used in my study is reasonably new to the area of policy research in Malaysia, and provides an example of the limitations of government regulations for Senior Policy Makers. Senior policy makers are constrained in terms of what they can say to researchers, thus limiting what can be said in the research process. This situation reflects the state of political development in Malaysia. This also raises issues for any form of policy evaluation in the Malaysian political context. If those involved in the production and implementation of policy are not able to publicly critique existing policies, then they are limited in their capacity to engage with effective policy evaluation and subsequently take steps to modify and improve on policy initiatives. Research for policy is thus constrained by these circumstances. My research *of* policy can potentially assist in opening up such matters related to research *for* policy. My study and issues of access, transcriptions of interview data and their usage have also confirmed that confronting such difficult issues often provides data for the research.

This study used policy ecology, critical policy analysis and thematic analysis approaches to examining data. These approaches have rarely been used in Malaysian studies, which have tended to rely on quantitative methodologies, case studies or ethnographic methods. This study has followed Ozga's (1990) suggestion that it is important to "bring together structural, macro-analysis of education system and education systems and education policies and micro-level investigation especially that which takes account of people perceptions and experiences" (p. 359). The complexity of policies related to the issues of teacher quality and remuneration can only be analysed and understood when the phenomena are investigated and explored from different perspectives and by using different research tools. This study offers insights from new perspectives and employs different research tools that add to the understanding of this complex interplay of factors associated with policies for performance-related pay scales in Malaysia and globally.

Researchers who investigate teachers and teaching promotional tracks should thus have strong inclination to look over the disciplinary fence, as it were, to borrow ideas, models and research tools from fields close to educational research, including psychology, sociology, or philosophy, and also from more distant domains, like economics or linguistics. The studies presented in Chapter 4 show the example of how ideas from other fields can improve the analysis of phenomena in the field of education.

The study also provides fresh insights into the processes of policy text production and the implementation/enactment of the ETP/S at the school level. My qualitative interviews valued the voices of my respondents by giving them the opportunity to express their opinions on issues related to the ETP/S that either had affected or were affecting them, in their roles in the MOE, in the Teachers' Union or at the school or classroom levels. The representative from the Teachers' Union, for example, expressed a range of teachers' views on the program. The respondents from various categories could also express their views freely to me acknowledging my dual insider/outsider position as a policy maker and doctoral student.

8.5   Implication of the findings of the study

There are several implications of this study that can be used to inform knowledge about policies for rewarding teacher performance and for informing the development of similar policies in Malaysia and internationally. Suggestions and recommendations for the MOE and central agencies such as Public Service Department (PSD) and Treasury include:

- While the contemporary policy literature tends to speak about enactment, this study of the ETP/S demonstrates that in the centralised Malaysian context, the dominant emphasis was on the implementation of the program. In contemporary school systems what is needed is a balance between what Schleicher (2008) has called 'informed prescription' at the policy producing centre and 'informed professionalism' at the school site. The interviews that took place for this study, however, highlighted that these policy actors were still at a stage of preferring 'informed prescription', where they could receive more detailed information about how to apply the ETP/S at the school level. The need to consider providing clear job descriptions and tasks at the higher grade of ET at the school level. The findings also suggest that policy makers should look into this issue carefully so that they do not overload the ETs at the classroom level (and that ETs do not overload themselves).

- It is suggested that the policy makers draft clear guidelines at various levels of the ministry in order to consistently apply expectations regarding the release of ETs at the classroom level for attending conferences and other activities that require their expertise outside the classroom.

- It is suggested that a special unit be established to oversee the activities of ETs at the school level. This should relate to the development of criteria for ETs, selection of them, and the development of an approach to monitoring and researching their impact on schools and the Malaysian schooling system.

- It is suggested that a clear prescription of ET's roles at the classroom level need to be formulated and carried out because of the various responsibilities they have. The lack of job description and the lack of enforcement at the ground level as reported in this study needs to be brought to the attention of the MOE.

- At the school level, policy makers should systematically investigate and evaluate the workloads of the ETs. The majority of respondents in this study, especially the ETs and EPs, claimed they were under a lot of stress because of the scope and extent of their workloads. Additionally, the establishment of clerical posts at the school level is needed to assist excellent teachers and allow them to focus on professional matters so as to overcome this problem.

- Consideration needs to be given to complementary teacher career path polices and other reforms necessary to the achievement of the 10th Malaysia Plan and Vision 2020.

8.6   Suggestion for further research

This small scale study has contributed new knowledge about the ways in which the ETP/S was designed and implemented and the views of those who have first- hand experiences with the policy. The findings are useful at several levels and provide a sound basis for future research, policy development and the practices of the ETs. The success of education reform, particularly on rewarding quality teachers, is better informed as a result of this study and it is suggested that future research builds on these findings. In the longer term, the Malaysian education system needs to adopt an approach to policy development that could be regarded as informed prescription and at the same time encourages informed professionalism within schools. Based on the findings of this study and the limitations identified previously, some suggestions for further research are outlined below:

- It is suggested that systematic, longitudinal research studies be carried out to identify the best way to implement the enactment of the ETP/S to improve the program.

- A study is required to consider the linkages between the classroom practice (pedagogies and assessment practices) of ETs and student learning outcomes, namely research is required on the complex interaction of policy variables in this study and their effects. This is to move towards a more evidence-informed approach to policy development and implementation.

This study of the ETP/S, as described in the analysis chapters (see Chapters 5, 6, and 7) showed a top down approach to developing and implementing policy. Weaver-Hightower (2008) suggested that not only policy makers at the top level contribute to policy processes, those at the bottom, in this case teachers, principals, other education professionals, and other members of society, also contribute. Contributors to the process, including media, teachers, administrators and academics pass along their thoughts, arguments, and interests to policy makers. The state then constructs a policy document and program that functions as policy. The next step, the government will disseminate the policy to those responsible for implementing it, sometimes disseminating it directly, but often mediated and re-contextualised (Singh, Thomas and Harris, 2013) through state education departments, districts, and educational materials (both government and commercially produced). Thus, the ecological framework and critical policy sociology approach used in this study offer multiple benefits in understanding and assessing the policy text production, policy implementation/enactment and evaluation of the ETP/S. This combined approach offers a significant step forward in understanding how teacher career path policies affect and are affected by the complex and multi-layered contexts within the education systems from which they emerge.

8.7 Concluding comment

This study has demonstrated the significance of the ETP/S, but also explored its shortcomings. The policy ecology provides insights that may be applicable to other career path policies in the Malaysian and other national policy contexts. Through the analysis of policy texts and perspectives from various participants, this study offers new understandings of the ETP/S that raise the question of whether the ETP/S is a reward for being 'excellent' or

an incentive to promote 'excellence' within the teaching profession. It appears the policy was developed to achieve both. This leads ineffably to non-clarity of the definition of the role for teachers in schools and for those working with ETs. This has led, it seems, to the role increasing and causing pressures and stresses on ETs. This has been referred to as a form of governmentality in the study.

Contemporary policy literature tends to talk of policy enactment rather than implementation. This study of the ETP/S, however, demonstrates that in a highly centralised Malaysian context, what we see is more akin to policy implementation, with those at the periphery, that is, the schools, districts, and states, looking to the centre for clarification and guidance. This situation might reflect the state of teacher professionalism in contemporary Malaysian schooling and also the nature of policy making in a developing nation. Any mediations in policy implementation in Malaysian schooling result from the top-down, multiple stages through which ministry policy must travel, not through teacher translation at the school site, as argued by policy researchers such as Ball and his colleagues (2012).

While the evaluations of the ETP/S show it has had an impact on the professional practices of those who have been recognised as excellent teachers, budgetary implications, issues of selection, evaluation and role definition all demonstrate that this policy cannot be the only policy response to Malaysia's desire to improve the quality of teaching as a way to strengthening national human capital and global economic competitiveness. Thought needs to be given to systemic goals aligned with the 10MP and how the system might function in respect to informed prescription and encourage enhanced teacher professionalism as a way to improve learning outcomes in all schools across all parts of Malaysia. And of course education policy alone cannot be the sole focus for achieving developed nation status.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Distribution of public servants

No	MINISTRIES	ESTABLSHMENT							
		TOP MANAGEMENT		MANAGEMENT& PROFESSIONAL		SUPPORTING		TOTAL	
		2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
11	Ministry Of Education	49	48	205,578	239,034	263,792	265,472	469,419	504,554*
1	Ministry of Health	303	302	29,972	36,507	147,518	158,572	177,793	195,381
2	Ministry of Defence	49	47	11,798	11,702	158,507	158,479	170,354	170,228
3	Ministry of Home Affairs	41	39	5,648	5,648	131,647	131,644	137,336	137,331
	TOTAL	393	388	47,418	53,857	437,672	448,695	498,080	502,940

Source: MOE, data as 2008: Comparison establishment of posts between Ministries
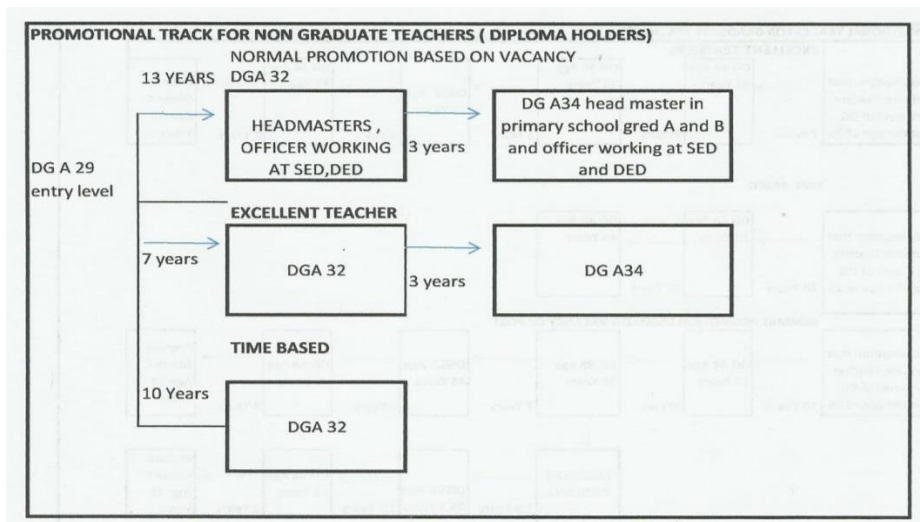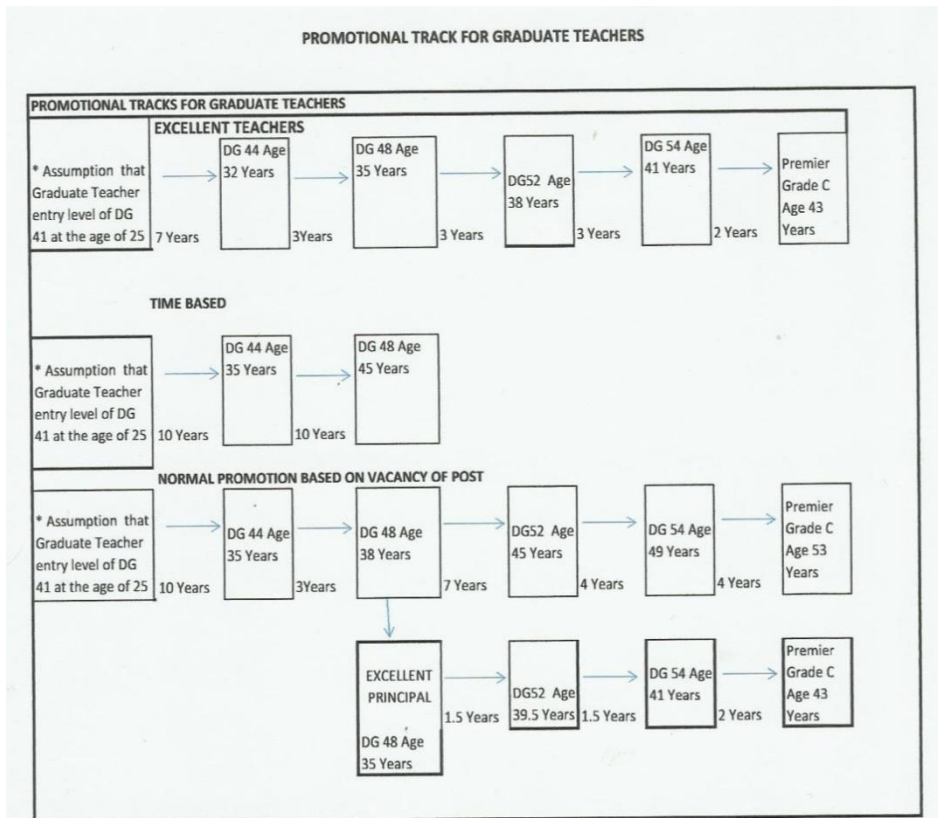
*Including teachers and non-teachers

Appendix 2: ETP/S Terms of Reference: Teacher criteria

1. **Made a lesson planning, to implement the teaching expertise and develop students according to the highest standards set by the Ministry of Education**
   a. Preparing Lesson Planning based on the National curriculum (1997) and related circulars
   b. Teaching subject expert which has been determined by MOE and follow all the guidelines based on the capacity of students
   c. Planning and executing teaching and learning such as preparation of support teaching aids, assessment of student achievement, setting assignments and revision of written work of students
   d. Setting up set of values in each student in the subject area and setting up the target of the students' achievement in that subject areas.
   e. Practising effective teaching methods/teaching strategies or approaches in various learning materials and used the latest teaching techniques, creative, innovative and exciting.
   f. specifically identify each student's strengths and weaknesses in the subject field or expertise
   g. Monitoring the academic progress of each student
   h. Preparing reports and analysing progress of each students
   i. Delivering reports to the principal, parents and students
   j. Providing a table of specification testing and assessment and evaluation for the subject or area of specialisation
   k. Becoming a member of a professional body relevant to the subject expertise, if any

2. **Lead and assist in the task of curriculum and extra curriculum subjects related to the expertise or specialisation**
   a. A committee member in the subject area/ field or expertise
   b. A consultant in the subjects or areas of specialisation
   c. Able to help to overcome the weaknesses and guide the students in the subject areas of expertise or specialisation
   d. Coordinate/prepare strategic plans, tactical and operational teaching and learning in the area of expertise or area of specialisation
   e. Become an advisor to the academic committee in the area of subject expert
   f. plan and execute the co- curricular activities that can enhance students' achievement
   g. Prepare student progress report in all activities, co- curricular, in the subject taught or area of expertise

3. **Become a consultant, advising and guiding teachers in the subject areas of expertise or specialisation**
   a. Plan and execute staff development program in curriculum and co- curricular in the subject area or specialisation
   b. Become a mentor to other teachers specifically in the area of expertise
   c. Give report and feedbacks on the progress of other teachers under his/her guide to principal, Director of SEO and that particular teacher
   d. Giving advice and guideline to other teachers in other schools in that particular subject of specialisation

4. **Conducting research, produce academic writings, exploring new innovations and discoveries in the expertise or area of specialisation and to present the results/findings**
   a. Conducting research and innovation in subject areas
   b. Produce journal articles based on his/her areas of expertise and copied to all the related division in MOE
   c. Present paper/sharing knowledge in their area of expertise

5. **Perform duties as directed from DED, SED, MOE**
   a. Perform related duties particularly on their subject areas which directed by the head of departments /schools

6. General- responsible to inform officially any changes happened at the school level regarding service, placement to MOE

Appendix 3: Promotional grades for teachers in Malaysia Civil Service (MCS) based on remuneration system

	Certification	Promotional Grades for New Remuneration System (NRS) Introduced 1992	Promotional Grades for Malaysia Remuneration System (MRS) Introduced 2002
CATEGORISATION OF TEACHERS		NRS is aimed at enhancing the capacity of public service in meeting the present and challenges in national development	MRS is a merit-based system that rewards Government employees for their work performance. Just as anywhere else, an employee's remuneration is based on the quality and productivity of work and employee's performance
	Degree Holders (DG)	DG3 (entry grade), 2, 1, Premier Posts A,B,C, I, II, III	DG 41 (entry grade), DG44, DG48, DG52, DG54, Premier Posts A,B,C, I, II, III
	Diploma Holders(DG)	DG6 (entry grade), DG5,	DG29 (entry grade), DG32, DG34, DG38

Appendix 4: Promotional track for graduate and non-graduate teachers

PROMOTIONAL TRACK FOR GRADUATE TEACHERS

PROMOTIONAL TRACKS FOR GRADUATE TEACHERS

EXCELLENT TEACHERS

* Assumption that Graduate Teacher entry level of DG 41 at the age of 25 — 7 Years → DG 44 Age 32 Years — 3Years → DG 48 Age 35 Years — 3 Years → DG52 Age 38 Years — 3 Years → DG 54 Age 41 Years — 2 Years → Premier Grade C Age 43 Years

TIME BASED

* Assumption that Graduate Teacher entry level of DG 41 at the age of 25 — 10 Years → DG 44 Age 35 Years — 10 Years → DG 48 Age 45 Years

NORMAL PROMOTION BASED ON VACANCY OF POST

* Assumption that Graduate Teacher entry level of DG 41 at the age of 25 — 10 Years → DG 44 Age 35 Years — 3Years → DG 48 Age 38 Years — 7 Years → DG52 Age 45 Years — 4 Years → DG 54 Age 49 Years — 4 Years → Premier Grade C Age 53 Years

EXCELLENT PRINCIPAL DG 48 Age 35 Years — 1.5 Years → DG52 Age 39.5 Years — 1.5 Years → DG 54 Age 41 Years — 2 Years → Premier Grade C Age 43 Years

PROMOTIONAL TRACK FOR NON GRADUATE TEACHERS (DIPLOMA HOLDERS)

NORMAL PROMOTION BASED ON VACANCY

13 YEARS DGA 32

DG A 29 entry level → HEADMASTERS , OFFICER WORKING AT SED,DED — 3 years → DG A34 head master in primary school gred A and B and officer working at SED and DED

EXCELLENT TEACHER

7 years → DGA 32 — 3 years → DG A34

TIME BASED

10 Years → DGA 32

258

Appendix 5: Information letter to school principal

INFORMATION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Name
Title/Position
Address
Date

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you as a Doctoral candidate at the School of Education, The University of Queensland. I am conducting a research on an exploration of teacher career path policy in Malaysia. The study is supervised by Professor Robert Lingard and Dr Jessica Harris, School of Education, The University of Queensland.

The main aim of the study is to explore policy makers', excellent teacher and teacher union views of how existing teacher career path policy, particularly the excellent teacher policy is linked with teacher quality, quality teaching and student learning outcomes. Enclosed with this letter is an Information Sheet that further outlines the details of the study for your perusal.

I would like to ask for your kind permission to allow me to recruit your excellent teachers'to be participants for this study. Teachers will be involved in one to one interviews. All interviews will be audio-recorded.
This study has been cleared in accordance with the ethical review guidelines and processes of The University of Queensland. These guidelines are endorsed by the University's principal human ethics committee, the Human Experimentation Ethical Review Committee, and registered with the Australian Health Ethics Committee as complying with the National Statement. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (contactable on 013-7678325). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the School Ethics Officer on 3365 6502.

I assure you that all information gathered during the study will be maintained in the strictest confidence. All replies, comments and responses provided during the study will be handled confidentially. No names or identifying information will be used in the write-up of the study.Participation in this study is voluntary. Thus you may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or penalty.
Thank you for your kind consideration and cooperation. I look forward to working together with you soon.

Yours sincerely,

FaridahAwang   Professor Robert Lingard
Doctoral Candidate   Principal Advisor
School of Education
The University of Queensland
Brisbane
Australia
Researcher Contact Details
Tel   : 013-7678325
E-mail : faridah.awang@uqconnect.edu.au
Supervisors Contact Details
1.   Professor Robert Lingard   2. Dr Jessica Harris
        Tel   : 607-33657343   Tel   : 607-33658831
        E-mail : r.lingard@uq.edu.au   E-mail: j.harris2@uq.edu.au

Appendix 6: Information letter to senior policy makers

THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

INFORMATION LETTER TO SENIOR POLICY MAKERS

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

Name
Title/Position
Address
Date

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you as a Doctoral candidate at the School of Education, The University of Queensland. I am conducting a research on an exploration of teacher career path policy in Malaysia. The study is supervised by Professor Robert Lingard and Dr Jessica Harris, School of Education, The University of Queensland.

The main aim of the study is to explore policy makers', excellent teachers' and teacher union views about how existing teacher career path policy, especially the 'excellent teacher' policy are linked with teacher quality, quality teaching and student learning outcomes. Enclosed with this letter is an Information Sheet that further outlines the details of the study for your perusal.

I would like to ask for your kind permission to allow me to recruit you to be participants in this study. It will be involved in one to one interviews . All interviews will be tape-recorded for my own purpose without transcribing.

This study has been cleared in accordance with the ethical review guidelines and processes of The University of Queensland. These guidelines are endorsed by the University's principal human ethics committee, the Human Experimentation Ethical Review Committee, and registered with the Australian Health Ethics Committee as complying with the National Statement. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (contactable on 013-7678325). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the School Ethics Officer on 3365 6502.

I assure you that all information gathered during the study will be maintained in the strictest confidence. All replies, comments and responses provided during the study will be confidential. No names or identifying information will be used in the write-up of the study. Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or penalty.

Thank you for your kind consideration and cooperation. I look forward to working together with you soon.

Yours sincerely,

FaridahAwang   Professor Robert Lingard
Doctoral Candidate   Principal Supervisor
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The University of Queensland
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260

Appendix 7: Consent form for school principal

CONSENT FORM FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

I hereby give permission to Faridah Awang, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education, The University of Queensland, Australia, to conduct an interview for the study "An Exploration of Teacher Career Path Policy in Malaysia".

I have read the outline of the study and understand what the study hopes to achieve, and what the participation of excellent teachers entails.

I understand the following to be true:

- Selected excellent teachers will be interviewed by the researcher. Interviews will be tape-recorded but not transcribed.

- The teachers' confidentiality will be respected and their identities will not be revealed in any way.

- The teachers' participation is voluntary and they may withdraw from the study at any time without any prejudice or penalty.

- All raw data will be kept in a locked bag, and placed in a locked cabinet, in a secured room.

Signed : _____

Name : _____

Date : _____

....
....

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the principal before requesting the consent form be signed.

A copy has been given to the principal.

Researcher:_____

Appendix 8: Consent form for policy makers

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM FOR POLICY MAKERS

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

I hereby give permission to FaridahAwang, a doctoral candidate of the School of Education, The University of Queensland, Australia, to conduct an interview for the study "An Exploration of Teacher Career Path Policy in Malaysia".

I have read the outline of the study and understand what the study hopes to achieve, and my participation entails.

I understand the following to be true:

- Selected policy makerswill be interviewed by the researcher. Interviews will be tape-recorded, and not transcribed.

- My confidentiality will be respected and my identity will not be revealed in any way.

- My participation is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study at any time without any prejudice or penalty.

- All raw data will be kept in a locked bag, and placed in a locked cabinet, in a secured room.

Signed : _____

Name : _____

Date : 1 / 1 / 2011 _____

....
....

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the teacher before requesting the consent form be signed.

A copy has been given to the teacher.

Researcher:_____

Appendix 9: Ethical clearance

2 September 2011

Ms Faridah Awang
PhD Candidate
School of Education

S/N: 42440884

Ethical Clearance Number: 11-035

Dear Faridah,

I am pleased to advise that, on 01.09.2011, ethical clearance has been granted for your project "An exploration of teacher career path policy in Malaysia".

I would also like to remind you that any correspondence associated with your project (consent forms, information sheets etc.) must be printed on official UQ letterhead (available from the School of Education Enquiries Office).

If you have any questions regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

I wish you well with your studies.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Weston
Senior Administrative Officer
(Postgraduate & Higher Degrees)

Appendix 10: Lists of interview questions

1) If you are aware the government try to motivate teachers in term of money and promotional posts and in 10 MP it has been clearly said that put investment on teacher quality to increase student achievement. With the title and award given to as an ET, how do you feel about this?

2) Do you think that the government doing this to motivate you and enhance your quality teaching which indirectly improve student achievement?

3) Do you think that by the title government has labelled you, you have made changes in the classroom practices by improving student outcomes?

4) Do you aware of the 10 MP, the development plan recently announced and particularly chapter 5, developing human capital in Malaysia, faster career progression, do have any idea about this?

5) If the government try to allocate more quotas on this ET, do you think it would be good for teachers and why?

6) Do you think the government should put more quotas on that issue?

7) Do you think by putting a lots of ET into various school will contribute to enhancing student achievement in the classroom

8) Do you think any relationship and important statement in the 10 MP with the career path for teachers, teacher quality, teaching quality and student outcomes?

9) Do you think that the government should stress on the career path policy for teachers. Do you think it is important?

10) So do you think that those who are not perform they are recognized and motivated by the government

11) So what do you think about the strength and weaknesses of the current existing policy on ET compared to the previous one?

12) So you think the government should look into this issue?

13) In that case, you the inspectorate to come over to monitor an ET in the classroom and made evaluation?

14) Do they have certain criteria and that an ET have to meet before promoting to an ET?

15) So you are actively participate at this various level?

16) Do you have any experience presenting papers in international conferences at the International level?

17) So do you think that the new characteristics announced by the government to make a line salary and if you are good and you will be promoted and that is recently announced and there will be a faster career progression?

18) So you have agreed on the existing one, is a good one meaning that proper ways for teachers to climb up the ladder

19) Do you feel stress with holding this post?

20) The government has high expectation to ET which indirectly pressure you, but in government point of view, rate for the job, the high salary given should compensate with the job that you have done, it is like we give you more so you should give back to the country.

21) Do you think Socio Economic status contribute towards to the student achievement as well

22) Do you think that the government should continue on the existing career path

23) Do you think that the objectives of existing policy has successfully motivates all ETs to produce high quality of teaching and student achievement?

24) In your point of view do you think that the ET career path policy is helping teachers to the quality of teaching as well as enhancing student learning outcomes.

25) Do you feel that this title has motivate you and other ETs

26) You as an ET and what do you think the government should do to increase the quality of teaching in the classroom? What are the other areas beside monitoring that you have touched

27) You as an ET do you think that , the existing career path is a good model to carry on or do you have any other suggestion for betterment in the future

28) Do they assess you looking at the student achievement?

29) Is there any difficulties with an ET relationship with principal because you are higher grade than the principal and he is lower grade than you

30) What are the other things that you would like to suggest to the government

31) Do you have any other thing to propose to the government? In exploring teacher career path policy , teacher and quality teaching and enhancing student outcomes?