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The Malaysian Education Staff Training Institute
Ministry of Education
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Chew Tow Yow
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PUSAT SUMBER INSTITUT AMALAN BAKI KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA	
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Establishment of the Institute

During the last twenty-five years educational development in Malaysia has been rapid and extensive to meet the needs of nation building. Having gradually overcome the major problems of quantitative expansion of education, the Ministry of Education has since focussed its major attention on qualitative improvement of the educational system. Efforts are being directed at curriculum renewal through a reassessment of the requirements of basic education at the primary school level and general education at the secondary school level. Efforts are also being directed at improving the school plant, teaching-learning facilities, teacher-pupil ratio, pre and in-service teacher education, and at improving the enrolment capacity of secondary vocational schools to be more effective in fulfilling the manpower needs for social reconstruction.

The establishment of the Malaysian Education Staff Training Institute (MESTI) in March, 1979, was the consequence of a deliberate attempt by the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of education and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system's operations through personnel development in educational leadership and management at all levels of the educational system. Hitherto there was no integrated programme directed at the training of the educational system's management and administrative staff. Besides the limited annual programme of short courses overseas and the post-graduate level training for selected personnel at local and foreign universities, the only training programme that has been undertaken on some scale was the series of short courses for primary and secondary school principals, conducted between 1973 and 1977, in which a total of 2,550 school principals attended a one to two-week course on school administration. In-service teacher education, on the other hand, has been conducted over the last two decades to prepare teachers for specific curricular changes and the change in the medium of instruction from English to Bahasa Malaysia, and to improve school support services such as school library services and guidance and counselling. One-year specialist teacher training has also been conducted for many years to prepare teachers

in such subjects as physical education, art, mathematics, science, home science, and in the teaching of pupils with hearing and speech difficulties.

Over the years the need for a more systematic approach for personnel training of educational administrators was voiced at internal ministerial meetings by officers who have had to implement ad hoc in-service teacher education programmes. The problem of personnel training for educational administration was eventually examined at a three-day brainstorming session held in July, 1978 and attended by 26 educational administrators. The decision to institute a permanent system for educational leadership and management training was made following:

- (1) an appraisal of the educational enterprise's operations, with specific reference to the inadequacies of existing training facilities for personnel training in management; and
- (2) an approximation of the kinds of training programmes to be instituted, for example,
 - (a) induction or orientation programmes in educational administration,
 - (b) training to correct observed job performance deficiencies,
 - (c) developmental programmes to prepare promising individuals for positions calling for broader leadership roles, and
 - (d) continual personnel training programmes to enhance and increase leadership and management skills.

The process to establish the Institute as finalized in 1978 when the Ministry of Education negotiated with the World Bank for the Fifth Education Loan (1979 - 1985) during which the Institute was incorporated as an educational development project at an estimated cost of US\$4.4 million. However, the original costing for building the Institute's campus on a 120-acre hill site, 27 miles from Kuala Lumpur, has since been revised to US\$20 million following an upward revision in building space requirements and in building construction costs. The additional cost will be borne by the Malaysian Government.

Institute's value and goal

The basic value premise that underlies the development of the Institute is that continual staff development is crucial to the task of improving the quality and effectiveness of education provided in the schools. In order to meet the challenges of having to develop and implement more relevant and effective educational programmes for the increasing number of pupils going through the school system, educational planners and administrators must be provided with adequate opportunities to continually update and upgrade their knowledge of and competences in the management of educational change.

The goals of the Institute are expressed as follows:

"Within the context of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the educational enterprise in delivering quality education through the nation's schools, MESTI's goals are:

- 1) To advance the professional growth and development of the Education Service personnel as educators, educationists, administrators, and as agents of change within the nation's educational strategy; and
- 2) To promote the systematic development of educational planning and management practices relevant to the nation's goals of planned change through education.

MESTI's objectives are:

1. To conduct evaluative studies to determine the efficacy and efficiency of organizational and management systems operating within the nation's educational enterprise;
2. To undertake intervention studies to develop viable alternatives in educational planning and management practices;
3. To implement a system of on-going assessment of training needs within the context of systematic development of professional competence of the Education Service staff through training;

4. To plan and implement comprehensive training programmes directed at equipping and enhancing the Education Service staff competence in educational planning and management;
5. To effect training for administrative support staff to insure efficiency in routine administrative functions;
6. To evaluate the short and long term effectiveness of training and staff development programmes;
7. To organize and support a programme of consultancy services to organizations and institutions for in-house training and organizational development;
8. To improve the technology of training in educational administration; and
9. To monitor and review regional and world trends in educational planning and management practices.

Foci of training

The breakdown of the Institute's clientele is as follows:

1) Educational planners, administrators and Supervisors at the federal, state and district levels	3,000
2) Educational institutional managers and management staff	11,000
3) Teacher educators	1,400
4) Administrative support staff	9,000
	<hr/> 24,400 <hr/>

The Institute's training programme priority is on the training of school principals. School principals, while they may be at the lower end of the educational system's administrative hierarchy, are the most vital of all categories of educational administrators in making the school, and thus the broader educational programme, a success. The need to focus training on school principals becomes all the more urgent considering that school principals are rarely and specifically prepared for the job.

The Institute's training programme development priority for the first five-year period is as follows:

- First priority Primary and secondary school principals;
- Second priority Administrators responsible for overseeing to the implementation of curricular programmes in schools;
- Third priority Ministry and State Departments of Education officials; deputy school principals; principals and deputy principals, heads of department and lecturers of teachers training colleges; and administrative support staff.

The above prioritization of training programme development does not imply that lower order priority clients are provided training only after all higher order priority clients have received training. In any one year the Institute undertakes training projects for a cross section of its entire clientele with the major share of the annual training resources given to the priority clientele group.

The Institute has adopted two training modes, namely,

- 1) Serial training programme to be conducted in series or in stages, for example, induction or basic stage, intermediate stage and advanced stage;
- 2) Discrete training programme which fulfill specific training needs related to specific job functions.

Within the two modalities of training, training approaches include the following:

- 1) Full-time residential training, lasting from one week to six months and using a variety of training techniques;
- 2) Practicum, principally as post-residential training reinforcement; and

- 3) Distance teaching as the basis for on-the-job training as well as pre-residential training sensitization and post-course follow-up.

Each training programme is implemented through training projects, each training project has its own specific focus/foci of training activities as follows:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Focus of training activities</u>
(1) Seminar:	(a) Dissection and analysis of issue and problems, (b) Sharing of experience and integration of practices, and (c) Formulation of developmental programme strategies;
(2) Workshop:	(a) Problem identification and analysis; (b) Detailed formulation of programme and project execution plans;
(3) Mini course:	(a) Development of competence for specific tasks and job requirements;
(4) Induction course:	(a) Orientation to new roles as from teaching to supervisory role;
(5) Basic course:	(a) Development of basic competences for adequate job performance;
(6) Intermediate course:	(a) Enhancement of basic competences, (b) Development of areas of specialization;
(7) Advanced course:	(a) Development in innovative practices, (b) Personal and professional development;
(8) Self-instructional training package:	(a) On-the-job training, (b) Pre-course sensitizing and post-course reinforcement;
(9) Practicum/Attachment:	(a) Application of training in specific work environment.

A number of training projects may be sequenced as a long-term training programme for a specific clientele group. It has also been suggested that successful performance at the Basic School Principals' Course becomes a prerequisite condition for appointment as school principal. It is also envisaged that the three-stage school principal course will culminate in the award of the Diploma of School Administration besides being a training programme in the career development of school principals.

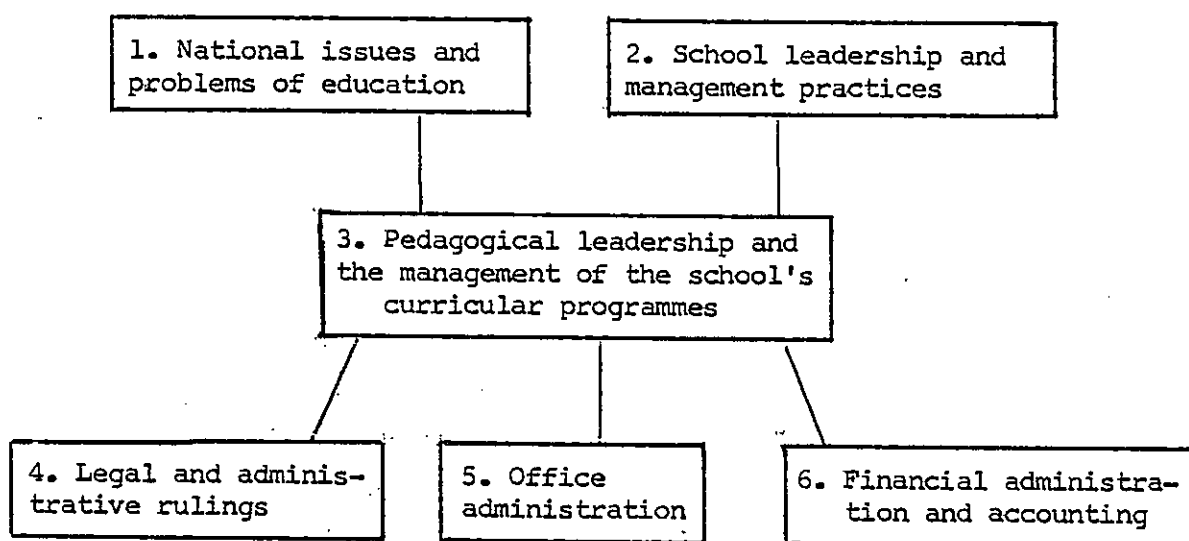
Operational structure and procedure

The Institute's operational principles for training programme development are as follows:

- (1) All training programmes must be based on systematic training needs assessment and analysis of desirable norms of job performance;
- (2) All training programmes must be developed in accordance with sound principles of curriculum development and implemented through training strategies which are efficient and effective in order to reduce the gap between actual and anticipated outcomes of training;
- (3) All training content must be based on relevant and practical knowledge and proven practices of educational planning and administration; and
- (4) All training programmes must be evaluated fully and at all stages of programme development and implementation.

At present, much of the Institute's training content is notional and is based on staff member's familiarity with relevant knowledge in specific fields. Since each training programme is developed in accordance with identified training needs, each course would require a selection and a reorganization of available knowledge and known practices. The present shortage of staff has somewhat limited the scope of coverage in several of the training courses even when competent officials have been invited from other institutions to assist in these courses.

The Basic School Principals' Course. This course has been developed as the initial phase of the training programme for school principals. It has been constructed in accordance with the overall aim of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the school's teaching-learning programme within the requirements of the formal school curriculum and the constraints of the local school environment. This is a departure from the previous courses which focussed on management practices. The training content is organized into six components with their inter-relationships as follows:



From each component, topics for lectures, group discussions and self-instructional modules have been identified. The practice is for each topic to be developed as an independent unit as well as being part of a series of topics. In terms of training materials production, a trainer, who is assigned to a topic, is expected, minimally, to produce a trainer's manual which sets out the specific learning outcomes of that topic, an organization of academic and practical knowledge, suggested teaching-learning strategies, and sample evaluation items for assessing learning outcomes. It is also suggested, where applicable, that a self-instructional module be prepared for the topic. The module may be used either as a supplement to the contact session with the trainer or a self-sufficient instructional device.

For the Intermediate phase of the training programme for School Principals, the plan is to develop training content which will prepare school principals to be competent in the management of school-based curriculum improvement. The Intermediate School Principals' Course is now being tried out.

Evaluation of training programme

Evaluation is treated as an integral part of programme development and implementation. The purposes of evaluation identified are as follows:

- (1) to determine the degree of effectiveness of the training programme, more specifically, the training project or course, in achieving the anticipated outcomes that fulfilled the specific needs for training; and
- (2) to assess the efficiency in the administration of the training programme.

At the course development stage, evaluation is aimed at assessing the 'plan worthiness' of the training curriculum, in terms of the proposed training objectives, organization of training content and suggested teaching-learning strategies. So far such formative evaluation has been undertaken as an in-house activity of staff members who meet at periodic evaluation sessions. Evaluation data have also been collected from a selection of the potential clients. Formative evaluation is scheduled as a continuing activity of training programme development as the structure and organization of a training programme has to respond to changing needs.

In determining the training outcomes accrued from participation at a course, the immediate outcomes evaluation measures include course component tests conducted at the end of each component, end of course tests, a long written assignment which is based on a school improvement project to be undertaken by the individual participant after the course, and assessment of the degree and nature of participants' performance in small group work. Participants are also asked to self-evaluate their own attainment of the training objectives. The Institute is continuing its attempts to improve the reliability and validity of its various formal testing procedures as the Institute officially certified course attendance according to the participants' individual performance at the course.

The Institute has yet to develop a strategy for assessing the long-term outcomes of training in terms of the impact of training on job performance. Measures under consideration include the involvement of school Supervisors to undertake a form of evaluation during their periodic visits to schools, and the instituting of longitudinal studies. Due to shortage of staff, this aspect of evaluation is the most neglected area of the Institute's operations.

Evaluation of course administration is undertaken as a joint venture between the course administrators and participants. Formal consultative meetings are held approximately twice a week with representatives of the course participants to analyze and resolve issues and problems on the spot. This form of course administration evaluation along with a form of participatory management in various aspects of course administration has helped to promote participant commitment to the success of the course.

Organizational infrastructure

The development of the Institute's organizational infrastructure is based on the analysis of its goals, operational structure and programme activities mentioned earlier in this paper. As an organization, the Institute is envisaged to develop its pools of human resources and physical facilities for training in terms of five departments, five service centres and an administrative unit.

The five departments, which will bear the major burden of developing the substantive knowledge content for training are:

- (1) Department of Educational Foundation and Development;
- (2) Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy Leadership;
- (3) Department of Educational Management;
- (4) Department of School Management; and
- (5) Department of Educational Research and Evaluation.

The five training services centres and their respective functions are as follows:

- (1) Training Research and Evaluation Centre which conducts the identification and analysis of training needs, monitors and evaluates the short and long-term effects of training;

- (2) Training Technology Centre which is responsible for research and development of training techniques;
- (3) Training Resource and Publication Centre which serves both as a depository of reference and training materials and as a functional centre for self-instructional training activities;
- (4) Administrative Support Services Centre which provides facilities for training in office administration, accounting and book-keeping, and the maintenance of school plants, supplied and services;
- (5) Course Administration and Trainee Welfare Centre which attends to all aspects of training project administration, and the servicing of trainees before, during and after attendance at training courses.

The general administrative unit looks after the day-to-day house-keeping functions of the Institute.

Chew Tow Yow/April, 1984.