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**SCHOOL BASED EVALUATION :
MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE**

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SCHOOL BASED EVALUATION - MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

New Curriculum for Primary School (KBSR) was introduced in 1982 and in 1988 Integrated Secondary School Curriculum (KBSM) was implemented in the secondary schools. The innovations brought about by both the curricula were far reaching in many aspects of the school practices. KBSR is entrenched in the belief that every child has potential to be developed and henceforth it is the responsibility of the school to promote each of the children to his or her full potential. To ensure that each child realises his full potential basic learning skills in 3 Rs are emphasised particularly in the first phase of the primary school years.

KBSM has the intention of developing individuals fully in all aspects -- intellectual, emotional, spiritual and in action. To be able to achieve and sustain such a development the curriculum also gives emphasis on new learning areas such as

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moral education, health science, living skills and informative science. Conventional subjects such as geography and history were modified so as to include field work.

In order to ensure successful implementation of the curricula a number of changes were planned and put into effect. Among those were classroom organization, pre-service and in-service teacher training, methodology of instruction and methods of pupil and classroom evaluation.

EVALUATION IN OLD CURRICULA

In both of the previous primary school and secondary school curricula evaluation was conducted at the end of the teaching - learning process and hence regarding it as a way of determining success in learning. For the primary school a public examination at the end of standard five is meant for certification for those attending primary schools. At the same time the examination also was widely used to select students to go to boarding schools and premier and controlled schools. From years of experience the so called standard five assessment had become the primary objective of schooling. It affected the whole milieu of the school system at the primary level.

At the secondary school level two public examinations, one conducted at the end of form three while one more at the end of form five are held. The former was known as Lower Secondary School Certificate Examination or Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (SRP) and incidentally it is to be terminated in 1992. The later is known as Malaysian Certificate of Education Examination or Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) which is still considered as the main public examination for the Malaysian School system. For bad or worse examination is used for several purposes such as a basis for selection to matriculation classes, entrance into form six, evidence of academic merit, basic requirement for selection into most occupations. Hence all the public examinations conducted by the Malaysian School system do not perform the function of diagnosing learning difficulties and teaching efficiency; do not form as a basis in planning and designing lessons and remediation, and do not act as motivation factor in students' learning.

Even monthly and term evaluations conducted at classroom level on close scrutiny are found to be ways of gathering information to make judgement about students' learning. Thus certification seemed to be the focus of evaluation. A part from that limited areas of school curricula were considered worth evaluating. In this way learning was narrowly defined as those aspects related to knowledge and mental skills. Even when mental skills were evaluated the focus was mainly on the product of presumably mental operation. Attitude, values and the like were not

evaluated though in actual fact a substantial amount of class time was spent on such matters. Evaluations which had some semblances of performing formative functions were those informally conducted during a particular lesson and in most cases were in the forms of verbal interactions or assignments to be completed either in school or at home. From verbal interactions teachers could gauge the amount of lesson mastered and areas of difficulties encountered by students. Immediate corrections then could be made. The same could be said with regards to assignments. Teachers could extract information related to students' learning and thus appropriate remediation could be conducted. All in all one could say that evaluation in the old curricula was never intended to help students' learning and to all intent and purposes it was used as a selection device to channel students for different educational and professional purposes. Logically then teachers' roles in gathering information about students' learning and in providing help to students to achieve learning objectives set were minimised.

EVALUATION IN NEW CURRICULA

KBSR is divided into two phases, that is the first phase commencing from the first year and ending in the third year. While the second phase begins from the fourth year and ends in the sixth year. In this curriculum two forms of evaluations are enforced. The first one is the Primary School Assessment known as Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR)

which is a summative evaluation conducted at the end of primary school years. For UPSR a very limited range of subject areas are examined. The subjects are mathematics, English and Malay. The second form of evaluation is the school based evaluation known as Penilaian Kemajuan Berasaskan Sekolah (PKBS). This evaluation takes care of both monitoring students' performance in day to day learning and assessing components of the subject areas which are left out by the UPSR. UPSR and PKBS are supposed to complement each other and in overcoming the weakness found in the evaluation system in the old curriculum.

As in KBSR, KBSM involves two phases, that is the lower secondary school and the upper secondary school. For the lower secondary school the terminal evaluation is the Lower Certificate Examination conducted at the end of form three year. Incidentally this examination is to be replaced in 1993 by Evaluation for Lower Secondary School known as Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR). For upper secondary school the terminal evaluation is the Malaysian Certificate of Education known as Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM). For SPM all subjects taught are examined.

As changes have been proposed in the overall aims of secondary school education, in the organization and content of the subjects taught, and in the methodology of teaching, it would be inappropriate not to suggest changes in the intent and methodology of evaluation. In order to meet the needs of KBSM an on going evaluation conducted at school level

known as Penilaian Kendalian Sekolah Menengah (PKSM) is slowly being introduced. Hopefully this evaluation will take care of monitoring learning as well as complementing what is lacking in both the PMR and SPM.

FEATURES OF PKBS AND PKSM

School based Evaluation or Penilaian Kemajuan Berasaskan Sekolah (PKBS) has the objectives of monitoring levels of mastery in knowledge, skill and values set forth by the curriculum, monitoring strenght and weakness found in the learning process, and providing of remedial treatments for those in dire need of help. Basically therefore PKBS is an in-built evaluation in the teaching - learning process. As a part of teaching - learning process it is conducted continuously during learning and a number methods are used to gather and record information about students' learning.

Subject such as Man and His Environment, Physical Education and Health Science, Religous Education, Moral Education and Art are left to respective teachers to prepare and to conduct their own tests. Such tests are used both to monitor learning as well as to provide input for certification purposes. To facilitate the preparation of test items teachers are required to cooperate among themself normally according to subject areas several schools. Teachers' prepared items are saved in item bank for common use. This item bank is known as Tabung Gunasama Bahan Ujian (TGBU).

Besides preparing tests for subject areas fully controlled by schools teachers are also required to prepare tests to monitor mastery for each objectives of the subjects related to 3 Rs.

When the new Integrated Secondary School Curriculum was introduced school based evaluation or Penilaian Kendalian Sekolah Menengah (PKSM) was proposed for implementation. The PKSM is to be used for all subject areas and almost similar concept as that of PKBS is employed. Thus teachers have to shift the emphasis from testing students for grading to testing students for diagnosing learning weaknesses. As in the primary schools there are subjects such as geography, history, living skills, moral education, religious education and physical education and health science which either partly or fully have to be evaluated by teachers for final certification to be incorporated in the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR). Most of these subjects in part, rely on project work and on going student activities. Thus assessment for grading has to be done continuously as well through different methods of information gathering.

EMPHASIS IN THE EVALUATION IN NEW CURRICULA

Shortcomings in the evaluation practices in the old primary school and secondary school curricula were realised when the New Primary School Curriculum and the Integrated Secondary School Curriculum were proposed. Thus improvement in the evaluation practices were made in a

number of important aspects. Firstly, evaluation was regarded not only as a means of judging level of mastery at the end of schooling process hence a basis for certification, but also as a mechanism for improving teaching - learning process. In designing the curriculum the role of evaluation was incorporated and thus making formative evaluation a central aspect in each unit or topic learned. As a result continuous assessment was introduced. Students are assessed in every unit of the lessons taught. Information provided by the assessment is used for remediation and judgement of the adequacy of students' learning. In planning a lesson unit teachers are expected to indentify salient points to be emphasised in the lesson units as well as methods for remedial treatment if and when learning difficulties occurred. Whether consciously or unconsciously teaching becomes more humane in the sense that teachers regards mastery of a lesson unit as something attainable by almost every student.

Secondly, different components of knowledge and learning skills are able to be assessed. In the old curricula evaluation was conducted at the end of a long learning process and normally took the form of formal paper and pencil test within a limited time allocation. As such it was impossible to gather information which could be used as a basis for making inference about different aspects of learning such as skills in organization of ideas, social skills, caring, habitually maticulous and being able to sustain in performing assignment. The new primary school and the Integrated Secondary School curricula have gone so far in exploring and

thus allowing varying methods of information gathering. Such methods being practised are check list, anecdotal records and reports, report based on field work, observation, records from diaries, projects and group reports. Using all these evidence do not only improve teachers' abilities to make inference about students' learning but also helps in motivating student to learn as whatever they do is well considered as learning.

Thirdly the role played by teachers in teaching - learning process is enhanced. In this respect teachers are not only given the task of preparing tests for use during lessons but also taken as partners in conducting assessment for certification. In giving teachers the responsibility of preparing tests and continuously administer and utilise the results a number of positive ramification could be predicted. Validity and reliability of teacher made tests would be improved. These may be resulted from in-service training on test and evaluation, teachers' good knowledge of the subject matter, teachers' good understanding of the students, and improved consciousness of the need to have a good monitoring instruments. On top of that teachers feel so much appreciated because of being confided in performing the task which has been deprived from them for so long.

PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL BASED EVALUATION

Implementing both the PKBS and PKSM creates a number of problems. The main objectives of both the PKBS and PKSM are to incorporate evaluation as parts of teaching - learning process and these entail the tasks of ascertaining how far teachers are prepared in changing their beliefs and attitudes which have been entrenched in the tradition that evaluation has the sole purpose of determining learning outcomes for certification. The idea that evaluation should be on going, that it could be conducted informally, that a variety of methods could be employed, that the information gathered should be used as a basis for remediation purposes and above all, students' performances should not be compared is rather strange to many teachers. Therefore they have to be convinced of the new idea with regards to the role of evaluation in education.

Success in convincing teachers of the new role of evaluation does not mean the problem is over. They have to be taught and trained on how to prepare a variety of valid and reliable instruments which could gather information regarding students performance, how to record and reports to students and other relevant parties, and how to prepare and conduct corrective measures so that learning could be improved. These arrays of teaching practices as a matter of fact, are not new to teachers. However, these acts are performed neither consciously nor systematically. Therefore to get teachers to prepare good instruments and conduct them on their own students is considered a problem beyond imagination.

Logistically and administratively schools are not fully prepared to implement school based evaluation. There must be adequate time provided to teachers for test preparation and to conduct them on students, there must be adequate time for students to go through remedial treatments, there must be adequate facilities for test preparation, there should exist atmosphere or spirit for cooperation among teachers to prepare test items and above all there should be sufficient fund provided by the Ministry of Education to ensure that shortage of materials for instrument preparation and the like does not arise.

The situation now is still far from being under controlled or orderly and satisfactory. To convince more than 150,000 teachers of the new role played by evaluation is already problematic. To train them to prepare and conduct evaluation exercises and to provide remedial treatment is probaly more problematic. To get the Ministry to provide logistic support is to overburden the Ministry as it has to bear enormous cost of not only implementing the curriculum or curricula but of running the whole Ministry.

Teachers' non conviction of the new role of evaluation, teachers' lack of expertise in preparing and conducting evaluation, and the lack of logistic support result in poor quality evaluation being conducted in schools. In a survey run by the Ministry it was indicated that 34.7 per cent of the teachers in the sample said that they did not understand what

was being proposed in PKBS. For those who said they understood PKBS, the percentage which was convinced of the evaluation new role may not be large. In the survey more than 20 per cent of those sampled felt that PKBS would not be successfully implemented. With regards to TGBU, even though 93.5 per cent of the teachers felt that the item banks were useful only 68 per cent said that the banks were already established at school levels. However, when the banks were scrutinised it was found that very few schools had kept sufficient pool of items and whatever the items kept the quality was questionable. As for the PKSM the problems faced by teachers and schools are almost identical to those faced by teachers and schools at primary level. Therefore effective measures to overcome the problems must be undertaken as quickly as possible.

In this paper it is suggested that the problems be solved at two levels. At the macro - level or national level a set of achievable objectives must be selected so that every school can have almost reasonably equal opportunity to achieve them. This means that changes expected must be suggested in small steps. Further changes could only be further recommended if the expected changes are achieved. If this premise is held then the strategies on implementation must be worked out so that strains would not be felt on the system.

At the micro - level one must try to understand and thus plan or align changes in evaluation practices so that they are in line with the national education system which is centralised. Using of one's own discretion or "budibicara" will not help. This can be illustrated in the form of instruction being given to schools to plan their own evaluation, using their own format and set their own criteria. Schools are not used to having this kind of freedom and neither do they have the expertise to do things independently. Since determining students' learning for the purpose of providing quality education to all students is important, one must be able to decide what can be left to teachers and what can be left to the central agencies. Although the ultimate aim is that schools should decide in all matters pertaining to learning and not just in evaluation, the task is too large and therefore should be surrendered to them gradually when ever they are ready.

In the long run PKBS and PKSM may be successfully implemented as intended but investment has to be put in teacher pre and inservice training specifically in psychometric, and logistic and administrative supports have to be adequate.

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