



香港教育大學

The Education University
of Hong Kong

Department of Education
Policy and Leadership
Faculty of Education and
Human Development

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Final Report

The selection and promotion of teachers in Hong
Kong primary schools - A case study on the
opinions from pre-service and in-service teachers

Project Supervisor : Mr. Hui Hon Wing

Student Name : Cheung Hon Kiu, Ken

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I. Introduction

Similar to other sectors, education institutions also undergo staffing process. In our general understanding, schools recruit teachers by inviting applicants to interview(s) while school administrators such as principals/headmasters would select the most appropriate ones. Apart from selecting teachers, school administrators and sometimes, incorporated management committees (IMC), are responsible for promoting capable teachers to senior positions, who happen to be chairs of administrative units and/or panels in schools. School administrators ought to have the ability to motivate staff and retain accountability among staff. School administrators should be able to execute policies that serve the betterment of schools (Roza, 2003). In addition, an effective chain of command within schools increases staff's professionalism, generates resolutions and utilizes curriculum and resource (Kwan, 2010). Therefore, the selection and promotion of teachers are serious issues for schools.

There have been several well recognized research studies (Liu, 2017; Wong & Wong, 2005; Chan, 2011) related to the selection and promotion of secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. Aiming to provide new insights towards primary school management in Hong Kong, this paper examines the selection and promotion of teachers in primary schools, gathers and analyzes pre-service teachers' and in-service teachers' opinions on the selection and promotion of teachers in local aided primary schools, with a view of bridging the gap between school administrators, junior teachers, student teachers and teacher training institutions by including different parties' opinions into the discussion, illustrating the strengths, weaknesses and related characteristics of the existing practices adopted by local primary schools. The research findings also contribute to improve Hong Kong's teacher training mechanism and facilitate local aided primary schools in recruitment and promotion.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher professionalism

Primary schools employ and promote professional and competent teachers. Teacher education's development and the status of teaching profession are inseparable as Furlong (2000) has argued, "the key elements of teacher professionalism and the fundamental nature of teachers' work can be most directly influenced by changing the knowledge, skills and values required of new teachers". The society therefore defines a teacher's professionalism based on the currently adopted knowledge, skills and methodologies while a teacher's professionalism is reflected by the socio-economic status and the labour terms within the teaching profession (Hoyle, 1975).

2.2 Issues related to the establishment of local primary schools

In April 2016, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union submitted a document "[LegCo CB\(4\)829/15-16\(01\)](#)" to the Legislative Council of HKSAR, urging for a comprehensive review on the establishment and pay scale of local aided primary schools. The community places higher expectations on primary education due to Hong Kong's rapid development. The government carried out reforms in primary education, aiming to improve its curriculum and pedagogies. Though with debates, new measures such as inclusive education (Wong & Chik, 2016, Fox, Farrell & Davis, 2004; Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007) and small class teaching (Siu & Heng, 2007; Zhao, 2015) are now implemented in many local aided primary schools. In spite of the government's efforts on professionalizing local primary school teaching force, the quality of education could be deteriorated by the outdated and inadequate establishment for primary schools.

Mentioned on the Education Bureau's website, the teaching staff establishment of local aided primary schools went through various changes across 1990s and 2000s.

In 1993, the Education Commission at that time advised the government to raise ratio of graduate teachers in primary schools in order to enhance the quality of primary education services, with a vision to achieve “specialized teaching”. The government then agreed to turn up to 35% of all primary schools’ teaching posts into graduate posts by 2007, which has been achieved by 2002. Such arrangement aims to provide schools with knowledge and skills required for effective leadership. It also maintains the attractiveness and competitiveness of primary school teaching positions.

The government also introduced several ranks into the teacher’s pay scale, hoping that the overall quality of primary education could be enhanced by raising the status and professional standards of primary school teachers. The graduate grade of Primary School Master/Mistress (PSM) has been created in public sector primary schools since 1994/95. In the 2007 Policy Address, the government proposed to increase the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools by two phases, i.e. to 45% in the 2008/09 school year and to 50% in the 2009/10 school year. Also, the government suggested creating the rank of Senior Primary School Master/Mistress (SPSM) by 2008/09, serving as deputy heads of primary schools.

As announced in the 2015 Policy Address, in order to attract more university graduates to become primary school teachers, the government proposed to increase the ratio of graduate teacher posts in public sector primary schools by phases in three years. In this regard, the ratio of graduate teacher posts has been increased to 55%, 60% and 65% in the 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 school years respectively.

It is obvious that the government looks forward to see more talents joining the teaching force in aided primary schools. However, low morale and heavy workload are shared by in-service primary school teachers nowadays. Despite Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s effort in expanding the education budget, problems related to employment and promotion still exist. There are not enough permanent teaching posts in aided primary

schools, meaning a certain amount of teachers, who possess tertiary academic qualifications, are employed with non-graduate grades (Ng, 2017).

2.3 The features of teacher selection and promotion

Jacobson (1992) identifies an abstract relationship between teachers' efforts and their job performance and argues that measuring teachers' performance is a costly and challenging task when compared with other professions. Such limitation may also introduce discrepancy between teachers' performance and principals' expectations. Based on Milgrom & Roberts' (1992) principal-agency theory, Chan (2011) sees selection and promotion as school administrators' means for motivating teachers and a solution towards the abovementioned conflict. Chan (2011) also highlights the importance of "selection" and "promotion". Selection is a vital process because organizational efficiency can be enhanced by employing suitable candidates. Promotion affects schools' operation and long-term development. Thus, failing to promote suitable teachers to senior ranks may introduce undesired consequences to schools.

Multiple studies (Poster, 1976; Rebore, 2007) have researched in the selection of teachers. These research findings generally divide the whole process into three phases. The first phase occurs "Before the interview", which the school identifies vacancies, sets up selection criteria, advertises and handles applications. The second phase would be "The interview", which the interviewers (school administrators) meet the interviewees (job applicants) and evaluate the interviewees through professional conversations. The third phase would be "After the interview", which successful candidates receive offers while the unsuccessful ones are notified of the results.

In most cases, teacher selection procedures only grant the appointment panel (i.e. school administrators) opportunities to make the appropriate appointments, yet failing to create opportunities for applicants to assess their passion and interest to the job (Beslin, 1978). "One-way" appointment procedures often benefit the selectors but

not the job applicants, who are uncertain about their suitability towards the school and its vacancies (Daneen, 1971). Lyons (1976) suggests a comprehensive and precise recruitment process introduces self-selections among candidates, allowing applicants to purposefully submit job applications to their desired schools.

2.4 Teacher selection and promotion in school administrators' perspective

A survey was conducted among 45 school administrators, aimed to investigate on the important factors considered by employers when they hire teachers of different ranks (Bryant, 1978). Key factors that all respondents gave equal importance in the teacher selection process include the candidate's maturity, interest, enthusiasm and ability to work with people; the candidate's previous work experience and achievements as well as the candidate's ability to teach across curriculum. All these factors determine whether the teacher is suitable for the school, able to deliver quality teaching and benefit the school's further development (Morgan, Hall & Mackay, 1983).

Principals identified five criteria as the best predictors of successful teaching performance of beginning teachers, including the personal quality of candidates, the leadership and participation in extra-curricular activities in campus, candidates' interests and hobbies related extra-curricular activities, candidates' ability to teach in other subject domains and candidates' past teaching experience (Liu, 2017). Liu's findings cohere with the studies of Bryant (1978) and Herbster (1982). Apart from principal's emphasis on extra-curricular activities, Liu (2017) also recommended teacher training institutions to equip their students with different professional qualifications. In general, teachers should do their best in their current positions because related work experience is an important selection criterion. Moreover, teachers with diverse expertise are more competitive in job seeking. Pre-service teachers should develop more interests and participate in more extra-curricular activities.

Herbster (1982) also identified the selection preferences shown towards

applicants of teaching positions based on the result from the high school system and teacher training institutions in Montana. Factors that school administrators put salient preference on were professional educational preparation, length of service in education and the applicants' capability in multi-field subject areas.

Based on several related studies (Caplow, 1978; Dalton, 1951; Glaser, 1968; Hughes, 1958; Lyons, 1981; Pavalko, 1971), school administrators usually take “formal criteria”, “informal factors” and “career contingency factors” into consideration when allocating promotion opportunities (Maclean, 1992). Formal criteria refer to a teacher's professional qualifications, work experience as well as his/her suitability for senior ranks. Informal factors are personal, such as the teacher's religion, family background, political affiliation and roles other than educator (i.e., participation in other organizations). Career contingency factors concern the teacher's willingness and capability to serve for the betterment of the school, including age, sex and marital status.

2.5 “Stayers, Movers and Leavers” model

Bobbitt, Faupel & Burns' (1991) “Stayers, Movers and Leavers” model identifies teachers as movers, stayers or leavers in terms of their career plans and intentions. Movers are those who seek opportunities for promotion, stayers are those who have no ambitions in career while leavers are those who do not plan to stay in the teaching profession. The five elements affecting teachers' eligibility in promotion are career orientation, subject, management, out of school and disenchanted identities (Evetts, 1994; Nias, 1989). Based on Bobbitt et al. (1991), Draper and McMichael (2000) further examined the situation of teachers who wish to be promoted beyond panel head level in secondary schools and discovered that movers (i.e. those who aspire for promotion in foreseeable future) identify more with management than a particular subject and they have stronger consciousness of career considerations when compared with stayers (i.e. those who are not planning to apply for promotion).

III. Purpose of Study

This paper investigates and analyzes the teacher selection process and promotion mechanism in local aided primary schools, from the perspectives of pre-service teachers, recently graduated junior in-service teachers (with less than 3 years of teaching experience), experienced junior teachers (with more than 10 years of teaching experience, at the rank of CM/AM/APSM) and senior in-service teachers (i.e. school administrators at the rank of PSM or above). The paper aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do pre-service teachers prepare for teacher selection? What do they concern the most?
- 2) How did in-service teachers prepare for teacher selection? What did they focus on the most? What made them succeed in getting a teaching post?
- 3) To what extent do pre-service and in-service teachers agree that the existing teacher training mechanism have prepared student teachers to meet local aided primary schools' selection requirements? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
- 4) How do junior in-service teachers perceive teacher promotion in their school? What do they concern the most when there are chances for them to be promoted? What are their perception towards school's management?
- 5) What factors and/or qualities concern school administrators the most when promoting junior teachers to middle or top managerial posts? From a school administrator's, what kind of teachers are/can be ideal "successors" to their rank/position?
- 6) What are/could be the key factors that determine the allocation of promotion opportunities among teachers in primary school?

IV. Research Methodology

Picciano (2004) suggests that quantitative research relies on the “the collection of numerical data which are then subjected to analysis using statistical routines” (p.51) while qualitative research relies on “meanings, concepts, context, descriptions, and settings” (p.32). Quantity refers to amounts while quality refers to the natural essence and meaning of stuffs. Common qualitative research methods include ethnography, historical research and case study research. The purpose of a qualitative study is to describe and interpret an issue observed in its natural setting. In a qualitative research, researcher(s) collect data through observations, interviews, field visits and from secondary sources such as photos and video clips (Fairbrother, 2014).

In order to narrow down a broad field of research into a manageable and researchable scale (Stake, 2010), the investigator only conducted and recorded face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with pre-service teachers from **one local teacher training institution**, and in-service teachers from **two local aided primary schools** to collect primary data. This is a qualitative research as the investigator draws implications by interpreting interviewees’ responses.

The investigator interviewed 3 pre-service teachers, who are final year undergraduate students, with an education major and are interested to work as primary school teachers upon graduation. The questions designed for them are mostly related to their perception towards teacher professionalism and their preparation for the teacher selection process (i.e. job hunting).

As mentioned, there are two local aided primary schools participated in the research. **School A** has a large and famous sponsoring body, locates inside a public housing estate in Tin Shui Wai. **School B** is a village school with a small sponsoring body, locates in the rural area of Yuen Long. 4 in-service teachers from **School A** and 3

in-service teachers from **School B** participated in the research respectively. These in-service teachers are different in terms of their backgrounds, lengths of service and expertise. The group covers different ranks in primary schools, ranging from CM to HMII. In the interviews, junior in-service teachers shared their experience in going through the selection process as well as their views and orientations on teacher promotion. On the other hand, senior in-service teachers (grades of PSM or above) explained their rationale and methods in recruiting new teachers and shared their insights on the promotion mechanisms in the primary school(s) they served.

The investigator summarizes and presents the major/significant findings from the interviews. After that, there are discussions on the following aspects:

- 1) To assess tertiary institutions' teacher training's practicality by comparing pre-service teachers' preparation in job hunting with recently graduated junior in-service teachers' past experience.
- 2) To assess pre-service teachers' employability by comparing pre-service teachers' perception on teacher selection with school administrators'.
- 3) Based on research participants' responses to give local tertiary institutions some suggestions on refining their teacher training programmes.
- 4) To understand junior in-service teachers' opinions on teacher promotion mechanism and their perceptions on primary school teachers' career prospects
- 5) To understand local aided primary schools' teacher promotion mechanism from school administrators' perspectives and make comparison with that of junior teachers, thus to recognize the similarities and differences on both sides' expectations.
- 6) To analyze how a primary school's teacher promotion mechanism affects its operation and/or development in long run.

V. Limitations

This study adopts a qualitative research approach. There could be lower degree of certainty and objectivity when compared with quantitative research analyses (Atieno, 2009). The quality of the research content greatly depends on the investigator's skills and experience and it is possible that findings are influenced by the investigator's preferences and biases. Therefore, subjectivity is a major concern.

Credibility in research concerns the level of confidence in the accuracy and trueness of the results. The researchers use interview to collect first-hand data while the interviewers are the researchers themselves, making the presence of researcher in the process of data gathering unavoidable. This may affect or influence the interviewees' responses. Instead of giving genuine responses, interviewees may try to give responses desired by the interviewers.

Transferability refers to the degree that the results can be generalized or transferred to other similar contexts or settings. Since this is a small scale qualitative research that only focused on two local aided primary schools and a small amount of research participants, the results do not represent the conditions in all local aided primary schools. Due to a low transferability, there is a low possibility for this research to be taken seriously by formal academic researchers, policy makers and educational practitioners before the topic is being further studied (Griffin, 2004).

In order to reduce the limitations of this research, the investigator explained to all research participants that the data collected would not be used for purposes other than this research. The investigator also promised all research participants that their responses and personal details would only be known by the investigator and, if necessary, relevant personnel from the investigator's university. The trustworthiness and confidentiality of the research are ensured.

VI. Findings

6.1 Pre-service teachers' preparation for job interviews

All pre-service teachers who participated in the research regard subject knowledge, professional qualifications/license/benchmark, experience in exchange/internship/work the crucial factors in job hunting. Pre-service teachers attribute their adequate subject knowledge to the teacher training they received in university. In order to enhance their competitiveness, student teachers are keen on taking tests and assessments that would grant them professional qualifications, for example IELTS and LPAT results, certain sports instructor licenses, certificates in visual arts and music. One of the interviewee says “exchange and study tours broadens student teachers’ horizons” while another interviewee, who had experience in multiple part time jobs, claims that her experience in going to different job interviews increased her level of confidence. Part time jobs related to education prove a student teacher’s experience in teaching and classroom management while those not related to education strengthen a student teacher’s skills in handling non-teaching duties, which is also part of primary school teachers’ work.

6.2 In-service teachers' experience on job hunting

In-service teachers of different age groups have slightly different job hunting experience. Teachers who served less than 10 years rely on internet when looking for teaching posts. They read information about their preferred schools and browse through job advertisements posted online. Teachers who served for 20 years or more relied on job advertisements posted on newspapers as well as recommendations from their professors/lecturers in respective universities/teacher training institutes. All teachers had face-to-face interviews with school administrator(s) hence it is almost a universal practice in primary schools’ teacher selection. In-service teachers consider the school’s

geographical location, mission and background before accepting an offer. Furthermore, a teacher usually serve in the school that was the earliest to offer a job.

6.3 Pre-service and in-service teachers' opinions on teacher training

The teacher training is theoretical in pre-service teachers' perspective. The programme is fruitful in terms of subject knowledge, pedagogies and educational theories. Also, there have been abundant opportunities for student teachers to participate in extra-curricular activities that enrich their experience and sharpen their generic skills. Yet, pre-service teachers mentioned that there were not much opportunities for them to understand and experience the work of a real primary school teacher in primary school context except their practicum. Also, the university was not successful in defining teacher professionalism and competency in education programmes as student teachers are not aware of these concepts when they are preparing for job interviews.

In-service teachers applauded teacher training institutions for equipping student teachers with adequate subject knowledge. However, acknowledged to society's increasing expectations on primary education services and the rapid development in local aided primary schools, in-service teachers doubted whether teacher training mechanism provides student teachers enough practical experience. There may not be enough channels for student teachers to acquire extra professional knowledge (i.e. second major or minor) and abilities that benefits primary schools (e.g. STEM education, I.T. techniques, guidance and counselling skills).

6.4 Junior in-service teachers' perceptions on their career prospects

Junior in-service teachers are generally positive towards their career prospects. They see clear career paths and structures within primary education services. They are aware of the administrative duties that come with senior ranks. They agree that teachers who often solve problems and earn credits for the school are more eligible to higher

ranks. Moreover, a teacher's academic qualification(s), dedication to work and family burden determine his/her career prospect. In general, junior in-service teachers from both schools are satisfied with their schools' allocation of promotion opportunities since they see fairness, transparency and accountability in the process.

6.5 Ideal candidates for promotion in school administrators' perspective

Before appointing a teacher to a senior rank, primary school administrators first evaluate a teacher's passion towards teaching, which could be reflected on the teacher's care towards students, dedication of time, quality of work and proactiveness in collaboration. Primary school teachers have great workload nowadays so school administrators prefer teachers who are passionate, dedicated and punctual in work. Besides, competent school administrators are usually good communicators and confident presenters. Most of them possess good analytical skills, good interpersonal skills and have well-established collegial relationships. School administrators should also carry an inclusive personality and are willing to establish social ties with people from all walks of life.

6.6 School's/Sponsoring body's role in teacher selection and promotion

Sponsoring bodies affect teacher selection and promotion. For example, schools with religious backgrounds tend to recruit and promote teachers who believe in that religion, meaning a factor that is not directly related to candidates' work performance is taken into consideration. Besides, single sex schools are likely to employ teachers with the same sex (i.e. girls' school employs female teachers).

Two local aided primary schools participated in this study and they are referred as "**School A**" and "**School B**" here. School A's staffing policies differ with School B's. School A's sponsoring body is huge in scale (i.e. runs a lot of primary and secondary schools). School A's sponsoring body gets involved in its teacher selection and promotion and reserve the decision-making authority, meaning the sponsoring body can

reject a teacher's application for teaching post at any rank, even that candidate is nominated/recommended by his/her respective headmaster/headmistress.

On the other hand, School B's sponsoring body has a rural background and is a lot smaller in scale. School B's sponsoring body has little involvement and interference on its teacher selection and promotion, meaning the headmaster/headmistress is likely to be the sole decision maker on the school's recruitment and promotion issues.

VII. Discussion

7.1 Practical elements in tertiary institutions' teacher training programmes

Universities assist student teachers in job hunting by providing opportunities to exchange/intern in other countries/regions, which sharpen student teachers' generic skills. There are also career talks and interview workshops that aim to familiarize student teachers with the profession and to prepare student teachers for job interviews. Furthermore, Chinese and English language courses are offered to help student teachers enhancing their written and oral communication skills. Student teachers who look forward to become primary school teachers tend to enhance their employability by utilizing the supplementary resources provided by universities.

However, when in-service teachers recalled on their job hunting experience, they saw other factors that made them more employable. They think that university lecturers'/previous employers' recommendations enhance employability. Being aware of the trial teaching part in certain primary schools' teacher selection process, in-service teachers find courses related to subject knowledge and pedagogies the most useful part in teacher training, functioning to increase their employability. In-service teachers also suggest that verifiable professional skills/qualifications are more valuable than just experience in extracurricular activities. For example, a teacher who has recognized qualifications in counselling, information technology, first aid or music could alleviate

other teachers' burden, making him/her much more employable than a teacher who just had multiple summer internships during his/her undergraduate studies.

7.2 Pre-service teachers' employability in school administrators' eyes

Aided primary schools and their sponsoring bodies follow the government's policy on teacher establishment. Schools employ teachers based on their number of classes and student figures. When there are more students enrolled, schools would put up job advertisements and recruit teachers, which the needs of the school's development and the needs of different subject panels would be prioritized in consideration.

When recruiting teachers, school administrators concern the applicants' academic background and attainment in benchmark the most. For example, an ideal candidate for Chinese language teacher should hold an education degree in Chinese language education and has passed LPAT for Putonghua. Some primary schools also emphasize the importance of teachers' classroom management skills and therefore, include trial teaching sessions in their teacher selection process. It seems that extra knowledge across curriculum (i.e. minor in music, arts or P.E.) and other professional qualifications/extra-curricular experience serve as the applicant's advantage, only under the condition that the applicant's major subject meets the school's demands. Teaching/work experience and years of service are not prerequisites for successful job applications because schools focus more on applicants' teaching techniques and passion towards teaching.

7.3 Suggestions for the refinement of teacher training programmes

The purpose for teacher training is to prepare aspired students for the teaching profession. In order to enhance undergraduates' employability and competency as primary school teachers, here are suggestions that local universities may take into consideration when refining their teacher training programmes.

First of all, both pre-service teachers and in-service teachers agree that

universities is successful in equipping student teachers with adequate subject knowledge and pedagogical theories. Yet, in-service teachers have reservations on the practicality of these theoretical knowledge. Therefore, instead of blindly pursuing after higher academic standards and depths in undergraduate courses, universities may focus more on the subject knowledge that are related to/covered by local primary schools' curriculum. Teaching techniques are important. Instead of understanding the rationale and arguments in pedagogical theories, professors and lecturers shall provide insights for undergraduates on how to apply subject knowledge into primary school settings.

School administrators and experienced in-service teachers both emphasized the importance of block practice because that was the time for student teachers to experience the reality. In-service teachers support the idea of allowing student teachers to have more block practices in different primary schools throughout their 5-year undergraduate programme, as well as increasing the length of practicum(s). More block practices allow student teachers to understand more about the trends and conditions in primary education services by teaching in primary schools with various settings, cultures and students. A longer practicum allows student teachers to better understand their assigned class(es), to apply what they have learnt into teaching and to enhance the quality of their teaching. Being aware of the difficulties in arranging practicum, both pre-service and in-service teachers support the idea of having after school tutorials for primary students and primary schools can employ student teachers as tutors. This approach are of mutual interests – primary schools can spare their teachers from running after school tutorials by employing student teachers, who lack means to accumulate teaching experience.

In order to enhance student teachers' employability and competency, school administrators and experienced in-service teachers suggest universities to review the current trends and demands in primary education services before creating relevant

minor studies, courses and training programmes for undergraduates. For example, universities may promote STEM and I.T. courses to student teachers as talents of these two areas are greatly needed by aided primary schools nowadays.

7.4 Career prospects for junior in-service teachers nowadays

Junior in-service teachers' employment terms make a significant difference on their career prospects. As previously mentioned, a school's establishment correlates with its student admission figures. Sometimes, primary schools may employ contract teachers by using government's funding but such employment may not fall within the school's establishment (i.e. not permanent teaching posts).

Permanent teachers generally enjoy good career prospects. A huge sponsoring body that runs multiple schools tend to offer its teachers higher upward mobility in their teaching career. For village schools that have relatively smaller establishment and a smaller sponsoring body, the number of senior teaching posts such as APSM and PSM increased due to their increased admission rates.

However, although having the same aspiration for promotion, contract primary school teachers do not enjoy the same level of upward mobility. They are less likely to be promoted unless they secure a permanent teaching post. Moreover, they cannot apply for rotation and promotion in other primary schools under the same sponsoring body. A new, junior in-service teacher says the most common way for a contract teacher to look for a better teaching post is to quit his/her original job and find a new one, probably in a school that gives higher recognition to his/her strengths. In general, new and junior contract teachers enjoy lower job security and dimmer career prospects.

7.5 School administrators' expectations on their "successors"

Junior in-service teachers and school administrators have different expectations on the qualities of potential school administrators. Junior teachers focus more on the personal strengths of teachers. Common qualities/characteristics mentioned by junior

teachers include the amount of time dedicated to work, academic qualifications, expertise/talents that could benefit school's development. Moreover, they think that teachers who assume headship in subject panels and/or administrative units in young age are more eligible to senior ranks.

School administrators, on the other hand, focus more on the personality and attitude of teachers. They believe that work experience and professional skills could be accumulated alongside more years of experience but a teacher's passion towards teaching and proactiveness in taking up projects and duties determine his/her career prospect. In the consideration of teacher promotion, age and years of service are not the most important factors but a teacher's leadership and personal charisma. A charismatic leader in education services should be able to collaborate with and motivate his/her colleagues to strive for excellence in both teaching and administrative duties.

To summarize, junior teachers who aspire for career advancement should serve in schools that could utilize their personal strengths because that allows junior teachers to proactively take up duties that best matches their specialties. Interpersonal skills are also very important. Superiors' trusts and good collegial relationships are the prerequisites for senior teaching posts.

7.6 The relationship between teacher promotion and school's development

As stipulated in the Code of Aid for Primary Schools, there should be one senior teacher (at AM/PSM grade) for every three classes. There are certain teaching posts within aided primary schools' approved teaching staff establishment which would not be counted in the ratio of graduate and non-graduate teacher posts (i.e. school head, deputy head(s), teacher librarian, resource teacher for integrated education, teacher(s) for specialized teaching, school-based Student Guidance Teacher (SGT) and primary school curriculum leader). A school's allocation of ranks to its teachers could reflect its culture, core values, mission and emphases in long-term development.

Research participants gave several examples. If a primary school promote its English panel head to the rank of APSM while have its Mathematics panel head, who also happened to be the teacher-in-charge for the school's STEM education, promoted to the rank of PSM, that means the school intends to dedicate more resources and manpower on STEM education. If a primary school has both its curriculum leader and its teacher-in-charge of gifted education promoted to the rank of PSM, it could imply that the school adopts an elitist approach to nurture students with great potentials. Also, a school's emphases in future development (such as academic performance, extra-curricular activities, athletics, STEM education, music & arts, happy education) could be reflected on its school administrators' career background. Whether school administrators have strong ties with a school's sponsoring body could also reflect the sponsoring body's/IMC's degree of involvement in the school's management.

VIII. Conclusion

To conclude, this paper gives a comprehensive and thorough exploration on local aided primary schools' teacher selection process and teacher promotion mechanism. Undoubtedly, local tertiary institutions' teacher training programmes supply talents to local primary education teaching force. However, it is observable that student teachers are in desperate need for opportunities to practise in teaching while the young generation of junior teachers are calling for higher job security and more promising career prospects. This research, therefore, collects and analyzes different stakeholders' views, from pre-service teachers (i.e. undergraduate students major in education) to in-service teachers with different years of service and ranks, hoping to offer suggestions for the betterment of local universities' teacher training programmes and to find common grounds between school administrators' expectations, junior teachers' doubts and student teachers' queries.

Restrained by the limited time and resources, the investigator could not collect data from more primary schools and teachers in order to enhance the results' objectivity, comprehensiveness and transferability. Though remained as a small scale research, this paper, however, still gives insights for pre-service teachers in preparation for job hunting. This paper also serve as reference for aspired junior in-service teachers to fight for better career prospects.

Last but not least, the investigator sees advantages, disadvantages and rationales of different local aided primary schools' (or sponsoring bodies') staffing mechanisms. School administrators believe in and support their respective schools' approach because the settings, cultures, mission and orientations of schools generate uniqueness in their staffing mechanisms. For junior teachers who aspire for career advancement, it is advisable to work in primary schools that appreciate and value their personalities, beliefs, attitudes, expertise and most importantly, passion towards teaching as well as care towards students.

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X. Special Remarks

20th April, 2018

To assessor(s) of this project/whom it may concern,

There were supposed 3 in-service teachers from School B participating in this research. The researcher planned to collect data by face-to-face, semi-structured interviews however, 2 of them refused to be interviewed due to personal concerns. They only agreed to deliver written responses to the researcher after negotiation.

Also, despite the researcher's multiple attempts on negotiation and assurance of confidentiality, the headmaster of School B declined to let his school formally participate in this research (did not sign the school's consent form), having concerns that this research is not beneficial to his school in nature and the name of his school could possibly be revealed in the research publication.

The abovementioned issues added to the limitations of this research. The researcher and the project supervisor are fully aware of the possible negative impact regarding the completeness and objectivity of the research.

To uphold confidentiality, names of the abovementioned schools and participants shall not be revealed in this paper. If necessary, relevant personnel can ask for more information directly from the researcher via phone _____ or email:

Thank you!

Mr. Cheung Hon Kiu

Principal Investigator

XI. Appendices

The investigator conducted several semi-structured oral interviews with participants of this research. The interviews were conducted in Cantonese and the following transcripts are presented in English.

In the following transcripts, “*Q*” stands for the *interviewer* while “*R*” stands for the *interviewee*. Necessary background information would be provided in order to facilitate readers’ understanding however, due to personal privacy concerns, no names of persons nor organizations would be revealed in the following data.

Interview Transcript 001	
Background of the interviewee: final year student who major in education; has an intention to teach in a local government-aided primary school	
Q:	In my understanding, you are an undergraduate who major in education. Apart from the training provided by your university, how do you prepare for job seeking?
R:	Only focus on job seeking?
Q:	Perhaps any courses, programmes or experiences in your study helped you in job seeking?
R:	Apart from the courses in my university, I also did several part time jobs. Through these part time jobs, I learnt a lot about handling job interviews.
Q:	Those part time jobs were related to education?
R:	Some are related to education and I had interviews in educational agencies. I also had part time jobs related to tourism and hospitality, which I also had interviews that require me to present myself to the interviewer(s).
Q:	Do you think that going to more job interviews would enhance your employability and competency?

R:	I think going to more job interviews increase a candidate's confidence and his/her presentation skills.
Q:	As we mentioned, you major in education. Did your programme make you a competent primary school teacher? Let's say the basic requirements for a competent teacher would be able to handle both teaching and other duties.
R:	My university equipped me with adequate subject knowledge. Yet, I rely on my block practices to get real and practical experience. In reality, the school demands a lot more than what my programme covered.
Q:	Till now, in your programme, which part helped you the most in terms of finding a teaching position in local primary schools?
R:	I think my university's student affairs office provided a lot of opportunities for students to participate in exchange programmes/study tours, which allow them to strengthen and demonstrate their generic skills. This is an advantage because it equip education students with skills other than teaching and learning. It broadens students' horizons and raises their cultural awareness. It also trains students' communication and collaboration skills.
Q:	Aiming to be a primary school teacher, do you think these qualities are important in job seeking?
R:	I think these are pretty important because nowadays employers do not only focus on academic and professional qualifications, but also the candidates' personality, experience and soft skills etc. These can be reflected on the candidates' participation in extra-curricular activities.
Q:	Do you think the qualities and characteristics you just mentioned make a professional and competent primary school teacher?
R:	I think these are important qualities but not the upmost important. Primary

	school teachers need to collaborate with colleagues. Participating in these activities train education students' interpersonal skills, which makes their work easier.
Q:	In your understanding, student teachers with what kind of qualities/qualifications/skills are likely to be recruited by headmasters?
R:	I think primary schools are quite realistic as they value how many subjects/criteria the candidate can be responsible for. For example, an English major student are not supposed to only teach English language in primary school. With a double major/minor in other practical subjects such as music, visual arts and/or physical education would be an advantage.
Q:	Where did you get these information from?
R:	I know a number of in-service primary school teachers and they shared these issues with me.
Q:	As you said, schools require teachers to have skills/knowledge other than their major in studies. Do you think it is reasonable for primary school administrators to set these requirements in their teacher selection process?
R:	I think it is unreasonable for schools to set these requirements for fresh graduate students because these were not supposed to be included in teachers' duties, though having such skills/abilities are bonuses. It is not fair if candidates were not given interview opportunities simply because they do not possess those "extracurricular" requirements.
Q:	Do you think it is manageable for undergraduate students to manage the above-mentioned expectations from primary schools? For example, subject knowledge in multiple areas, leadership, communication skills etc.
R:	I think it is manageable because BEd. students have five years' time. Apart

	from studies, there are lots of time for students to enhance themselves through participating in other activities and/or getting different part time jobs.
Q:	As a final year student who major in education, what suggestions would you make to the university in order to improve their teacher training mechanism and increase their graduates' employability?
R:	I think block practice is a valuable part in education programme. I heard that my university would lengthen the block practice, which I personally support the idea because it gives students the opportunity to know more about the lives of teachers. For other courses, I don't think it takes five years to complete them, which I suggest to put most of the courses before students go into block practice. Besides, block practices in two different schools allow students to know their strengths and weaknesses. Students can therefore further study in university after their first placement, aiming to improve their weaknesses.
Q:	If you don't have anything to add, that would be the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You are welcome.

Interview Transcript 002

Background of the interviewee: final year student who major in education; has an intention to teach in a local government-aided primary school

Q:	Let's say you are going to find a teaching position in local government-aided primary schools, apart from the teacher training you received in your
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	university, how would you prepare for the job interviews?
R:	I think the first and most important step would be how to polish your resume. Regarding the subject knowledge, I took recognized examinations including IELTS and LPAT and Putonghua Shuiping Ceshi (PSC). Moreover, primary schools value extracurricular activities. Therefore, I got an instructor license in rope skipping. In the coming days, I also registered a course related to visual arts. I only attended one job interview preparatory workshop organized by the university, simply to know more about what questions would be asked in the interviews and how to write a cover letter that can draw school administrators' attention.
Q:	Would you consider the school's background and mission and see whether the school prefers a certain kind of candidates? Does it affect your choice?
R:	Personally, I consider the school's mission and religious background. I am a Christian and therefore I prefer teaching in a Christian school. I would rather teach in schools that have no religious background if the other choices are schools with religious backgrounds that contradict with my religion.
Q:	Do you think those measures you just mentioned (like attending workshops and getting professional licenses) would increase your employability and competency as a recently graduated primary school teacher?
R:	Let me add something before that. Work experience is also important as I had part time jobs that are related to teaching, some even related to administrative duties. Primary school teachers have to handle both teaching and non-teaching duties. With more experience in teaching and tutoring, I know more about the curriculum. I also get in touch with more kids and have the opportunities to apply different pedagogies. Besides, it also enhances my

	<p>observation skills as I refine my teaching by observing the needs of my students. Meanwhile, the exams I took simply serve as a proof of my abilities. Whether it increases my employability.....I am not sure because many candidates would have such qualifications. About that coach license, it should be favoured by primary schools because it is a kind of human resources from the school's perspective. I guess this relatively increases my employability, but it still depends on what kind of teachers the school needs. Interview workshops simply give us a picture of the interview but the real scenario varies among schools.</p>
Q:	Do you think the education you received in university made you a competent primary school teacher?
R:	<p>In my opinion, 50% of it were useful. My university's training is theoretical and sometimes, those knowledge may not be applied in work. Different teachers have different personalities and different schools have different requirements. The same set of training may not produce "competent" teachers for all schools. Though we have block practice, it was not comprehensive. It simply focused on my teaching on one assigned class (i.e. my pedagogies and classroom management). However, I couldn't experience the work and lives of real primary school teachers. Anyway, it takes a period of time for new teachers to accumulate experience. Personality is also an important factor. Some can (are willing to) be good teachers while some cannot (aren't). More lesson observation for pre-service teachers would be appreciated.</p>
Q:	So far, which part of the teacher training helped you the most in job seeking?
R:	In my opinion, many courses and activities are interrelated.....If I have to

	<p>choose the most remarkable one, I would say practicum because it is highly related to the job. It allows student teachers to experience the lives of primary school teachers. These frontline and down-to-earth experience are valuable because it guides me in choosing a school which is suitable for me.</p>
Q:	<p>During the practicum, you understood the lives of teachers in that particular host school. You just said it helps you in choosing the right school to serve in, how?</p>
R:	<p>I had two placements. The first one was in a DSS primary school and the second one was in a government primary school. These schools have different missions, approaches, environments, structures and student population. These are the crucial factors that affect my decision in job-seeking.</p>
Q:	<p>In your understanding, what kind of fresh graduate teachers are most welcomed by headmasters from local government-aided primary schools? For example, do schools favour students with any particular minors?</p>
R:	<p>In terms of academic performance, students who are double major or with a minor are more competitive. Let's say, schools like to recruit English teachers who can also teach music, visual arts or P.E. In terms of personality, schools prefer candidates who are caring to students, yet authoritative in appropriate times (such as during lessons). Schools concern a lot on how do teachers present themselves to students.</p>
Q:	<p>Where did you get these information from?</p>
R:	<p>First, I recalled my previous experience i.e. how did my primary school teachers behaved. Second, I observed how my colleagues in my BP schools hang along with their students.</p>

Q:	Do you think school administrators favour candidates with certain characteristics, professional skills/qualifications?
R:	I didn't ask headmasters about this. Yet, in my observation, apart from the qualities you mentioned, schools also value teachers' abilities in coping with parents. A professional teacher should be able to balance the interests between the school and parents. Furthermore, presentational skills and organizational skills are vital. Teachers need to be confident when teaching and be organized in lesson planning and knowledge transfer. Apart from the bachelor degree and PGDE, school administrators also favour candidates who possess professional qualifications related to extracurricular activities, for example sports coach license.
Q:	Do these requirements set by headmasters match with your perception of a good and professional primary school teacher?
R:	In my opinion, it is not necessary for a good and professional primary school teacher to be an expert in multiple extracurricular activities, as long as it is enough to meet the school's demands. Subject knowledge is important, so does the teacher's personality. Education shapes students' moral values and virtues. Professional teachers shall be role models of their students.
Q:	Do you think it is reasonable for school administrators to set these job requirements in their teacher selection process?
R:	From the perspective of the school, it is desirable to employ all-round teachers as it is economic and efficient. Also, teachers who teach more than one subject may have more understanding on their students because they spend more time together. On the other hand, from a job seeker's perspective, it is quite demanding for schools to presume that recently

	<p>graduated teachers are capable of handling extra duties when he/she are still in the process of establishing his/her style of teaching. Even if that new teacher has certain skills/qualifications, it adds pressure to the teacher if he/she has to fulfill the school's demands.</p>
Q:	<p>Does it mean that schools' perception of professional teachers twisted nowadays? Schools have much higher expectations on teachers?</p>
R:	<p>To a certain degree, yes and it is understandable. I see teachers not only as teachers, but also counsellors and public relation representatives etc. Teachers do not only "teach". They also deal with a lot of stuffs that are not related to teaching. This is the results of today's trends in education.</p>
Q:	<p>As a student who major in education, do you think you can manage these expectations?</p>
R:	<p>Personally, in a scale of 1-10, I would give myself 6 to 7 out of 10. It takes time for teachers to accumulate experience. With more experience, teachers can handle non-teaching duties better.</p>
Q:	<p>As you said, it is not easy for new teachers to meet the expectations from schools. What suggestions you would make to the university in order to refine their education programmes and enhance their students' employability and competency?</p>
R:	<p>Many primary schools value STEM education and universities can provide more related courses and training for their students. Also, the university can train BEd. students to be instructors for certain sports such as rock climbing. BEd. students should have more training on soft skills as well, for example counselling or organizing and hosting group activities etc.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you encourage more cooperation between universities and primary</p>

	schools so that BEd. students could be more exposed to primary students?
R:	More persistent lesson observations would be beneficial because it better prepares education students to take up the identity of a primary school teacher. Furthermore, mentorship programmes should be encouraged. Student teachers can learn a lot from in-service teachers.
Q:	If you don't have anything to add, that would be the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You are welcome.

Interview Transcript 003

Background of the interviewee: final year student who major in education; has an intention to teach in a local government-aided primary school

Q:	Let's say you are going to find a teaching position in local government-aided primary schools, apart from the teacher training you received in your university, how would you prepare for the job interviews?
R:	Regarding my abilities, I have been exposed to a lot of teaching pedagogies and subject knowledge in the past five years' training the university. The university also encourages education students to take IELTS and LPAT and pass the benchmark. These prove my abilities. I attended a job hunting workshop organized by the university, covering aspects of job interviews such as appropriate attire, possible questions, format etc. There are language courses which guide education students in writing their resumes and cover letters. I joined mock self-introduction and group discussion as well.
Q:	Do the above-mentioned methods increase your employability?
R:	So far I haven't attended any job interview so it would be hard for me to

	<p>make comment and comparison. Still, it increases my confidence. I think I can better handle interviewers' questions and write better cover letters after attending those workshops. Experienced lecturers who run these workshops shared a lot with education students on job hunting.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think the education you received in university made you a competent primary school teacher? Why?</p>
R:	<p>My five year education programme is fruitful in nature. Compared with a four year bachelor degree plus a one year PGDE, my education programme prepares students to be teachers starting from year one, emphasized on both subject knowledge and teaching pedagogies. We learned how to teach step by step, covering aspects like lesson planning, assessments, classroom management etc. Apart from studies, the university also provided a lot of opportunities for students to join exchange programmes. I went to exchange in Mainland China and I had an immersion in Australia. These activities expose students to other cultures and practices. It gives students insights in catering learning diversity. I also had a summer internship, which was not related to education. It strengthens my interpersonal and problem solving skills. Last but not least, block practice trains student teachers to become professional teachers. Student teachers had to write lesson plans, collaborate with each other and learn from the school. In general, I think the university is successful in preparing students to be professional and competent primary school teachers.</p>
Q:	<p>So far, which part of the teacher training helped you the most in finding a teaching position in local primary schools?</p>
R:	<p>I would say there are two parts. School administrators value professional</p>

	<p>qualifications and experience the most and therefore, teachers should possess adequate subject knowledge and methodologies. In terms of practical experience, I tutored in after-school supplementary classes for several primary schools and I went through my block practice. These are precious opportunities for me to realize and apply what I have learnt on my students. Also, it is the only opportunity that I get in touch with catering students with different levels of abilities.</p>
Q:	<p>In your understanding, what kind of student teachers are most welcomed by school administrators?</p>
R:	<p>I know a lot of senior students who recently graduated and successfully secured teaching positions in local primary schools. I have a feeling that their personalities make them competent primary school teachers. Most of them are good in presentation and seem to have natural affinity with primary students. These qualities may give headmasters an impression that they are passionate about teaching. I know some new teachers who got flying colours in exams such as LPAT. This could be an advantage. Moreover, new teachers with impressive performance in practicum and/or expertise in catering for learning diversity (special education) are quite welcomed by headmasters. In general, it still depends on whether the candidates' strengths matches with the schools' demands.</p>
Q:	<p>Where did you get these information from?</p>
R:	<p>I heard these from in-service teachers that I know as well as from the internet. I treasure these network and information because it helps me a lot in job hunting.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think the above-mentioned characteristics and qualities match with</p>

	your perception of a good and professional primary school teacher?
R:	In my opinion, it matches. Teaching highly related to human beings. Teachers work with superiors, colleagues and students. An outgoing personality is essential for competent teachers because teachers serve as students' role models. Professional teachers should possess adequate subject knowledge and have attained benchmark set by the government.
Q:	As you said, some schools may have expectations on new teachers. Do you think it is reasonable for school administrators to set extra requirements in their teacher selection process? Is it manageable from a recently graduated teacher's perspective?
R:	I deliberately took a STEM course offered by my university, which is related to 3D printing and application design. These trends puts extra pressure on teachers. There are more and more teachers who further study in areas like visual arts, music and STEM simply because they want to be more "employable", despite their little interests on these subjects. From a job seeker's perspective, I am not sure whether this is a reasonable practice because I don't know whether these are the crucial criteria for headmasters to recruit teachers. Yet, this is kind of a way for candidates to enhance their employability if they didn't excel in exams like LPAT and IELTS. From a school's perspective, it is absolutely reasonable because it is always desirable to employ teachers who can teach multiple subjects/take up extra duties, though there are more pressure on teachers.
Q:	I am curious, do you see all-round teachers as good teachers?
R:	I would say primary schools tend to strike a balance between the candidate's subject knowledge and other skills/qualifications. A primary school teacher

	<p>need not to be a “world-class expert” in that subject but it would be great if that teacher is an event planner and/or an activity host. I have some reservations though. If a teacher puts too much emphasis on other qualifications instead of subject knowledge, it may not be beneficial to his/her teaching.</p>
Q:	<p>What suggestions you would make to the university in order to refine their education programmes and enhance their students’ employability and competency?</p>
R:	<p>Universities can incorporate a diverse range of courses that train students’ skills other than subject knowledge (e.g. STEM). After school support programmes subsidized by EDB is a good opportunity for students to practise their teaching. After this scheme ceased due to shortage of funding, there were no chances for us to apply what we have learnt in university except practicum. University’s related department can be a platform that facilitate cooperation between schools and students who wish to gain more teaching experience. Social network is another benefit. Student teachers who performed well in after school tutoring may have “return offers” from schools. Student teachers will also have more understanding about themselves, as well as the school(s) and the neighbourhood(s).</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think the length of your block practice is appropriate?</p>
R:	<p>I had two BPs, six to eight weeks each, allowed me to understand more about different schools. I think the length of block practice is appropriate.</p>
Q:	<p>That’s pretty much the end of the interview. Thank you for coming.</p>
R:	<p>You’re welcome.</p>

Interview Transcript 004

Background of the interviewee: New CM with less than 3 years of service

Q:	Did you receive any teacher training before you work as a primary school teacher?
R:	I graduated from a local university, with a bachelor of education degree, majoring in General Studies.
Q:	If so, do you think the training has turned you into a competent primary school teacher? Why?
R:	To a certain degree, I agree that's helpful because the programme is comprehensive, covering both science and social science in general studies. There were block practices in my year 3 and 4. Therefore, the university trained BEd. students both theoretically and practically.
Q:	Do you still remember how did you apply for teaching positions among different primary schools? How did you prepare? How did you find a job in this school?
R:	I relied on the internet, using a job searching system named "Jump" operated by Ming Pao. I looked at the advertisements and select schools that suit my preference according to their locations, values, sponsoring bodies' backgrounds. I prepared my CV and wrote a passage about my educational beliefs. I consulted my university lecturers' opinion and attended some workshops organized by the university. I looked into the school's background, what else does the school focused, whether these emphases align with my strengths. I chose to work in this school not because it was the first school to give me an offer. I concern the school's geographical location and its mission and environment more. When I was an undergraduate

	<p>student, I conducted after-school tutoring sessions in the current school that I serve and perhaps this is why I picked this school.</p>
Q:	<p>In your understanding, do headmasters particularly favour/welcome candidates who carry certain kinds of qualities/qualifications/skills when they recruit new teachers?</p>
R:	<p>Teachers shall be decent and polite. A person who wants to be teacher should convince the headmaster that he/she is passionate about teaching by showing sincerity. Headmasters favour those who can think fast and creative. Candidates who can think in multi-perspectives, generate ideas and solutions for the school's betterment would be most welcomed.</p>
Q:	<p>What were the qualities/factors that made your job application a successful one? Did your headmaster tell you the reason he/she picked you?</p>
R:	<p>STEM is a hot topic in education these years. Apart from my major, I had experience in running STEM activities in primary schools and therefore the school picked me.</p>
Q:	<p>Do the qualities/qualifications/skills required by headmasters match with your personal belief on a good, responsible and professional primary school teacher? Is this important in your job seeking? Why?</p>
R:	<p>A competent and professional teacher needs to be fair to his/her students and able to cater students' needs. Also, teachers have to be caring, able to take care of students' learning as well as their lives, teach not only subject knowledge but nurture students' values and self-care ability. I guess my perceptions should be similar with the school's and the headmaster's.</p>
Q:	<p>Did a clear definition on "competent teacher" help you in job seeking?</p>
R:	<p>Definitely! If a candidate doesn't know the definition of a "competent</p>

	teacher”, that person will be very confused when he/she work. During an interview, the headmaster can tell whether the candidate understands the definition and requirements of a competent and professional teacher.
Q:	As a graduate of an education programme, what suggestion(s) would you make to the universities/teacher training institutions? How could universities refine their teacher training mechanism in order to make their student teachers more competent and employable?
R:	I can only use my major subject i.e. G.S. as an example due to my little understanding on other programmes. At that time, some of the courses I took in year 1 and 2 were not useful because they no longer match with today’s Hong Kong G.S. curriculum. Some of those courses were too theoretical but not practical. Courses should be more focused on teaching/pedagogy. Academic researches aren’t bad in nature but courses should focus more on training students to incorporate subject knowledge into primary schools’ context. Placement is a vital period for student teachers to get practical experience.
Q:	Let’s move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you regard promotion as a vital element in your teaching career? Does it motivate you to better perform your teaching and administrative duties?
R:	I value promotion but I do not take it for granted in my career. A promotion serves as a motivation for me to work harder.
Q:	In your understanding, how do teachers get promoted to higher ranks/paygrades? What kind of teachers tend to be promoted?
R:	Teachers who desire promotion opportunities do not only finish their parts but do more, further reflect and improve when assigned tasks. From a

	realistic angle, I think those who help the school to get awards/prizes will be promoted. Besides, teachers who are careful and detail minded tend to be promoted to administrative/managerial positions.
Q:	Do you see any characteristics/features shared among these teachers?
R:	Those who get promoted usually dedicate more time on work because they have more to do.
Q:	Do you see teachers with the above-mentioned features are generally more favoured/welcomed by the school administrators (i.e. headmasters)?
R:	Yes, those teachers are welcomed by headmasters and sponsoring bodies.
Q:	Do you think the workplace relations matter in teacher promotion?
R:	I don't have much experience on this. I guess interpersonal relationship is an advantage, though not the most important factor.
Q:	In your understanding, do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different primary schools? Any similarities or differences? e.g. Do teachers with more years of service and/or higher academic qualifications usually get brighter career prospects?
R:	In my understanding and using this school as an example, professional skills and qualifications that helps school's development benefit promotions while years of service of service may not be a key factor that affects promotion.
Q:	Given that local government-aided schools have different sponsoring bodies. Using your school as an example, will your school's background, culture, settings and visions affect its teachers' career prospects?
R:	My school's sponsoring body is a charity without religious background. It is relatively a fair one because it focuses on the candidates' abilities and there aren't any specific requirements. I know that the sponsoring body

	deliberately build schools near public housing estates in order to help the poor and weak.
Q:	Would you say the teacher promotion mechanism in your school (or your school's sponsoring body) a fair one?
R:	I would say my school's sponsoring body's mechanism is a fair and reasonable one. Compared with sponsoring bodies in small scales, objectivity is higher in my school's sponsoring body because it can be subjective to solely rely on headmaster's recommendations. Yet, in terms of efficiency, it took more time for teachers to secure the promotion/job due to the complex interview and selection procedures. From the candidate's/job seeker's perspective, it could be quite worrying.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? In general, are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	In my understanding, this school has less senior positions compared to other schools.
Q:	Is this related to the establishment of the school (i.e. student figures and number of classes)?
R:	I don't think so.
Q:	I heard that because your school's sponsoring body is a big one with lots of primary schools in Hong Kong. Do you know whether middle and top management positions are opened for all teachers within the same sponsoring body? Does it increases the upward mobility for teachers within the same sponsoring body?

R:	I don't think that matters. I wonder how many teachers have been successfully promoted to other schools within the sponsoring body. My understanding is that teachers from A school would quit and then apply for jobs in B school, even though both schools belong to the same sponsoring body. It also greatly depends on the teacher's employment terms (i.e. contract or permanent).
Q:	That's pretty much the end. Thank you!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 005

Background of the interviewee: New CM with less than 3 years of service

Q:	Did you receive any teacher training before you work as a primary school teacher? If so, do you think the training has turned you into a competent primary school teacher? Why or why not?
R:	I first finished a bachelor degree in a local university. Then, I finished a PGDE, went through a teaching practice before I become a primary school teacher. Yes, I learnt a lot in my PGDE as it focuses on how to transfer subject knowledge to students in a classroom context.
Q:	Do you still remember how did you apply for teaching positions among different primary schools? How did you prepare? How did you find a job in this school?
R:	I browsed on the online job searching system named JUMP. I also looked at different schools' websites to understand more about the schools' backgrounds, personnel, mission and policies etc.

Q:	In your understanding, do headmasters particularly favour/welcome candidates who carry certain kinds of qualities/qualifications/skills when they recruit new teachers?
R:	In my understanding, schools with religious background tend to recruit candidates who share the same religion. Girls' schools tend to recruit female teachers. I think Chinese and English language teachers who have attained benchmark are more favoured by headmasters in recruitment.
Q:	In your opinion, what were the qualities/factors that made your job application a successful one? Did your headmaster tell you the reason he/she picked you? If not, can you guess the reasons that the headmaster at the time employed you as a teacher?
R:	My headmaster didn't tell me the reason but I guess I was picked because my major subject and my expertise match with the school's demands.
Q:	Do the qualities/qualifications/skills required by headmasters match with your personal belief on a good, responsible and professional primary school teacher? Is this important in your job seeking? Why?
R:	In my perception a good, responsible and professional primary school teacher should be punctual. Teachers should not ask for leaves with out proper reasons. I think the headmaster shares the same view with me. Since every candidate who wish to be teacher should be responsible and professional so I don't think the definition matters in job seeking.
Q:	Let's say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to make their student teachers more competent and employable?

R:	I suggest the university to open more STEM courses because STEM is a big trend in today's Hong Kong education. Teachers of all subjects shall make better use of technology in their teaching.
Q:	I will now move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you regard promotion as a vital element in your teaching career? Does it motivate you to better perform your teaching and administrative duties?
R:	I would say promotion is important for teachers because it motivates teachers to enhance their performances in both teaching and non-teaching duties.
Q:	In your understanding, how do teachers get promoted to higher ranks/paygrades? What kind of teachers (any particular personalities/qualities/qualifications/skills) usually get promotion opportunities?
R:	In my school, teachers with enough experience and years of service would be recommended by the headmaster for promotion. From my observation, teachers who lead administrative unit(s) or chair panel(s) tend to get promoted faster.
Q:	Does it mean teachers with the above mentioned features are generally more favoured/welcomed by the school administrators (i.e. headmasters)? Do you think the workplace relations matter?
R:	Teachers with the above-mentioned features are more favoured by headmasters. I think collegial relationship matters in all sectors which education makes no exception. Headmasters tend not to promote teachers who fail to collaborate with colleagues, despite his/her great efforts and high abilities.

Q:	Do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different primary schools? Any similarities or differences? e.g. Do teachers with more years of service and/or higher academic qualifications usually get brighter career prospects?
R:	Of course different schools have different promotion mechanisms. In my school, teachers with more years of service tend to be promoted. Also, those who have attained Master degree tend to have brighter career prospects.
Q:	Given that local government-aided schools have different sponsoring bodies. Using your school as an example, will your school's background, culture, settings and visions affect its teachers' career prospects?
R:	Absolutely. My school is a village school. Some says the bonding between headmasters, teachers and students of village schools are stronger and therefore, teachers tend to be more loyal to the school and in return, the school offers higher job security for its teachers.
Q:	Would you say the teacher promotion mechanism in your school (or your school's sponsoring body) a fair one? Why or why not?
R:	I am not sure about this and therefore I cannot comment on it.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? Are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	I am not sure about this and therefore I cannot comment on it.
Q:	That's the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 006

Background of the interviewee: Experienced CM with 20 years of service

Q:	Thank you for being my interviewee. Can you begin by briefly explain your career path to me?
R:	I started teaching in this school since my I finished teacher training. I have been teaching in this school for 20 years. I usually teach senior primary students English language, although the school has a policy that teachers have to rotate to teach students of different grades.
Q:	Did you receive any teacher training before you work as a primary school teacher? For example, education diploma and/or education degree?
R:	I first finished a Certificate of education (Cert Ed.), then completed a bachelor degree in education (BEd.) once I entered the education sector.
Q:	Do you think the teacher training you received have successfully turned you into a competent primary school teacher?
R:	In fact, I have some reservations. In both my Cert Ed. and BEd., my subject was English language. The training equipped me with adequate and practical subject knowledge and therefore I am confident in and capable of lesson planning and designing activities. However, I think most education theories are not practical in real classrooms. It takes time for teachers to accumulate work experience in real classrooms.
Q:	So would you say you gained more after you became a real teacher compared with your time in university?
R:	Yes, of course.
Q:	Do you still remember how did you apply for teaching positions among different primary schools? How did you prepare?

R:	<p>There were multiple methods. I paid attention to job ads on newspapers and apply for English teacher positions. Also, I handed in applications to schools that I prefer to work in. Originally, my Cert Ed. trained me to be a secondary school teacher and I did my practicum in secondary schools. I applied for jobs in secondary schools at first but the competition was keen and I did not get offers from secondary schools. Then, I saw more opportunities in primary school, particularly in the district of Tin Shui Wai. Eventually, I got used to the settings and environment in this school and I found out that I could cope with the job duties of primary school teachers, plus that the school is near to where I live so I stayed in this school until now.</p>
Q:	<p>Perhaps we can first start with teacher selection. How would you define a professional and competent primary school teacher?</p>
R:	<p>A new primary school teacher should be able to secure recommendations from his/her university's lecturers/professors, which is not hard to achieve. Teacher is a profession with conscience because it is related to children. A professional and passionate teacher has to be responsible for their students' lives. Those who only aim for monetary or materialistic rewards should not enter this profession. Passion is important but it is not a concrete concept and therefore, very hard to measure someone's passion. This rely on school administrators' (who also happen to be interviewers') interpretation and the comments from relevant university teaching staff. For example, in job interviews, fresh graduates will present on how they deal with the given scenarios in school and interviewers will interpret their virtues and values.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you regard those recently graduated BEd. students as "professional" primary school teachers?</p>

R:	We have a lot of new teachers in this year and therefore I can give some response. Obviously, they are passionate about teaching. Although some of them are not experienced enough to deal with students' problems, they are willing to take responsibility and learn on the job. I don't know about other schools but at least in this school, most of our teachers are mostly responsible and caring to students, the phenomenon as a whole is positive.
Q:	Using this school as an example, what are the usual practices/procedures in a teacher selection process? What's the rationale behind these practices/procedures?
R:	In my understanding, when students increase, the school has to put on an advertisement on newspaper(s), then invite applicants to interview. Another way would be the headmaster may ask his/her colleagues, whether they know friends/family members who wish to teach, and then encourage them to apply. In either ways, candidates still have to go through a fair interview, and the school will make professional judgement. This is an advantage of the school's teachers' recruitment mechanism. The school employs teachers based on their suitability, abilities, and qualifications but not the applicants' referee(s)/family background/social network.
	Do you support your school's transparent and objective teacher selection mechanism?
	Definitely! The headmaster will explain his/her decision to the middle management of the school and it is not one person's decision. I also heard that sometimes there were better candidates but my school failed to attract him/her so I think the mechanism is transparent and fair in nature.
Q:	Among all candidates, apart from their passion towards teaching, what

	<p>elements would interviewers take into consideration when selecting the most appropriate ones to be new teachers? What do the interviewer(s) value the most? How do they verify the qualities of the job applicants?</p>
R:	<p>When the school recruits a teacher for a subject, the school refers to the candidate's past experience in teaching the subject. Besides, the school gives credits to candidates' experience in running extracurricular activities that the school favours. For example, if my school emphasizes on music, drama, or sports, they tend to recruit experienced teachers who excel in these areas.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think your school's sponsoring body's background, culture, settings and visions affect its teacher selection process?</p>
R:	<p>Not really. The sponsoring body I serve is quite fair in terms of teacher recruitment. The only point I would make is that if the candidate have studied/served in the schools under this sponsoring body, then perhaps the interviewers may want to know more about that. If the candidates' responses align with the sponsoring body's mission and views, this maybe an advantage. Even for those who have no ties with the sponsoring body, if they have studied thoroughly about our school and its sponsoring body, this can also be a privilege in job interview.</p>
Q:	<p>Let's say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to better prepare their students for the field?</p>
R:	<p>Since it has been a while ago, I no longer have deep understanding on today's teacher training. Yet, I would say practicum is very important. In the past, student teachers have placement every year. Nowadays, there is only one</p>

	<p>practicum for student teachers in their final year, which may not be enough. I suggest that an element of “practicum” should be included in every year of BEd. programmes. I think more work experience in school(s) helps student teachers to improve their teaching. One-time assessment on student teachers may not be objective. Another problem is that student teachers cannot review his/her performance and then make improvement. More placement opportunities also better prepare student teachers to adapt into teacher’s duties, meanwhile adapt to different types of schools and students.</p>
<p>Q:</p>	<p>Using your school’s sponsoring body as an example, does it affect its teachers’ career prospects? Does the sponsoring body intervene in teacher’s promotion mechanism?</p>
<p>R:</p>	<p>My school is operated by a big sponsoring body, which means more promotion opportunities for teachers. There are more quotas and grades because all primary schools under this sponsoring body share the same promotion mechanism.</p> <p>In terms of its involvement, this is how my school works. First, the headmaster would recommend certain capable teachers for promotion. Then, teachers would go through a board in the sponsoring body. The promotion board will be a good test to verify the teacher’s abilities because it covers a wide range of questions which candidates who lack experience can never tackle. I also know that headmaster’s recommendation doesn’t guarantee a promotion as there are cases that the board refused to promote teachers recommended by their respective headmasters. This is quite different with some of the primary schools run by smaller sponsoring bodies, which their headmasters have higher degree of autonomy and discretion. In general, my</p>

	<p>school encourages teacher's development. More opportunities doesn't mean teachers would get promoted easier and faster.</p>
Q:	<p>As you said, your school's sponsoring body has an transparent and fair promotion mechanism and the senior positions are open for all. Do junior teachers need to first act a senior rank's duty before getting promoted to a higher paygrade?</p>
R:	<p>It is not a must for acting. Our promotion mechanism is that if there is a position emptied, if headmaster or the candidate thinks that he/she is not ready yet, then acting could be a temporary measure. Another scenario is that the candidate failed to secure the board's approval, but the headmaster really sees the school's needs for a senior teacher, then the colleague will first act the position. A coin has two sides though. This serves as a chance for the teacher to gain experience but acting on the same rank for so many years may not be a good sign on a teacher's career prospect.</p>
Q:	<p>In your opinion, are there any weaknesses in your school's (or your school's sponsoring body's) teacher promotion mechanism? Why?</p>
R:	<p>From a teacher's perspective, the teacher promotion mechanism may deteriorate the candidate's level of confidence if he/she fails a lot of times. With no acknowledgement to the actual reasons, the candidate may fail in the board for consecutive years. Even if a candidate tried very hard on his/her teaching and administrative duties and other colleagues support that teacher to be promoted to higher position, senior management may look at the case from a different perspective and the board's requirements may differ with teachers' expectations. But as a whole, our teacher promotion mechanism is appropriate and objective.</p>

Q:	Using your school as an example, do teachers with more years of service and/or higher academic qualifications usually get brighter career prospects?
R:	In my school, years of experience is a basic requirement, usually 3 to 4 years then the headmaster may invite teachers for promotion. More importantly, whether that teacher's subject/expertise matches with the school's emphasized projects and/or areas. Those who have skills/qualifications related to these areas, are usually more welcomed by the headmaster when choosing teachers for promotions.
Q:	In your observation, apart from the teacher's major subject(s) and expertise, what kind of teachers (any particular personalities/qualities/ qualifications/skills) would usually get promoted? Any common features?
R:	A common feature would be younger in age. Younger teachers tend to have more opportunities in promotions probably because they have less family burden and more time dedicated for schools. Family is another crucial factor. Compared with younger teachers, experienced teachers who have families may not be able to dedicate that much time on work. One's career prospect and his/her amount of time dedicated on work is positively correlated.
Q:	If you don't mind, would you say those teachers who are single or DINKERS tend to have brighter career prospect?
R:	Subjectively speaking, yes. Single/DINKERS teachers will be more successful on their career. As a wife and a mother, I know many female teachers who are also someone's wife and mom. Some of them are willing to give higher priority for work instead of family. They may value career prospect higher than family time.
Q:	In retrospect, did you carry those features when you were a new, junior

	teacher?
R:	Obviously not. I respect my job and I try my best to excel in both teaching and administrative duties. This is not easy as you are aware of the great workload and burden of primary school teachers (particularly the senior ones) nowadays. Only those who are very capable and dedicated in work can achieve.
Q:	Being an experienced primary school teacher, do you prefer collaborating with the kind of teachers that you have just mentioned more when you perform your duties? Does your school and its sponsoring body favour these group of teachers when allocating resources and opportunities?
R:	I cannot choose, but I would prefer working with teachers who are proactive, willing to take up responsibilities/tasks. Teachers should understand their strengths and weaknesses, utilize their strengths/skills and practise division of labour. I love collaborating with colleagues who are straightforward. Everyone is busy but still, tasks have to be finished. I don't mind doing more but everyone has to make effort so that the overall outcome or results is good. Ideally, with a good division of labour, collaboration among teachers should be comfortable and smooth.
Q:	Does your school and its sponsoring body favour the abovementioned group of teachers (that you like working with) when allocating resources and opportunities?
R:	My schools and its sponsoring body also prefer proactive colleagues. However, the school may sometimes unevenly allocate the work and tasks, putting too much pressure on certain capable colleagues. The school is aware of it and appreciates it, the school and its sponsoring body also gives them

	<p>opportunities for promotion, meaning more time and space for development.</p> <p>However, there is always a question in my head: Not capable meaning he/she can do less? I never agree on this kind of attitude. Some colleagues are not willing to contribute in collaboration. They are not willing to help teachers who have great workload in order to smoothen/quicken the process.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? Are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?</p>
R:	<p>There are enough promotion opportunities and positions to satisfy teachers' ambitions because the number of students increased in these years. This generally relies on the government's policies (establishment) and social changes and the school has little control over it. However, a point worth to mention is that some colleagues have no aspirations for senior positions. The situation in these years is that the pool is big but the number of teachers who apply for promotion drops.</p>
Q:	<p>Although you are not aspired for senior positions, being an experienced teacher, if you were asked to give some advices to the young, junior teachers who aspire to be promoted to higher positions in the future, what would you say? Any dos and don'ts? How could they secure promotion opportunities?</p>
R:	<p>Young and new teachers really have to ask themselves: what do they want? If they really want to help the school to improve, at least they have to handle their teaching duties well. Another way is to examine your strengths, utilize it in the school's development, then apply for the grade. Respect your title, your grade, your role and your duties because education is different with</p>

	business and/or other sectors. A teacher promotion comes with more contribution to the school and students. When I were young, I didn't care about administrative duties because I thought those were not related to the sake of students. Later, some senior and experienced teachers discussed with me: What is good for students? Only within classrooms? Or the background and the school as a whole are also important? If a teacher is not in an administrative position, how can he/she do more to provide a better learning environment for students?
Q:	That's pretty much the end of our interview. Thank you very much!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 007

Background of the interviewee: Experienced APSM with 6 years of service

Q:	Can you briefly explain your career path to me? How many years have you worked as a primary school teacher? How many schools have you served in your teaching career? How many years have you served as a APSM/AM?
R:	This is my first year being a primary school teacher and previously I taught in a secondary school for 3 years and spent another 2 years in a special school. In total, this would be my 6 th year being a teacher. I entered this primary school as a CM and I was promoted to APSM a few months ago.
Q:	As I know, you majored in education in university. Do do you think the teacher training in university has turned you into a competent primary school teacher? Why?
R:	Yes. I teach Chinese language and the training I received in university covers courses such as teaching methodology 1 & 2, classroom management,

	Chinese calligraphy. I can apply what I learnt in these courses into my teaching. Both subject knowledge and pedagogies are important.
Q:	Do you still remember how did you apply for teaching positions when you first graduated from university?
R:	I browsed through the job advertisements online. I select those I am interested in, send out my application letters and eventually go to interviews.
Q:	Perhaps we can start with teacher selection. How do you define a professional and competent primary school teacher?
R:	A professional teacher is passionate about teaching and respect this profession. To show respect towards the profession, teachers should not be late for school, should love and care students, willing to follow the school's requirement and follow regulations/code of conduct set by the government.
Q:	Do you regard those recently graduated BEd. students as "professional" primary school teachers?
R:	Most of the new and junior teachers can do so. Yet, I see some people simply joined the profession due to other considerations such as the socio-economic status of teachers, keen competition in the job market and job security etc. It is pretty obvious that these teachers are not that passionate about teaching.
Q:	Using your school as an example, what are the usual practices/procedures in a teacher selection process?
R:	Normally, the school will put an advertisement on newspaper(s), conduct interviews and mock teaching. School administrators such as headmaster and assistant headmaster would be responsible for recruitment.
Q:	What's the rationale behind these practices/procedures?
R:	Through interviews, the school can select candidates who are passionate

	about teaching. In mock teaching, headmaster can identify candidates' ability in managing a class.
Q:	Among all candidates, how do the interviewer(s) select the most appropriate to be new teachers? What do the interviewer(s) value the most? How do they verify the qualities of the job applicants?
R:	The school focuses on candidates' past teaching experience, subject(s) taught before and classroom management experience, which can be reflected on the mock teaching.
Q:	Using your school's sponsoring body as an example, do you think its background, culture, settings and visions affect the school's teacher selection process?
R:	Yes. Usually in the recruitment, it is emphasized that teachers' beliefs shall align with the school's mission and values. Also, teachers should respect the authority of the school's Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), which is formed and chaired by the school's sponsoring body.
Q:	Let's say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to better prepare their students for the field?
R:	Modules and courses related to I.T. in education is not enough in BEd. programmes. As a result, teachers often have great difficulties in incorporating I.T. in their teaching and utilizing I.T. in their work. I know some teachers who have difficulties using computer software such as Word and Excel, which are related to teacher's daily duties. More I.T. training for student teachers in university will better prepare them for the job.

Q:	I will now move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you agree that promotion motivates teachers to better perform their teaching and administrative duties? What made/drove you taking today's rank/position?
R:	Definitely! I would say most teachers look forward to promotion and it is kind of an encouragement to those who performed well.
Q:	What made/drove you taking today's rank/position?
R:	I saw my school's development and improvement, which I would like to be part of it!
Q:	Does your school's sponsoring body pose any effects on its teachers' career prospects?
R:	Well...my school's sponsoring body seldom intervene in teachers' promotion but in my understanding, if that sponsoring body is religious, then teachers' religion could be a crucial factor in promotion.
Q:	Then, can I put it in this way? Let's say even your school's sponsoring body is small in scale and with a strong rural/geographical background, it seldom affect the operation of your school?
R:	Yes, that's right!
Q:	Okay! In my understanding, there your school is the only primary school under the sponsoring body, am I right?
R:	Yes.
Q:	Can you briefly explain how the school and/or its sponsoring body allocates the promotion opportunities among teachers?
R:	The headmaster would assign teachers with certain years of service and experience to take up administrative duties and/or to chair a subject panel.
Q:	You just mentioned years of service, does it mean that teachers who served

	longer period of time in the school have an advantage in promotion?
R:	Not necessary as years of service is just one of the factors. The school focuses more on teachers' performance in teaching and handling administrative duties.
Q:	In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in your school's (or your school's sponsoring body's) teacher promotion mechanism? Why?
R:	The strength would be serving as an incentive to motivate teachers to work harder while the weakness would be some experienced teachers may not be able to secure promotion opportunities despite their many years of service. Teacher promotion is never guaranteed in this school.
Q:	As you have served in other local government-aided schools before, Do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different schools? Any similarities or differences?
R:	As I mentioned, schools with religious backgrounds tend to take candidates' religion into consideration during promotion. Furthermore, some schools may lay stronger emphases on certain subjects and units and eventually, promoting the leader/head of those panels and/or units.
Q:	Do you see any features shared by teachers who got promotion opportunities?
R:	Those who were promoted are able to motivate colleagues, encourage and help others in work. These teachers also tend to have higher educational backgrounds, more professional qualifications in STEM and special education (SEN) etc.
Q:	As an experienced teacher, do you carry the above-mentioned features?
R:	Yes! I have specialized expertise that the school favours.

Q:	What kind of teachers do you prefer working with?
R:	I like to work with colleagues who love their students. I believe that teachers should put their students on top priority.
Q:	Does your above-mentioned educational philosophy align with your school's mission?
R:	Yes, quite similar.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? Are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	The upward mobility in my school is strong as I can see, teachers who excel in administrative duties are usually promoted to higher ranks.
Q:	Alright, if you don't mind, I understand that your school's establishment is relatively small, why would you still see a strong upward mobility?
R:	At this moment, the school is still looking for appropriate talents to fill up quite a number of senior positions (around two PSMs and several APSMs).
Q:	Being an experienced teacher, if you were asked to give some advices to the young, junior teachers who aspire to be promoted to higher positions in the future, what would you say? Any dos and don'ts?
R:	Young and new teachers should equip themselves with knowledge across the curriculum, being able to teach in help in different subjects. Also, they should be aware of the future directions and trends in education. Keep updating their knowledge and skills in order to meet the market demands.
Q:	How could they secure promotion opportunities?
R:	Student teachers should be well-prepared and learn more when they are still

	in university. I suggest them to join some youth uniformed groups, get more sports coach/instructor licenses, get more professional qualifications that can contribute to primary schools' long-term development.
Q:	Alright. That's the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 008

Background of the interviewee: Acting PSM with 20 years of service

Q:	Can you briefly explain your career path to me? How many years have you worked as a primary school teacher? How many schools have you served in your teaching career?
R:	I have been a primary school teacher for 20 years. I served in two primary schools and my current school is the second one. In these 20 years, I experienced a lot of reforms and changes in educational policies, from TOC, to AA. Hong Kong government's requirements on teachers have been changing, from certified teachers to graduate teachers who all specialize in at least one major subject. I finished my part time BEd. in four years and took another two years to finish my PGDE. I teach Chinese language and nowadays many schools prefer using Putonghua to teach Chinese. As a result, I had to pass LPAT after I finished my PGDE, which was a tiring process. I once reviewed on my teacher career and found out that apart from transferring subject knowledge, nurturing students' moral values and virtues are also very important. To achieve that, I further studied courses and programmes provided by tertiary institutions and EDB, study something new every five years in order to update myself with the social changes. In

	the process, I met teachers from all backgrounds. We were able to share views and exchange opinions with each other, which was quite rewarding.
Q:	When were you promoted to APSM and to the current grade?
R:	I was promoted to APSM in 2013, which was the first year I began dealing with more administrative affairs. Starting as a panel head of Putonghua, I also took in-charge of the school's gifted programmes, secondary school affairs, student affairs, teacher's roster etc. Despite the great pressure and burden, my superior and colleagues gave me a lot of support and help.
Q:	Obviously you have went through teacher training before joining the profession and you would agree that those training are useful. In retrospect, how did you seek jobs among different primary schools? How did you prepare?
R:	In my final year, I sent letters to different schools within the district I lived in April and May. I sent applications to different schools with different backgrounds and sponsoring bodies (merchants' association, Christian etc.). I went to three interviews and I got my first offer, which I accepted that's how I began working as a primary school teacher. I declined an offer from a government primary school because their offer came later.
Q:	How do you define a professional and competent primary school teacher?
R:	I believe that being responsible is the best way to demonstrate professionalism and this applies to all professions. Responsible teachers should prepare for lesson, grade assignments carefully, communicate frequently and bilaterally with students and their parents. A professional teacher would understand and care your students. Having a good rapport with the students' families allow teachers to oversee the changes throughout

	students' lives, which is the source of satisfaction in my profession.
Q:	Do you regard those recently graduated BEd students as “professional” primary school teachers? Can they achieve what you have achieved?
R:	It takes time for young teachers to train and learn. In my observation, some teachers are passionate about teaching while some simply treat it as a job with salary. Teachers who are not passionate may barely finish teaching and refuse to take up extra duties other than teaching. Also, they seldom take their duties seriously.
Q:	Using your school as an example, what are the usual practices/procedures in a teacher selection process? What’s the rationale behind these practices/procedures?
R:	Normally, the school would put on job advertisement on newspapers. After receiving applications, panel heads will select the appropriate candidates based on the needs of different subjects. Then, there will be a first interview in school to evaluate the candidate’s subject knowledge, professional conduct, teaching strategies, interpersonal skills etc. After that, there will be a second interview conducted by our school’s sponsoring body.
Q:	Among all candidates, how do the interviewer(s) select the most appropriate to be new teachers? What do the interviewer(s) value the most? How do they verify the qualities of the job applicants?
R:	Interviewers can verify applicant’s academic qualifications and professional skills, past experience based on the cover letter. Questions will also be raised during the first interview, regarding the content written on the application form and cover letter. Then, we will see what happened to the candidates, like whether he/she changed jobs frequently? Basically, the recruitment is

	related to the needs of the school. Apart from major subject, we also give credits to candidates with minors/other professional skills.
Q:	Do you think your school's sponsoring body's background, culture, settings and visions affect its teacher selection process? Does it favour teachers with certain stands/qualities?
R:	No specific preferences on teachers. The sponsoring body respects schools' needs and set up relevant positions.
Q:	Let's say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to better prepare their students for the field?
R:	In my understanding, in nowadays' practicum, student teachers seldom get involved with class teacher's duties. Also, they have little chances to communicate with parents. The practicum should add some elements to these aspects as it is related to primary school teachers' work. For example, I suggest that student teachers can follow and observe a class teacher, assist in duties such as collecting reply slips from students. This allows student teachers to learn how to handle issues in classes.
Q:	I will now move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you agree that promotion motivates teachers to better perform their teaching and administrative duties?
R:	Before that, I think it is important for schools to have professional teachers with "quality" i.e. whether teachers are capable of finishing their duties before they look for a promotion. Still, the promotion mechanism provides a clear career ladder that motivates young teachers to take up more

	responsibilities. Usually, there would be a senior and more experienced colleague, serving as a mentor, to guide new teacher(s) in accomplishing tasks. Different schools have different practices. I know some schools set a 2-year barrier for teacher promotion while some do not.
Q:	What made/drove you taking today's rank/position?
R:	To be honest, I didn't thought of promotions because this greatly depends on the school's establishment and situation. For example, if the average age of the school's senior staff is quite young and the school's promotion mechanism takes the length of service into consideration (such as government schools), then why would young teachers be motivated? In contrast, in some newly set up schools, there are perhaps more opportunities.
Q:	Using your school's sponsoring body as an example, will your its background, culture, settings and visions affect its teachers' career prospects?
R:	As I just mentioned, even within the same sponsoring body, different schools have different establishments. Their number of positions in respective grades change across periods, districts and student figures.
Q:	Can you briefly explain how the school and/or its sponsoring body allocates the promotion opportunities among teachers? Do junior teachers need to first act a senior rank's duty before getting promoted to a higher paygrade?
R:	It is not necessary to have colleagues to act a higher position before being promoted. If there are vacancies and nominated teachers have passed the sponsoring body's board, teachers can be immediately promoted. Different schools have different structures and positions, and again this relies on the student figures. Certain positions, particularly those with PSM or higher

	paygrades are interchangeable among different primary schools under our sponsoring body, meaning a higher mobility for teachers.
Q:	In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in your school's (or your school's sponsoring body's) teacher promotion mechanism? Why?
R:	Such mechanism is convenient for teachers. For example, if a teacher moves to a new neighbourhood, he/she can then apply to switch schools according to his/her residence's location.
Q:	Alright. Any weaknesses? Let's say, a PSM from "ABC School" has to take up a SPSM position in "DEF School", would the change of working environment be a disadvantage?
R:	I would look at it in both angles. Of course, the teacher may have little understanding towards the new school and it takes time to get used to it. However, new environment may also come with more potentials for development. Sometimes a teacher cannot utilize his/her talents and strengths in the old school, a new school could be a way out, who knows?
Q:	Have you served in other local government-aided primary schools before?
R:	Yes.
Q:	Do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different primary schools? Any similarities or differences?
R:	My previous school has a smaller sponsoring body. Teachers will be promoted according to their years of service. A lot of decisions are school based, with a simpler process compare with my current school's sponsoring body.
Q:	Then, do teachers with more years of service tend to have brighter career prospects in schools that are operated by small sponsoring bodies?

R:	If both teachers possess similar skills and qualities, then perhaps the length of service is an advantage in fighting for promotion opportunities.
Q:	From your observation, what kind of teachers would usually get promoted? Are there any specific characteristics/qualities shared by school administrators?
R:	School administrators usually possess good analytical skills and good interpersonal skills, together with appropriate collegial relationships. They are usually good speakers and presenters, strong at establishing social ties with parties both inside and outside the school. Furthermore, they have more inclusive personalities.
Q:	In retrospect, did you carry above-mentioned features when you were a junior teacher? Any examples?
R:	Not really. I am a pretty straightforward person and I seldom polish my speech i.e. not a good presenter/communicator.
Q:	Being a primary school administrator yourself, do you favour the kind of teachers that you have just mentioned more when allocating resources and opportunity?
R:	I love working with hard-working teachers who are punctual, responsible and proactive in work. I appreciate teachers who are willing to participate and contribute when collaborating with others. I hate those who fail to finish their tasks on time as well as those who do not take their duties seriously.
Q:	Does the sponsoring body favour teachers with the above-mentioned qualities more when allocating opportunities and resources?
R:	Our sponsoring body/school will give more projects and duties to those who are proactive and experienced instead of those who are lazy and apathetic.

	Senior teachers may lack knowledge in certain aspects (such as I.T.), but young, junior teachers may be able to help.
Q:	Does it mean that a teacher would have a brighter career prospect if he/she takes up more projects than others?
R:	Not necessary. Apart from teaching, administrative duties are also important. Whether that teacher has been panel/unit head is a crucial step in promotion. Panel/unit heads are positions that train and strengthen a teacher's managerial skills.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? Are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	I would say there are always opportunities and vacancies, as long as there are enough classes/students. My school always encourages capable colleagues fight for promotion, though whether they can pass the sponsoring body's board is another factor.
Q:	Being a school administrator yourself, if you were asked to give some advices to the young, junior teachers who aspire to be promoted to higher positions in the future, what would you say? Any dos and don'ts?
R:	First of all, young and new teachers should not be too calculating. As a junior colleague, more tasks mean more opportunities to learn new things, to get training and to sharpen your skills. Be productive and proactive in group work! Next, I understand most human beings are lazy but this is definitely not encouraged in this profession! New teachers should always ask when they have queries/problems.

Q:	So, you think it is okay for junior teachers to seek help from experienced and senior teachers?
R:	Of course! Junior teachers should ask more about rules and practices in the school. School administrators were also new teachers years ago. I think this is simply a kind of knowledge transfer. Another example would be, when new teachers have to host/run certain activities, senior teachers will give them advice and support. Junior teachers are welcomed to consult their superiors before making important/big decisions.
Q:	How could new and junior teachers secure promotion opportunities?
R:	Usually, new teachers have to go through 2 years' probation, which include appraisals from superiors, lesson observations...School administrators always ask new teachers: What kind of projects/duties they would like to take up in the future? New teachers should be proactive and well-prepared since only the capable ones can secure promotion opportunities. For example, an English teacher can further study to get qualifications related to visual arts or library management. This shows that the teacher is willing to and ready for taking up extra duties when he/she is promoted.
Q:	That would be the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 009

Background of the interviewee: SPSM with 30 years of service

Q:	Can you briefly explain your career path to me? How many years have you worked as a primary school teacher? How many schools have you served in your teaching career? What ranks did you go through?
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R:	I have been a primary school teacher for 30 years. I served four schools in total. I spent only 1 year in my first school and then spent the rest 29 years in three different schools under my current school's sponsoring body so the school I am currently teaching in is my 3 rd posting within this sponsoring body. I began as a CM. At that time, I had to pass a 2 year probation. It took 7-8 years for me to be promoted to AM, which APSM and PSM were not available at that time. 2 years after that, I have been promoted to PSM and took up the role and duties of a deputy headmaster. I was further promoted to SPSM at 2008, which was the year that the government introduced the rank of "SPSM" into the pay scale. Our sponsoring body basically follows the government's policies.
Q:	Perhaps we can first start with teacher selection. How do you define a professional and competent primary school teacher?
R:	Teaching is never easy. If a person treats teaching as a life long career, he/she must be passionate about teaching, patient and caring towards students and be responsible and respectful towards his/her duties. Teaching is not about paper work. Teachers serve people. Professional primary school teachers shall be able and willing to take care students with different backgrounds and personalities. Primary students are generally and relatively vulnerable. They really need teachers' care, guidance and attention.
Q:	Do you regard those recently graduated BEd students as "professional" primary school teachers?
R:	I would say most recently graduated teachers are passionate about teaching, particularly those who graduated from education programmes. Yet, they may not fully understand students' needs because all in all, they lack practical

	<p>experience. I think as long as teachers are keen to learn and willing to get in touch with students (especially young kids), that would be a good start.</p>
Q:	<p>Using this school as an example, what are the usual practices/procedures in a teacher selection process? What's the rationale behind these practices/procedures?</p>
R:	<p>Schools employ teachers based on no. of students and classes, as well as making reference to government's policy regard teacher establishment in primary schools. Another possible cause is that our school gets subsidies from the government for certain purposes and therefore it allows us to employ more staff. Then, the school will review the needs of different subjects and panels. The school has to inform the sponsoring body about the updated situation before asking for more positions. After the sponsoring body approved, the school puts job advertisements on newspapers and start receiving job applications. We would select the appropriate ones and conduct 2 rounds of interviews: 1st round is school based: applicants meet HM + SPSM/PSM + relevant panel head(s); 2nd round is conducted by the sponsoring body: applicants meet personnel from sponsoring bodies as well as selected/appointed headmasters. This practice applies to all new teachers.</p>
Q:	<p>In the 1st round interview, how do the interviewer(s) select the most appropriate to be new teachers? What do the interviewer(s) value the most? How do they verify the qualities of the job applicants?</p>
R:	<p>We first select appropriate candidates from cover letters, sort out their major subjects, verify their academic and professional qualifications, benchmark etc. Then, we would take teaching experience into consideration, though it is not necessary for candidates to have teaching experience in the past.</p>

	Furthermore, experience and skills in other areas such as youth uniformed groups, sports instructors, qualifications of musical instruments etc.
Q:	Does the school favour applicants with more years of service in recruitment?
R:	Years of teaching is not necessary an advantage. Instead, we focus more on teaching techniques. We would ask relevant questions in the interview. For example, we give the applicant a scenario, and see whether his/her proposals are appropriate and reasonable/practical. Also, there would be question related to the subject, such as “How to teach a chapter?” etc.
Q:	Do you think your school’s sponsoring body’s background, culture, settings and visions affect its teacher selection process?
R:	Our sponsoring body does not have special requirements. They put on job ads simply based on the needs of different primary schools. The needs of schools (major subjects, qualifications, expertise) may vary along time. A point I want to make is that some religious schools make take applicants’ religion into consideration when selecting teachers. Such case never happen in schools under our sponsoring body.
Q:	Let’s say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to better prepare their students for the field?
R:	Universities are definitely strong in terms of educational theories as well as subject knowledge. In my opinion, practical experience is more important than theories because teaching is not about doing researches. Placement is vital as it provides confidence for student teachers to teach in real classrooms and get in touch with students. These can never be realized in university

	<p>campus and mock teaching in university is never the same story. I understand that universities have difficulties in finding practicum host schools and schools have worries as well. I agree that field experience is beneficial for student teachers. I appreciate the F.E. arrangement of EdUHK ELE department (F.E. Semester) because a longer period of time allows student teachers to have more time to prepare, get used to the school's environment and then apply what they have learnt into their teaching. Other universities usually have their student teachers to stay in our school for 4-6 weeks placement, which was not long enough. I therefore suggest for longer practicum, which is fairer and more beneficial for student teachers' professional development. In case a longer practicum cannot be implemented, I would also suggest that primary schools partner with universities to have afterschool tutorials. This provides student teachers' opportunities to get in touch with primary students.</p>
Q:	I will now move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you agree that promotion motivates teachers to better perform their teaching and administrative duties?
R:	This is absolutely a motivation for teachers and I think this is a universal rule, applicable to all professions. Promotion motivates people to work harder and enhance staff morale. A promotion mechanism is indispensable.
Q:	In retrospect, what made/drove you taking today's rank/position?
R:	Personally, I would ask: Whether that person aspire to improve and move up to another level? Whether that person wants to be a stronger and better person? Does that person wants to know more about the profession and even the education sector as a whole? Does that person want to gain more

	<p>knowledge and skills which are not directly related to teaching? The world is changing persistently. Teaching is a life long career. Responsible teachers would update and improve themselves according to social changes. Those who changes to meet the market demands tend to have more promotion opportunities.</p>
Q:	<p>Does your school's sponsoring body pose any effects on its teachers' career prospects?</p>
R:	<p>Our sponsoring body offers more promotion opportunities to its teachers compared with others. This is because our sponsoring body has a lot of primary schools in Hong Kong, meaning there are more senior positions among different schools. Moreover, our sponsoring body always organize joint-school events, training sessions and conferences, which broadens teachers' horizons.</p>
Q:	<p>So, my interpretation is that senior positions in different primary schools under the same sponsoring body are interchangeable, am I correct?</p>
R:	<p>Yes, you can put it in that way. Although each primary school nowadays has an incorporated management committee, within our sponsoring body, teachers can apply for vacancies offered by all primary schools. However, the sponsoring body has the authority to allocate newly promoted teachers to different primary schools, meaning promoted teachers may have to work in a new school.</p>
Q:	<p>Does this practice applies to teachers of all ranks?</p>
R:	<p>No. For example, based on EDB's policies, APSM is a school based rank. Meanwhile, teachers who hold administrative ranks i.e. PSM or above could be deployed to other schools regularly.</p>

Q:	Can you briefly explain how the school and/or its sponsoring body allocates the promotion opportunities among teachers? Do junior teachers need to first act a senior rank's duty before getting promoted to a higher paygrade?
R:	“Acting” is a usual practice in our sponsoring body but it is not a necessary step for promotion. An APSM may act a PSM position for a while but eventually he/she may return back to APSM rank. Acting does not guarantee a promotion. Acting positions are open for applications within the school but not for other schools. Applicants have to pass an interview before taking up the acting position. We also follow government's policy and give extra allowance to teachers who act higher ranks.
Q:	In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in your school's (or your school's sponsoring body's) teacher promotion mechanism? Why?
R:	In terms of strengths, our sponsoring body's teacher promotion mechanism is systematic and organized in nature. Also, there is a human resource department in our sponsoring body to deal with issues such as collecting documents and verifying qualifications. This is comparatively fairer. For weaknesses, our teacher promotion mechanism lacks efficiency. taking more time and higher administrative costs. The sponsoring body will not announce the board's decision until the very end of the school term, probably in July. Such late and sudden announcement gives schools little time to re-arrange duties among teachers and prepare for the coming year.
Q:	Have you served in other local government-aided primary schools before? Do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different primary schools? Any similarities or differences?
R:	Yes but I am sorry to tell you that I may not be able to answer this question

	because I don't have much experience working in primary schools run by other sponsoring bodies. I am not the right person to give comments.
Q:	From the perspective of a primary school administrator, what kind of teachers (any particular personalities/qualities/qualifications/skills) would usually get promoted? In retrospect, did you carry those features?
R:	In my observation, teachers who are willing to participate, proactive in taking up new duties/in charge of new projects, tend to get promotion opportunities more often. Also, passionate teachers may secure promotion opportunities while passion here does not refer to the amount of time a teacher spent in work. Furthermore, because senior teachers have to deal with different parties (students, parents, outsiders etc.), interpersonal skills is important.
Q:	Being a primary school administrator yourself, what kind of teachers you would like to collaborate with?
R:	I prefer to cooperate with colleagues who are passionate and experienced and most importantly, willing to contribute. There is no positive correlation between a teacher's level of passion and his/her years of service/age.
Q:	Does the school (and its sponsoring body) favour the kind of teachers that you have just mentioned more when allocating resources and opportunity?
R:	I believe top management are willing to give opportunities to these teachers. Also, the headmaster would recommend teachers to the promotion board according to that teacher's expertise, skills, qualities and personalities.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)?
R:	In terms of primary schools, this sponsoring bodies provide more promotion

	<p>opportunities when compared to schools run by small sponsoring bodies. Also, our sponsoring body and its schools have to act according to government's policy. Let's say if EDB raises the percentage of APSM positions within primary schools, then more opportunities may appear. Last but not least, the student figures is a vital element. The size of teacher establishment and the number of vacancies rely on the number of students and classes. Big schools' headmasters are HMIs while small schools' are HMIs. Big schools have more PSMs than smaller schools, but PSM positions are not fixed to specific duties. Usually PSM will be allocated to some important duties such as academic affairs, discipline and counselling, curriculum etc.</p>
Q:	Are there enough senior positions (i.e. PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	Of course there are always opportunities in education. However, I can tell you that it is not easy to be primary school teachers these days. Primary school teachers have great pressure and burden. Schools only entrust administrative duties with reliable, responsible and "trust-worthy" teachers. Not all teachers are capable of and willing to take up extra workload apart from teaching.
Q:	Being a school administrator yourself, if you were asked to give some advices to the young, junior teachers who aspire to be promoted to higher positions in the future, what would you say? Any dos and don'ts? How could they secure promotion opportunities?
R:	I would say time management and pressure management are very important.

	Teachers have to strike a balance between work and life. Proactive teachers who aspire for promotion opportunities should first find out effective ways to manage their time and deal with work pressure.
Q:	That would be the end of our interview. Thank you!
R:	You're welcome.

Interview Transcript 010

Background of the interviewee: HMII with 17 years of service

Q:	Can you briefly explain your career path to me? How many years have you worked as a primary school teacher? How many schools have you served in your teaching career? How many years have you served as a PSM/SPSM/HM?
R:	I have been teaching in this primary school once I graduated from university. This is my 17 th year being a primary school teacher. I have been promoted to HMII in 2012.
Q:	Thank you. Perhaps we can first start with the topic of teacher selection. How do you define a professional and competent primary school teacher?
R:	Professional and competent primary school teachers should have their own educational philosophy and follow a code of conduct. They should also possess adequate subject knowledge and pedagogies in order to handle their teaching duties.
Q:	What are the usual practices/procedures in your school's teacher selection process? What's the rationale behind these practices/procedures?
R:	My school usually put job advertisements on newspapers such as Ming Pao and Sing Tao Daily. We also make announcement on online system run by

	<p>the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union. In the selection process, I and the assistant headmaster would read the cover letters and resumes, invite appropriate applicants to interview and arrange mock teaching for them. The interview and the mock teaching allow us to examine the applicant's abilities in teaching and his/her classroom management techniques.</p>
Q:	<p>Among all candidates, how do you select the most appropriate ones to be new teachers? What do you value the most? How do you verify the qualities of the job applicants?</p>
R:	<p>I would focus on their relevant teaching experience and see whether the applicant's major subject matches with the needs of my school. I would verify their statements by making reference to their previous jobs. I and my colleague would also observe carefully during the mock teaching.</p>
Q:	<p>Do you think your school's sponsoring body pose any effects on its teacher selection process?</p>
R:	<p>My school's sponsoring body is a rural committee and no, it won't get involve in our teacher selection process. We select teachers based on their abilities and personalities.</p>
Q:	<p>Let's say you now have an opportunity to give suggestion(s) to the universities/teacher training institutions. What changes should they make to their teacher training mechanism in order to better prepare their students for the field?</p>
R:	<p>I suggest that universities should encourage BEd. students to take 1-2 minors in their undergraduate studies so that when they become primary school teachers, they can teach more than one subject.</p>
Q:	<p>Let's move on to the topic of teacher promotion. Do you agree that</p>

	promotion motivates teachers to better perform their teaching and administrative duties? What made/drove you taking today's rank/position?
R:	I agree that promotion motivates teachers to better perform their teaching and administrative duties. I wanted to bring changes to the school, making it a place where students can learn and grow happily. To achieve such purpose, I had to climb the career ladder and become a headmaster.
Q:	Using your school's sponsoring body as an example, will it affect its teachers' career prospects?
R:	Yes. My school is a village primary school with a small teacher establishment, run by a rural committee. We have fewer classes and students, meaning our teacher establishment may fluctuate with student figures. This may lower the job security of our teachers.
Q:	Can you briefly explain how the school and/or its sponsoring body allocates the promotion opportunities among teachers? Do junior teachers need to first act a senior rank's duty before getting promoted to a higher paygrade?
R:	Junior teachers will begin taking up administrative duties and/or even chair panels after serving in our school for 2-3 years. Meanwhile, I would observe their performance and output and decide which teacher I should promote. My observation in fact is similar to the process of "acting a higher position".
Q:	In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses in your school's (or your school's sponsoring body's) teacher promotion mechanism? Why?
R:	I allocate promotion opportunities among teachers according to their performance and abilities but not personal ties and relationships. This brings a certain degree of fairness and transparency into my school's teacher promotion mechanism.

Q:	Have you served in other local government-aided primary schools before? Do you think the teacher promotion mechanism varies among different primary schools? Any similarities or differences? e.g. Do teachers with more years of service and/or higher academic qualifications usually get brighter career prospects?
R:	Though I didn't serve in other local government-aided primary schools before, I do agree and understand that different schools have different teacher promotion mechanisms. In my opinion, the length of service is not necessarily an advantage in promotion but teachers with higher academic qualifications do have brighter career prospects.
Q:	From the perspective of a primary school administrator, what kind of teachers (any particular personalities/qualities/qualifications/skills) would usually get promoted? In retrospect, did you carry those features when you were a junior teacher? Any examples?
R:	Professional and passionate teachers who demonstrate qualities of leadership and charisma would usually get promoted. I carry those features myself.
Q:	Being a primary school administrator yourself, do you favour the kind of teachers that you have just mentioned more when allocating resources and opportunity?
R:	I particularly appreciate teachers who can deliver proposals and solutions. To be brief, I love working with "planners" and "troubleshooters". These group of teachers can always help our school to plan and run activities.
Q:	Do you think there is a strong upward mobility for teachers in your school (or your school's sponsoring body)? Are there enough senior positions (i.e.

	PSM or higher ranks) to satisfy the ambitions of teachers who perform excellent teaching and/or administrative duties?
R:	Yes. I think my school provides enough promotion opportunities for CM teachers who excel in their work.
Q:	Being a school administrator yourself, if you were asked to give some advices to the young, junior teachers who aspire to be promoted to higher positions in the future, what would you say? Any dos and don'ts? How could they secure promotion opportunities?
R:	Here are some tips. Once entered the profession, new teachers to establish their own style of teaching as soon as possible. New teachers should also understand the school's operation details and its long-term development. Always be passionate about teaching and remember, teachers are abided by professionalism and a code of conduct.

XII. Consent Forms

Consent forms signed by schools and participants are in the next few pages.