
Title	Teacher education objectives: A survey of student views
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Teacher Education Objectives: A Survey of Student Views

Introduction

A survey was carried out in 1980 to gather the views of principals of secondary schools and junior colleges and those of the academic staff of the Institute of Education (IE) with regard to the repertoire of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by new graduate teachers. It was found that there was a substantial commonality between the principals and IE staff with regard to their expectation of an initial training programme for graduate teachers. The "core objectives" identified were those directly related to classroom teaching. The "supportive objectives" which emerged in the study were those which were thought necessary to enhance the "core objectives" directly. The "peripheral objectives" were those the teacher may need only occasionally.

The study to be summarized here was a sequel to the previous one; it sought the views of the students in the one-year full-time Diploma-in-Education programme. The survey was conducted in 1981 towards the end of the student's training programme. At that time, the students had completed three-quarters of their programme which included the greater part of their theoretical courses; three weeks of school experience, and ten weeks of teaching practice. Thus, the students might be expected to hold a realistic view of what they would need later on as full-fledged teachers. More specific questions attempted in this study were:

- . What were the areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes that the students expected to have acquired by the end of their training in IE?
- . What relative importance did the students give to the different areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes?
- . What special skills were identified as

important to the students in relation to the secondary schools in which teaching practice was carried out?

Method

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the previous study was adapted for the present survey with some modifications for items pertaining to background information. The sections for general or broad objectives, professional knowledge, professional skills and personal qualities of the teacher were kept intact so that comparisons could be made between the two studies. New sections included were for information pertaining to teaching practice and post-teaching practice evaluation.

Where teacher education objectives were concerned, there were 22 items of general or broad objectives some of which were further defined as specific items of knowledge, skills and attitudes. There were 14 items on professional knowledge objectives, and 29 items on professional skills in the questionnaires. Students rated these items on a five-point scale as to their importance for a new graduate teacher. There were 16 items on attitudes and personal qualities of the teacher for which the students were to indicate eight that they considered as more important. The content of these teacher education objectives will be mentioned in the relevant section of this summary.

The Respondents

The population of this study consisted of 295 students in the full-time Diploma in Education programme in both the English and Chinese streams. A total of 229 students were present at the time of data collection; they represented 77.6% of the population concerned. Of these, 82.5% were from the English stream and 17.5%

* This article is a summary of the *Survey of Teacher Education Objectives: The Views of Diploma in Education Students* published as a monograph in 1982. A report of the previous study was published in 1981 and a summary of the report appeared in Vol. 4 No. 1 of this *Journal*.

from the Chinese stream.

The mean age of the respondents was 24.5 years (SD 2.1 years). There was a female preponderance with 82.5% females and 17.5% males. Slightly more than two-thirds (68.5%) held Bachelor's (Pass) Degrees and another 29.3% Bachelor's (Honours) Degrees. Only 2.2% held Master's Degrees.

Of these respondents, 37.6% gave private tuition for an average of 3.1 years and 26.2% worked as relief teachers for an average of 1.2 years. Other teaching experience included voluntary tutoring in community centres or churches, instructing or demonstrating at the university, and instructing in Vocational and Industrial Training Board classes. However, such respondents make up only 10.5% of the total. Another 16.6% had other kinds of work experience. In short, a total of 90.9% of the respondents had work experience of one kind or another before joining the Institute of Education.

Results

Based on the average rating given by the respondents to each item, the objectives were ranked within each set, separately for the broad teacher education objectives, professional knowledge, professional skills, and personal qualities of the teacher. The objectives within each set were then classified as three groups with about one-third of the items in each group. The three groups of objectives thus classified were referred to as of high, medium or low priority. The results of ranking and classification are presented here.

Teacher Education Objectives

Of the 22 broad teacher education objectives, the seven considered by the respondents to be of high priority are shown below, in descending order of importance.

Rank	Teacher Education Objectives
1	Knowledge of the subject the teacher has to teach.
2	Ability to communicate with pupils.
3	Ability to plan and conduct lesson and to carry out follow-up activities.
4	Ability to organize pupils for effective learning.
5	Ability to maintain class discipline.
6	Ability to select, adapt and sequence subject matter to suit a given group of pupils.

7 Readiness to upgrade content knowledge.

The students considered the following eight broad teacher education objectives as being of medium priority:

Rank	Teacher Education Objectives
8	Ability to gather, organize and present subject matter and to devise scheme of work.
9	Development of positive personal qualities such as being cooperative and innovative, etc.
10	Knowledge of available resources for the subjects the teacher has to teach.
11	Knowledge of self (trainee) as an individual (strengths and weaknesses, motives, attitudes, temperament).
12	Knowledge of the education system: policy, goals, curriculum, examinations, school organization, etc.
13	Readiness to upgrade professional knowledge and skills.
14	Knowledge of self (trainee) in the social context (e.g. rights and responsibilities, etc.) in both professional and personal life.
15	Ability to deal with professional problems in an objective manner.

The remaining seven broad teacher education objectives were considered to be of low priority by the respondents.

Rank	Teacher Education Objectives
16	Ability to relate one subject with other subjects and with life situations.
17	Ability to use AVA and to devise AVA materials when necessary.
18	Ability to plan and carry out ECA.
19	Ability to carry out a form-teacher's duties (e.g. keeping the class register, collecting fees, etc.)
20	Ability to use and maintain resources, equipment and instruments relevant to the subjects.
21	Knowledge of the theoretical foundations of educational practice (philosophical, economic, sociological, and psychological).
22	Ability to communicate with pupils' parents and maintain good relationship with them.

Professional Knowledge

Of the 14 items of professional knowledge, the four considered by the respondents to be of high priority are shown below, in descending order of importance.

Rank	Professional Knowledge
1	Syllabi of the subjects taught by the teacher.
2	National examination systems (e.g. GCE 'O' and 'A' level regulations).
3	Assessment procedures in school (e.g. modes of assessment).
4	Educational policy and goals.

Considered as of medium priority by the respondents are the followed items of professional knowledge:

Rank	Professional Knowledge
5	Curriculum structure for the different streams (e.g. Special, Express and Normal Streams).
6	Psychological basis of educational practice (e.g. the application of psychology in learning and teaching).
7	Reports on education (e.g. the Goh Report).
8	Administration framework (or structure) of the school.
9	Sociological basis of educational practice (e.g. the socialization function of education).
10.5	Overall ECA programme of the school.
10.5	Pupil services (e.g. School Health Service).

Of low priority to the students are the following items of professional knowledge:

Rank	Professional Knowledge
12	Economic basis of educational practice.
13	Special curricular provisions (e.g. Foreign Language Programme, Supplementary English Language Programme).
14	Philosophic-political basis of educational practice (e.g. education for citizenship).

Professional Skills

Of the 29 items of professional skills, the 10 considered as of high priority by the respondents are shown below, in descending order of importance:

Rank	Professional Skill
1	Skill in motivating pupils to learn (e.g. arousing their interest, using reward and punishment).
2	Skill in deciding on methods and techniques to be used in a lesson.
3	Skill in maintaining a good teacher-pupil relationship.
4	Skill in lecturing, explaining and demonstrating.
5	Skill in maintaining classroom discipline.
6	Skill in constructing and using tests for evaluating pupils' progress.
7	Skill in questioning basic learning difficulties.
7	Skill in questioning during a lesson.
8	Skill in handling basic learning difficulties.
9	Skill in pacing and sequencing a lesson.
10	Skill in speaking clearly with appropriate pace and tone.

The following professional skills are considered by the respondents as of medium priority:

Rank	Professional Skill
11	Skill in using vocabulary within the level of comprehension of the pupils.
12	Skill in setting and marking pupils' exercises.
13	Skill in using sentence structures appropriate to the pupils' level of comprehension.
14	Skill in putting the same idea in other words, when necessary.
15	Skill in using correct speech.
16	Skill in setting objectives for a lesson.
17	Skill in organizing and supervising practical work (e.g. lab work or field-trips).
18	Skill in conducting discussion and tutorials.
19	Skill in deciding on the use of resource materials for the lesson.

Professional skills considered as of low priority by the respondents are as follows:

Rank	Professional Skill
20	Skill in supervising pupils at work.
21	Skill in modulating speech according to

- class size and the physical condition of the classroom.
- 22 Skill in using basic AVA (i.e. chalkboard, picture, charts, specimens, tapes, OHP).
- 23 Skill in using gesture and facial expression to assist in communication.
- 24 Skill in concluding a lesson.
- 25 Skill in using drills during a lesson (e.g. in a language or PE lesson).
- 26 Skill in using other AVA (i.e. ETV programmes, slides, film-strips, video-cassette, etc.)
- 27 Skill in keeping pupil records (e.g. pupils' report books).
- 28 Skill in designing and producing AVA when suitable ones are not readily available.
- 29 Skill in performing routine duties (e.g. keeping the class register).

Personal Qualities of the Teacher

Of the 16 items of personal qualities, the five considered to be of high priority by the respondents are shown below, in descending order of importance:

Rank	Personal Quality
1	Is responsible.
2	Is confident.
3	Maintains effective human relationships.
4	Exercises good judgement.
5	Displays integrity.

The respondents considered the following as of medium priority:

Rank	Personal Quality
6	Is conscientious.
7	Shows initiative.
8	Is cooperative.
9	Is reliable.
10	Is able to withstand stress.

- 11 Shows leadership.

Personal qualities considered as of low priority by the respondents are:

Rank	Personal Quality
12	Is well-adjusted.
13	Is alert.
14	Is punctual.
15	Is appropriately dressed for activities/work.
16	Offers useful suggestions.

Comparisons with the Views of Principals and IE Staff

The students were posted only to secondary schools (with and without pre-university classes) for teaching practice. Their responses were therefore compared with those of the secondary school principals, numbering 115, who were involved in the previous study.

Coefficients of rank difference correlation were calculated for the two groups of respondents for the four sets of objectives. The resultant coefficients are .950 for the broad teacher education objectives, .800 for professional knowledge, .802 for professional skills, and .737 for personal qualities of the teachers. All coefficients of correlation are significant beyond the .01 level of confidence.

In the previous study, 115 IE academic staff responded to the same four sets of objectives. Among these, 58% were from the departments dealing with curriculum studies, 21% with educational studies, and 21% with supportive services (such as teaching practice, audio-visual aids, etc). Their responses were compared with those of the students here. The resultant coefficients of rank difference correlation are .952 for the broad teacher education objectives, .874 for professional knowledge, .865 for professional skills, and .852 for personal qualities of the teachers. All coefficients of correlation are significant beyond the .01 level of confidence.

It is obvious that there is a very high degree of agreement between the students, on the one hand, and the principals and IE staff, on the other hand. The agreement is greater between the students and IE staff than between the students and principals, especially in the area of personal qualities of the teacher.

Post-Teaching Practice Evaluation

Students' responses to the open-ended questions on special skills and knowledge needed and the strengths and weaknesses of the training programme were coded under broad areas. Only responses of similar nature, mentioned 10 or more times were reported.

Special skills and knowledge mentioned by the respondents in response to the open-ended questions included: class control; adaptation to pupils' level of ability; guidance and counselling; motivation; teaching aids and resources; methods and techniques;

Strengths of the training programme mentioned by the respondents included these: the Teacher Induction Programme and the Special Method Courses were helpful; the AVA course was useful; the programme provided an insight into the teacher's work; teaching practice was adequate and beneficial; full-time training allows for better adaptation to school work; there was variety and all-round development; wide choice of Special Interest courses.

Weaknesses of the training programme mentioned by the respondents touched on the

sequencing of courses in the programme; theoretical emphasis; methodology advocated, and the nature of certain assignments. Comments were also made on the requirement to make observation records during classroom visits and the time distribution of PE course.

Conclusion

As is true of the previous study involving secondary school and junior college principals and IE academic staff, the students surveyed here also placed teacher education objectives (both at the general as well as the specific levels) that have to do with classroom teaching directly at a higher priority; these seem to form the "core objectives" as were identified by principals and IE staff. Next in importance to the students were those objectives that might enhance the previous groups of objectives; these could be considered as the "Supportive objectives". Considered as of relatively low priority were knowledge, skills, and personal qualities that the teacher might need only occasionally or were only remotely related to classroom teaching. There was a considerable degree of agreement between the students, the principals, and IE staff with regard to the priority of the various teacher education objectives.