GLOBALIZATION
&
THE QUEST FOR QUALITY EDUCATION REFORMS

- A Case Study of the Challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong

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Abstract

The impacts of 'Globalization' are multi-dimensional. In the realm of education, driving for 'quality' in the delivery of educational service has become a global tide of educational reforms since the past 2 decades. Being a global city, Hong Kong is no exception and therefore not immune from this global wave of 'quality education reforms' either.

The current paper attempts to identify the strategic responses of a local Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong to its outer context of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city. In particular, the challenges facing the English language teachers of the research school are explored and discussed at the institutional level.

Both 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' data collection methods have been adopted in the research, including 'questionnaires', 'in-depth interviews' and 'class observations'. An English Language Proficiency Assessment Exercise has also been conducted following the 'classroom observations' of the English Language Teachers of the research school.

The 4 propositions of Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework at the institutional level were discussed and explored in the Case Study. Although the Research has its own limitations, the overall findings do provide scope for future researches and studies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1: Introduction

1A. Background of the Research: Teachers' Protest & Suicide Cases:

- ***An Alarm Call to the Government in pursuit of the 'Quality Education Reforms' Movement in Hong Kong***

> *The government came under intense pressure yesterday as thousands of protesters joined the largest demonstration of teachers held in Hong Kong, with more protests expected to follow….The teachers, estimated to number at least 10,000 by the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) and around 7,500 by police, demanded a review of education reforms and the resignation of Permanent Secretary for Education Fanny Law Fan Chiu-Fun.*
>
> (Source: South China Morning Post, 23 January 2006)

On 22 January 2006, thousands of teachers joined the rally organised by the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) in Hong Kong. This was the first time such a large-scale academic protest took place in the city. The Professional Teachers' Union organised the rally to protest against the fast-pace educational reforms in the territory and the recent senior government official's, Mrs. Fanny Law's, remarks in early January that 'if two teachers had committed suicide because of educational reforms, why did only two commit suicide and not more?' Such remarks were described as 'cold-blooded' by teachers, principals, academics and the public in the city.

Although Mrs. Law offered a public apology for the 'wrong wording' used on the other day, the Union was not content with her apology. Hence, thousands of the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) members joined the protest on 22 January 2006, calling for a rethink on education reforms and policies**,** together with the resignation or secondment of Mrs Law from her current educational post.

A survey conducted by the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers between November and December 2005 revealed that nearly 90% of 800 teachers polled said they were under stress. One in four teachers said they had to work up to 77 hours a week and 56% said they worked for more than 61 hours a week. 70% said their teaching quality was affected because of the pressure.

Teacher's workload: (Source: Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers)

Feel under stress	**90%**
Work more than 71 hours a week	25%
Work more than 61 hours a week	56%
Say stress affects their teaching	70%
Say more teachers need to be hired	***90%***
Want smaller classes	***89%***

Another Survey conducted by the Ming Pao Daily on 23 January 2006 (with a sample size of 217 teachers whose average teaching experience of over 15 years in Hong Kong) showed that ***82.9%*** of the teachers joining the protest due to the "Hasty Educational Reforms introduced by the Government".

Here below is a summary of the major Educational Reforms introduced in Hong Kong since 1997. Those initiatives which are related to "language reforms" are marked with an *:

Education Reforms in Hong Kong since 1997:

Year	Introduced/Forthcoming Education Reforms and Policies in HK
2012	Formal launch of the first Hong Kong Secondary School Diploma Exam.
*2010	Deadline of the 'mother-tongue' (Chinese-Medium Instruction) Mechanism for all schools not reaching the required English standards.
2009	New system (3+3+4) of higher forms curriculum in Secondary Schools; New system of Secondary School place allocations.
*2007	New Syllabus & Requirements for 'Chinese' and English' Public Exams;
*2006	Deadline for English and Chinese (Putonghua) Teachers' Benchmark tests.
*2005	Introducing 'specialist teaching' for Chinese, English and Maths. Subjects.
2004	Continuous Professional Development requirement of not less than 150 hours for each teacher per year.
*2003	Introduction of Native English Teachers (NET) scheme in schools; Introduction of 'school appraisal' and 'external appraisal' schemes; Forced closure of under-enrolled schools; Hire temporary teaching staff.
2001	Encouragement of 'Private' and 'Semi-Private (DSS)' Schools in HK
2000	Cancellation of primary 6 public exam; introduction of extra-curricular school activities development
*1998	Introduction of 'mother-tongue' (Chinese language) teaching mechanism Highlight of 'Information Technology' Education; Introduction of 'Integrative Education Project';
1997	Incremental implementation of 'whole-day school' system in Primary Schools in HK

(Source: Education and Manpower Bureau, 2006)

1B Aims and Objectives of the Research

The suicide cases and the large-scale Teachers' Protest held on 22 January 2006 not only served as a wake-up call to the Education Policymakers and the Hong Kong Government to rethink the pace and content of the educational initiatives introduced since 1997, but also inspired the researcher to conduct a case study into the school setting to better understand the stress of the frontline teachers, especially those English Language teachers, who were supposed to pass their language Benchmark Tests by August 2006, on top of implementing all the other language initiatives and educational reforms introduced by the Hong Kong Government since 1997.[1]

There are mainly 3 objectives of doing this Research at an institutional/individual level:

1. To investigate the **strategic responses** of the chosen school (both at the Management and teaching levels) to its outer context of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city;

2. To examine the challenges facing the research school, especially its **English language teachers**, in implementing the school strategies;

3. To understand the **stress and views of its English language teachers** who were also supposed to pass their English Language Proficiency Test starting from 2006, on top of facing the various educational reforms introduced in the city.

[1] A list of the Major Educational Reforms introduced in Hong Kong since 1997 is shown on p.8.

1C. Rationales for the choice of a Research school for the Case Study

There are indeed several good reasons for choosing this particular Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong for the Case Study in Chapter 4 of this Thesis:

First, this is the researcher's previous workplace where she was teaching English language during the academic years of 2007-2009. As a result, she is familiar with the School's background and personnel. Although she had actually resigned from the post of the Senior-Form English Language Teacher from the Research school in September 2009, with the kind permission of the Principal, the research site was still open to her and she could undertake all the data collection activities smoothly for the Research purpose, including 'questionnaires', 'interviews' and 'class observations' during the academic year of 2009-2010, in the capacity of an 'academic researcher'. Free access to the school setting and feasibility of the Research Fieldwork were guaranteed.

Second, little has been done in the previous educational research on an individual school's strategic responses to the outer context of 'quality education reforms' in the city. Although there has been a vast amount of literature on the debates and criticisms on Hong Kong's Educational Reforms surrounding the issues of 'globalization', 'quality', 'quality education' and the implementation of the 'Corporate Managerialism' from the private business sector into the academic setting (all these debates will also be discussed in Chapter 2, "Literature Review" section), little has been done at an in-depth

institutional level to closely look at the actual challenges and stress of the front-line educators of a Private Secondary School, especially its English Language Teachers. What would be the strategic responses of a Private Senior-Form Secondary School in Hong Kong to the Government's quest for 'Quality Education Reforms' since 1997? Is such kind of School facing more or fewer challenges than its counterparts from the Government and the Aided Schools?

Third, the chosen research school setting is quite unique. Unlike general schools admitting students from Form 1 to Form 7, this School only offers senior classes from F.4 to F.7. This type of school is **fading out** in the city. Prior to the introduction of the new 3-3-4 system in Hong Kong in 2009 (3 years of Junior Secondary + 3 years of Senior Secondary schooling + 4 years of University Education), the old education system was following the 3-2-2-3, that is, 3 years of Junior Secondary Schooling (F.1 to F.3) + 2 years of F.4 and F.5 (Hong Kong Certificate Examination) + 2 years of F.6 and F.7 (Hong Kong Advanced Level Exam) + 3 years of University Education. Under the old system, those students who failed in their internal school exams and/or external public examinations such as the Hong Kong Certificate Examination or Hong Kong Advanced Level Exam and could not further or repeat their studies at their own schools would then resort to this type of Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong. The 'blackbox' of the teaching and learning inside such kind of school is always a mystery, which is rarely discussed and explored in the current educational research in Hong Kong.

The current paper, therefore, attempts to fill the gap of the existing educational literature.

1D. Overall Design and Structure of the Thesis Paper

The Thesis Paper comprises five chapters.

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter, outlining the background of the research, i.e. the Teachers' Protest and Suicide Cases, serving as an alarm call to the Government and Education Policymakers who have introduced various initiatives in pursuit of the 'Quality Education Reforms' in the city since 1997. The aims and objectives of the Research as well as the rationales of the choice of a research school for the Case Study are also stated in this Chapter.

Chapter 2 is a macroscopic study of the various education reforms in Hong Kong and worldwide. In this Chapter, a literature review on the various concepts and interpretations of "Globalization" and "Quality Education" are conducted.

'**Globalization**' has become a major topic for studies and researches at Universities since the past 2 decades, such as in the disciplines of Business and Management, Arts and Humanities, Cultural and Communication Studies, Political Science and Sociology, yet, its definitions and interpretations are varied.

'Quality education' is another equally heated topic for debates. Everybody is in favour of improving the quality of education in one's country, albeit each person may have one's own interpretations of what 'quality' and 'quality education' are.

Peters and Waterman (1982) define “quality” as “excellence” while Juran (1988) claims that “quality” is best defined as “fitness for purpose”. Hence, in the Literature Review section, not only can we see the various definitions and interpretations of ‘globalization’, ‘quality’ and ‘quality education’, but also the debates surrounding these topics. It is noted that ‘quality education reforms’ are carried out not just locally, but also globally, with the similar trend of “marketization” and “decentralization”, though with “different agendas” from different governments (Mok, 2002; Mok 2003a; Mok, 2003b).

Chapter 3 outlines the rationales for the Design of the Research, as well as the details of the data collection methods used in the Case Study. Some Primary Data Collection Methods, such as ‘Questionnaires’, ‘In-depth Interviews’ and ‘Class Observations’ were employed in this part of the Study. The interview questions were formulated against the Conceptual Framework of Ho (2005: 11-17); while the questionnaires were based on the parameters of the “10 Characteristics of a Quality School” by Chapman and Adams (2002: 16).

The aim of the Case Study is to better understand the stress and challenges of the front-line educators, and in particular, the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of the chosen School, in the backdrop of the ‘quality education reforms’ movement in the city since 1997.

As it is an in-depth study of the Senior-Form English Language Teachers at the 'institutional' and 'individual' level, this part of Research is a 'microscopic' study; while in Chapter 2, Literature Review Section, the study is a 'macroscopic' one; from global to regional, and then from regional to local review.

Chapter 4 not only reports findings of the 'questionnaires' and 'interviews' with the School's stakeholders, but also the six 'class observations' conducted in the academic year of 2009-2010.

The 6 class observations were all video-taped. With the permission of 2 of the Senior-Form English Language Teachers, their video clippings were further passed on to a local English Language Expert for comments and assessments. The marking criteria were based on the same English language benchmark test set by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong for the English Language Teachers in Hong Kong, Paper 5, "Classroom Language Proficiency and Assessment Test - English" (LPATE) . The Language Expert's Report marks the end of the Case Study Review in Chapter 4.

It is hoped that at the end of the Case Study, not only are we able to collect the relevant data from the Research School (both quantitatively and qualitatively), but also to identify the various challenges facing the educators; and in particular, the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of the School, as a result of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city.

A further discussion on the Case Study, including the significance and limitation of the Research, as well as the scope for future researches and studies will be conducted in Chapter 5, Conclusion Part.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 : Literature Review

2A. Origins and Interpretations of "Globalization"

'Globalization' has been defined by Robertson (1987a: 38) as the 'crystallization of the world as a single place' and 'the emergence of the global human conditions' (1987b: 23). Robertson (2000: 8) further claims globalization as a concept which refers to 'the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.'

Gopinathan (2001), however, offers the below definition for the term, 'globalization':

> Globalization is commonly understood to be primarily a process of economic integration in which the owners of capital, financiers and money managers, among others, have been able to overcome the constraints of nation state boundaries to bring about global economic integration.
>
> (Gopinathan, 2001: 21)

As we can see, both Robertson (1987a, 1987b, 1990, 1995, 2000) and Gopinanthan (2001), in fact, define the term 'globalization' as the unity or integration of human activities into one 'global' world, although the latter puts the stress on the 'global economic integration'.

There is indeed a substantive literature in relation to the topic of 'globalization', but different definitions and interpretations of the term, 'globalization', are offered by various authors and critics.

Beck (2000: 11) defines 'globalization' as a blanket term describing 'the processes through which sovereign national states are criss-crossed and undermined by transnational actors with varying prospects of power, orientations, identities and networks'.

Some authors (Clark, 1998; Held et al., 1999; Perraton et al. , 1997 and Pick, 2004), also point out 'the multi-facets of globalization' and claim that globalization is more than just about trade and commerce, but also a 'process of deep social, cultural and economic change from which the contours of a global order are beginning to emerge.' (Pick, 2004: 103)

In view of the complexities of 'globalization', Jameson (1984, 1991, 1998) is of the view that it would be impossible to think of a comprehensive interpretation or definition for the term, 'globalization'. To define or trace the origin of 'globalization' is, therefore, no simple task. Nevertheless, Walters (1995) notes three possibilities of the origin of 'globalization':

- **‘Globalization’ has been in progress throughout history**

Robertson (1987, 1990, 1995, 2000) and Robertson et. al. (2002) can be claimed as the representatives of those commentators who take the first view of Walter’s (1995) interpretations of ‘globalization’. Robertson (op. cit.) thinks that the processes and actions of such concept of

‘Globalization’ has, in fact, been proceeding for many centuries, and should therefore not be viewed as a direct consequence of ‘an amorphously conceived modernity’. He (op. cit.) has identified the development of ‘globalization’ in 5 phases: (a) Phase 1: 1400-1750; (b) Phase 2: 1750-1875; (c) Phase 3: 1875-1925; (d) Phase 4: 1925-1969; (e) Phase 5: 1969 to date. He (op. cit) further suggests that we may have already entered a sixth phase, with the increasing multiculturalism and the moving of the world from being ‘in itself’ towards being ‘for itself’, i.e. nations now engage more in a wide range of economic, military, cultural and political contacts and people around the world tend to think, feel and act globally.

- **‘Globalization’ as an outcome of capitalism in the modern period**

Giddens (1990) however thinks that ‘globalization’ is a product of capitalism and modernity. He (op. cit.) opines that ‘globalization’ is closely linked to the development of modern societies, industrialization and is also a continuation of modernity. He (op. cit.) terms the contemporary era as the ‘high modernity’ because he senses that we have now moved into a new stage: a ‘global’ stage where society has become a ‘world society’.

- **‘Globalization’ as a recent product of post-industrialism & post-modernity**

Jameson (1984, 1991, 1998) is one of the most influential commentators who views ‘globalization’ as a recent product of post-modernity, which he terms as the ‘logic of late capitalism’. Jameson (op. cit.) thinks that we have entered a stage of ‘post-modernity’, i.e. the latest stage of ‘capitalism’, characterized by international corporations’ domination of a global marketplace. Jameson (op. cit.) further notes that there is a blurred distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture in post-modernity, and therefore, he thinks that the contemporary ‘global’ culture, signifying the ‘cultural homogenization’, is, in fact, becoming characterless and fragmented. In Jameson’s (op. cit.) term, the prominent feature found in post-modernity is ‘schizophrenia’, which he refers to the confusion and fragmentation of the post-modern life in this new ‘global’ order. Jameson’s idea is echoed by another eminent scholar, Harvey (1989), who claims that

due to the fast-pace development of technology in this new 'global' age, 'time' and 'space' has been compressed together and that people are now living in a confusing 'time' and 'space'. There is a breakdown of the linear progression of 'time' and 'space'. Harvey's (op. cit.) theory on 'time-space compression' has contributed much to the literature debate surrounding 'post-modernism' and 'globalization'. As a matter of fact, there is a great similarity between Jameson's (op. cit.) and Harvey's (op. cit.) views in the way that both of them see 'confusion', 'fragmentation' or in Jameson's term, (op. cit.) 'schizophrenia', being the prominent feature of post-modernity in this new 'global' order.

Following Walters' (1995) attempt in tracing the above three possible origins of 'globalization', Held et al. (1999) have also made some important contributions to the literature debate on 'globalization' by summarizing and categorizing three significant concepts among critics in their interpretations of 'globalization': (a) 'the hyperglobalist thesis'; (b) 'the skeptical thesis' and (c) 'the transformationalist thesis':

- **The Hyperglobalist Thesis**

Authors of the thesis hold the view that the world is converging towards a single system of capitalist economic governance. 'Globalization' is therefore seen to be an 'inevitable and thoroughly positive part of that process' (Danreuther & Lekhi, 2000: 583). Advocates of 'convergence' position argue that societies from all over the world are moving towards the same direction, though they may move at different speeds and in different contexts. Proponents of a global strategy point to the increasing

homogenization of customer tastes and preferences. They suggest that significant economies of scale can be attained by marketing standardized products worldwide. In the area of business management, Levitt (1983), amongst all, is the most influential advocate who claims that the world is driven by a 'powerful force' towards a 'converging commonality' and that force is 'technology', resulting in a 'global market' for standardized consumer products on an imagined scale of magnitude. Levitt (op. cit.) further claims that gone are the accustomed differences in national tastes or modes of doing business. The commonality of preference would finally lead to homogenization of the world. Organizations that do not adapt to these 'new global realities' will become victims of those that do.

Ohmae (1989, 1995) further claims that the global force is so powerful that we are entering a 'borderless world'. This is also largely attributed by the fast-pace development of the latest technology.

Friedman (1999) also thinks that the 'global economy' is increasingly the most important driving force in human affairs. Nation states are nowadays becoming more and more market driven by this 'global force'.

- **Skeptical Thesis**

Authors of this thesis are skeptical of the 'hyperglobalist' views. They doubt the 'global convergence' theory. Baum (1980), for example, injects a new issue of 'societal

continuity' into the debate. He claims that societies over the world, albeit may 'converge' in certain aspects, such as in the areas of economy and technology, they also 'diverge' in other respects, mainly in the social relational areas.

In the area of business marketing, Douglas and Wind (1987) also observe some divergence trends in customers' styles and tastes. They, therefore, argue that the convergence of customers' demands is not a one-way street; divergence trends are also noticeable.

Fleenor (1993) is also skeptical and cautious of the 'convergence' theory by commenting that 'globalization is a set of ideas' that do not necessarily work in our current business environment since there are too many barriers to 'global convergence' or 'product standardization'. 'Cultural difference', for example, is a very important element. Fleenor (op. cit.) further comments that the 'global convergence theory' is a rather 'dangerous and misleading' thinking.

Fleenor's (op. cit.) argument is echoed by Weiss (1998) and Kleinknecht & ter Wengel (1998) who suggest that 'globalization is a myth'. Globalization has created its own bandwagon that those who are not on it are deemed to failure, yet, according to these critics (op. cit.), there are still many barriers to 'global convergence' or 'product standardization'. Cultural difference is among all the most important barrier.

Lechner (1990) has also added his comments to the debate and raised an important issue concerning 'identity' in this newly 'global system'. Clark (1998) further points out that the hyperglobalist position has overlooked the role of 'nation states' since they are not only the vehicles of globalization, but are also reconstituted by it through a politically driven process. This is supported by Hirst & Thompson (1996) and Kapstein (1994) who observe that national governments in many countries continue to have significant power to regulate the forces of the global economy. Some authors also criticize the 'hyperglobalist thesis' for their lack of empirical evidence to support their claim in their 'global convergence' theory (Beck, 1992, 1998, 2000; Dannreuther & Lekhi, 2000; Zincone & Agnew, 2000). Hence, these critics (op. cit.) find that the 'hyperglobalist' thesis is not founded.

- **Transformationalist Thesis**

Many authors, though agree with the 'skeptics' view that there is a lack of empirical evidence to support the 'global convergence' theory, they find it at the same time difficult to refute the reality of the convergence trend brought along by 'globalization' in many countries. Globalization is, no doubt, a very influential driving force!

Spybey (1996: 5), for example, points out the influence of 'globalization' which operates on an extremely large scale and penetrates into 'the significant, the routine and the most intimate aspects of life'.

Some authors also point out the paradoxes and complexities of 'globalization' itself and conclude that 'globalization' should not be viewed as a purely global economic integration activity, but rather a complex and influential 'force', affecting the globe not just economically, but also politically, socially, legally and culturally (Beck, 2000; Clark, 1998; Dannreuther & Lekhi, 2000; Perraton et. al., 1997; Robertson, 1987, 1990, 1995, 2000 and Wilson & Dissanayake, 1996). It is under such circumstances that Held et. al. (1999) have developed the 'transformationalist thesis' as an alternative approach to make up the insufficiencies of the previous two theses. Authors of the 'transformationsit thesis' believe,

> 'Globalization is a central driving force behind rapid social, political and economic changes that are reshaping modern societies and world order.'
>
> (Held et. al, 1999: 7)

Scholars of the 'Transformationist Thesis' view 'globalization' as a complex element, which is multi-dimensional, involving not only 'economic' , but also 'social' and 'political' aspects. They recognize the significant driving force of 'globalization', but at the same time, see the paradox that it brings along, due to the many barriers to 'global

convergence', such as the 'cultural', 'social' and 'political' elements. They view 'globalization' as a 'complex set of processes, variable in their effects and full of paradoxes and ambivalences sometimes working in opposite directions.' (Pick, 2004: 102)

Wilson and Dissanayake (1996: 1), for example, comment on the contradictory character of 'globalization'. On one hand, the capitalist force seems to be dominant. On the other hand, they also point to the paradox that 'there is also much involvement in grass roots organizations, regionalism and moves towards developing more local autonomy'.

Robertson (1987, 1990, 1995, 2000) has also addressed the issue of the paradox of globalization. He (op. cit.) claims that at a time of an accelerating 'coming together' which is characterized and brought along by the force of globalization, a phenomenon of 'fragmentation' is simultaneously noted. This idea of 'fragmentation' echoes the views of those 'postmodernist' authors, such as Jameson (op. cit.) and Harvey (op. cit.), as we have earlier discussed.

As noted by Robertson (op. cit.), although there is an increasing co-operation among states and regions, a core notion of strong nationhood is also, who observes that an increasing awareness of nationalism is now crossing state boundaries in the 'new global order', as demonstrated in the tension between Spain and the Basque separatists, Canada and the Quebecois, Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tiger separatists as well as India and the Sikhs of Kashmir. He concludes that such a surging awareness and pushing forces in

local, regional and nationalistic pride form another part of the 'globalization process'. Instead of bringing along 'unity' of nations under one world in the 'new global order', 'globalization' has in fact led to an increasing 'diversity' and 'fragmentation' simultaneously. This is where the paradox of 'globalization' lies.

However, unlike those authors of the 'Skeptical Thesis' who have also put forward the paradoxes of 'globalization' previously, these scholars of the 'Transformationist Thesis' believe that the 'global' and 'local' forces can work together, while the 'Skeptics' do not think so. This is where the difference of their views lies. Instead, advocates of 'Transformationalist Thesis' believe in 'glocalization', i.e. the combination of 'globalization' and 'localization' forces. Robertson (op. cit.) has devised this concept in the interest of global capitalism to stimulate local market diversity and the term, 'glocalization' was used by Robertson (1995) in the Japanese marketing. Authors of the 'Transformationist Thesis' favour a mid-way approach to address the paradoxes of and barriers to 'globalization'.

Prahalad and Doz (1987), for example, suggest that the international strategist should determine the extent of globalization in a business and should adapt the organization's response to its local circumstances accordingly. Bartlett and Ghoshal (1987, 1992) also claim that international organizations must have strong geographical management to optimize learning, efficiency and responsiveness to the local circumstances.

As we can see, different authors hold different views on the interpretations of 'globalization'. Some of them believe in 'global convergence' while some are skeptical of it. They find that globalization is a 'myth'. Some also doubt the long-term benefits that 'globalization' might bring to the world (Giddens, 1990 and Wallerstein, 1979; 1984). However, advocates of 'Transformationist Thesis' believe that the 'global' and 'local' forces can be combined together and they believe in the force of 'glocalization', as Robertson (1995) has suggested.

Nevertheless, we can see a consensus among these different critics, i.e. ***'globalization' is an important driving fo*rce** which is bringing along tremendous challenges to the human race and simultaneously leading us to an unpredictable future, whether positively or negatively. No matter what approach or thesis we are adopting, the 'globalization' force is there and 'driving' around us!

2B. Definitions of "Quality" and "Quality Education"

The term, 'quality' has different meanings in the literature of education management. Peters and Waterman (1982) define 'quality' as 'excellence'. Hence, in the educational context, 'quality education' means 'excellence' in education.

Juran (1988), however, claims that 'quality' is best defined as 'fitness for purpose', that is, a product of 'quality' should be able to perform its designated functions.

Juran's (1988) interpretation of 'quality', in fact, derives very much from those of Gilmore (1974) who defines 'quality' as 'conformance to specifications', and of Crosby (1979) who interprets 'quality' as 'defects avoidance' . According to these authors, a 'quality' product should not only be able to perform its own functions and specifications well, but also to satisfy or even exceed the needs or requirements of the user/customer. The 'customer' usually pays and consumes. There is yet a difficulty in applying such interpretations in the field of 'education '. It is because although the immediate user of 'education' is the 'student', it is the government who pays in most countries. Besides, there are other secondary or indirect users of education, such as employers, parents as well as society as a whole.

Hence, if we apply Crosby's (1979), Gilmore's (1974) or Juran's (1988) definition of 'quality' in the area of 'education', we must be extremely careful and should incorporate the various stakeholders in society into the category of 'customers' in our definition.

Dew (1997) has contributed to the literature debate on 'quality' by suggesting that 'quality' can be viewed in different dimensions: (i) quality as 'conformance to requirements'; (ii) quality as 'corrective action'; (iii) quality as 'anticipating and preventing problems' and (iv) quality as 'continuous improvement'.

Dew's (1997) first three interpretations of 'quality' are, in fact, more or less the same of Crosby's (1979), Gilmore's (1974) and Juran's (1988) previous definitions of 'quality', which we have earlier discussed, i.e. 'fitness for purpose'; 'conformance to requirements' and 'defects avoidance'. Yet, Dew's (1997) fourth dimension of viewing 'quality' as 'continuous improvement' offers readers a new perspective in the interpretation of 'quality' in the educational context.

However, it is important to note that Dew's (1997) fourth dimension of viewing 'quality' as 'continuous improvement ', though may sound new in the field of education, is actually not a novel concept in the business and management discipline. This idea is in fact derived from the concept of 'Total Quality Management (TQM)' introduced by the private business and industry sector. According to Mehrotra (2006), the concept of 'Total Quality Management (TQM)' was initially developed by an American, W.

Edwards Deming, after World War II for improving the quality of goods production and service delivery. By establishing a set of production and delivery procedures, techniques and standards, it is hoped that this will help to ensure the reliability and excellent performance of the final product so as to meet or even exceed the requirements and expectations of customers. The concept of TQM has enjoyed a wide success in the manufacturing and business sector. Nowadays, many educators also welcome the implementation of TQM concept in the academic setting.

Mehrotra (2006) has also stressed the four important principles of Deming's TQM concept in applying to the academic setting, which are described by him as the 'four pillars of Total Quality Management', namely (i) Synergistic Relationships; (ii) Continuous Improvement and Self-Evaluation; (iii) A system of Ongoing Process and (iv) Leadership. As we can see, 'continuous improvement' and 'a system of ongoing process' are actually two of the 'four pillars' of Deming's concept of 'Total Quality Management'(TQM), upon which Dew's (1997) fourth dimension of viewing 'quality' as 'continuous improvement' has been built.

Chan & Lai (2002), agreeing with Dew's (1997) multi-dimensional interpretations of 'quality', comment that the perspectives of 'quality' can, in fact, be generally divided into two levels, that is (i) viewing 'quality' in an absolute sense; and (ii) perceiving 'quality' in a relative sense.

In an absolute sense, ‘quality’ is something which ‘exhibits characteristics of the highest possible standard’. In the context of education, this would, therefore, mean the ‘elitist in nature’. This is in line with the previous interpretations of ‘quality’ as ‘excellence’ (Ho et. al., 2005; Peters and Waterman, 1982) and ‘defects avoidance’ or ‘zero defects’ (Crosby, 1979). On the second level, ‘quality’ can also be interpreted in a ‘relative sense’, when a product or service has to fulfill the specifications that have been laid down for it. This also corresponds with the previous interpretations of ‘quality’ as ‘fitness for purpose’ (Juran, 1988) and ‘conformance to specifications’ (Gilmore, 1974), where the product has to comply with the relevant specifications, requirements and expectations of its users/customers. As we can see, Chan & Lai (2002)’s double-level perspective of ‘quality’ is very comprehensive since it has embraced all the previous interpretations of ‘quality’ that we have earlier discussed.

Building upon Chan & Lai (2002)’s double-level perspectives of ‘quality’, we shall then move on to discuss what ‘quality education’ is, in both of its ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ senses. However, before exploring the concept of ‘quality education’, it would, perhaps, be sensible for us to first of all raise and answer the fundamental question: *what is education itself*?

Rogers (2003) defines ‘education’ as “the provision of organized conditions for learning to take place” and “a means of providing learner support and assistance”. It aims at “maximizing effective learning”; though for some people, ‘education’ only means “a system of institutions which aim to provide learning opportunities” (Rogers, 2003: 45).

Rogers (op. cit.) claims that 'education' involves at least two parties: (i) agent, such as formal educational institution and/or teacher; (ii) student or learner. Both parties usually intend certain outcomes from the activities in which they are engaged. There is an education purpose and planning on both sides.

Adams (2002) points out that the meanings and purposes of education and the patterns of development of education systems have been profoundly influenced by history and by recent economic and cultural changes in the region. 'Education', in a broad sense, "improves the capabilities of individuals and the capacity of institutions"; and the more recent views of 'education' are that it is regarded as "a human need, an integral part of quality of life, a support for moral and social values, and an instrument for economic productivity" (Adams, 2002: 11).

Chapman & Adams (2002) further contribute to our Education Literature by offering the following interpretation of 'education quality':

> Examined with context, education quality apparently may refer to inputs (number of teachers, amount of teacher training, number of textbooks), process (amount of direct instructional time, extent of active learning), outputs (test scores, graduation rates), and outcomes (performance in subsequent employment). Additionally, quality education may imply simply the attaining of specified targets and objectives. More comprehensive views are also found, and interpretation of quality may be based on an institution's or program's reputation,

> the extent to which schooling has influenced change in student knowledge, attitudes, values and behavior, or a complete theory or ideology of acquisition and application of learning.
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 2)*

The above definitions offered by Rogers (2003), Adams (2002) and Chapman & Adams (2002) are also echoed by UNESCO (2004) which suggests that 'education' must be able to 'help learners live their lives with greater competence and greater confidence' and that **'**this objective of education will only be met when the learning process is positive and helpful enough'. UNESCO (2004) defines 'education' as a way to 'help learners live their lives' which also has a very close connection with 'life education', a deep-rooted philosophy from our traditional, humanistic stream of educators, such as the one advocated by Lindeman (1926), Rogers (1969) and Knowles (1990).

Sharing a similar concept, Ho et. al. (2005) point out that 'education', in general, should be able to enhance at least two kinds of skills: "job skills and life skills".

In today's knowledge-based and market-driven society, workers not only need to be well equipped with job skills, such as information technology, engineering, marketing, negotiating, presentation and other professional skills, but also "life skills", since it is someone's "life skills" that finally determine if he or she will be able to endure, face problems and adversities in the future; and if he/she is going to turn out to be a happy or

unhappy person in the end. Life skills include various skills in communication, time management, stress management, emotion management, interpersonal skills, reflective skills, capacity to persevere and fight all odds relentlessly. According to Ho et. al. (op. cit.), people with **"**excellent life skills are confident, strong and adaptive". Besides, Ho et. al. (op. cit.) point out that "education must not just produce knowledgeable and skilled people, but should produce people with integrity.' In their opinion, *"*quality education" or "efficient and effective education reform" should be able to achieve its various goals and bring about the enhancement of these generic skills, including integrity, on the part of learners; and amongst all skills, "life skills", are of the paramount importance – an interpretation completely in line with that of UNESCO's (2004).

UNESCO (2004) remarks that 'education' will only become one of 'quality' if it comprises a 'positive and helpful learning process' for the learners/students. It is only in such a way that the real purpose of 'education' can be achieved. Hence, a 'positive and helpful learning process' is the first characteristic of 'quality education'.

Due to the complexity and fast-growing pace of our today's world, 'learning must go on throughout life' (UNESCO, 2004). Apart from comprising a 'positive and helpful learning process', 'quality education' should also mean a 'continuing process' of life-long learning.

UNESCO (2004) further suggests that 'quality education' is about 'developing behaviour based on positive values – understanding and respect for other people of all kinds'. In other words, 'quality education' should support positive social changes and will ultimately lead to 'many social and economic benefits, which countries and individuals hope for'.

Using Chan & Lai (2002)'s 'double-level' perspectives as the analytical framework for UNESCO's above definitions, we can see that in an absolute sense, 'quality education' should exhibit the following three characteristics: (i) a 'positive and helpful learning process' for the learners/students; (ii) a 'continuing process' of life-long learning and (iii) a tangible result of 'economic and social benefits'.

In a relative sense, 'quality education' would mean making a difference to the individuals, in terms of the enhancement of the 'competence' and 'confidence' of the learners before and after receiving their 'education'. In relation to 'society', 'quality education' will also result in bringing along 'economic and social benefits'. In short, 'quality education' should be able to 'add value' to both of the individual learners and society as a whole in a positive manner.

Then, what is meant by 'value-added' and how can 'quality education' add value to individuals and society in an 'absolute' or a 'relative' sense? Ho (2005: 10) has contributed to the literature by illuminating us on the term of 'value-added' in the context

of education by suggesting that there are at least six aspects of 'value-added' that may be derived from the 'education process':

- Self-control skills: the ability to focus the mind on a task, the ability to control one's emotions, and the awareness of the need for balance.
- Reflective skills.
- Social skills.
- Mastery of skills of communication and reasoning.
- Knowledge about the world and society in which students live.
- Vocational or professional knowledge and skills.

As we can see, the first two aspects of 'added-value' that Ho (2005: 10) has suggested, namely (i) self-control skills and (ii) reflective skills, are more to do with the level of individual learners while the remaining four aspects, (iii) social skills; (iv) communication skills; (v) knowledge about society and (vi) vocational skills, are in relation with people around, workplace and society as a whole. Analyzing from Chan & Lai (2002)'s 'double-level' perspectives, we can see that the first two aspects of 'value-added' as suggested by Ho (2005), are rather 'absolute' while the other four value-added skills are inclined to be in a more 'relative' way.

Ho's (2005) "value-added" Conceptual Framework is to view "education" as a "productive" process. Ho (2005: 9) thinks that education is "productive" in a broad sense since it "promotes excellence" not only by imparting job-related skills, but also by

"allowing each individual to feel happy through being at home with themselves, realizing their own potential, finding meaning in living, and gaining in confidence." Education should therefore produce "value-added", and "efficient education" should produce "value-added in a cost-effective fashion – with minimum wastage and minimum negative side effects". According to Ho (op. cit.), there are at least "six aspects of value-added" which may be derived from the "education process" - (i) "self-control skills"; (ii) "reflective skills", (iii) "social skills", (iv) "mastery of skills in communication and reasoning", (v) "knowledge about the world and society" and (vi) "vocational or professional knowledge and skills".

Ho (op. cit.) further suggests three critical aspects which affect the "efficiency" of education production at the "institutional" level: (i) examinations; (ii) autonomy and (iii) opportunities for upward mobility" and formulates the following 4 propositions for future researches to be conducted at the "institutional" and 3 other propositions at "social context" levels:

<u>At the institutional and individual level:</u>

P1: The education experience potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organization skills, social skills, and communication skills, over and above the knowledge transmitted.

P2: The education process involves both imitation and drilling, and creative explorations and reflections. Maintaining interest through creative activities and self-confidence through an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the process much more effective and less frustrating for students.

P3: It is important to attract quality graduates to go into teaching. Allowing teachers a high degree of autonomy and supporting their endeavours through adequately equipped schools and quality textbooks are at least as important as material incentives to attract quality teachers.

P4: Examinations and drilling can be useful and much less harmful if results from examinations are not used to penalize students psychologically by designating them to the "bottom fifth" or the "bottom third" and thus labeling them as inferior.

<u>At the Social Level:</u>

P5: A comparison between marginal benefits and marginal costs, broadly defined, should form the basis for government funding of education, the salary levels of teachers, and the tuition fees of students. The current uniformity of pay scales across fields in Hong Kong most probably is not optimal.

P6: The education ladder should be designed to allow sufficient room for developmental purposes at each stage of development while the curriculum should recognize the emotional and psychological needs of the student.

P7: The government has an important role in maintaining a level playing field and in opening channels for upward mobility for law-abiding citizens. This is necessary before civic education can be effective.

Ho's (2005)'s 4 propositions at the "institutional" level will also form the backbone of the overall design of the in-depth interview questions for our Case Study in Chapter 4. Further details will be discussed in Chapter 3D, "*Criteria for the selection of Conceptual Frameworks" (pp. 105-106).*

2C. The Global Wave of 'Quality Education Reforms

According to Akoojee & McGrath (2004:25), 'globalization is a significant force both at the level of discourse and phenomena.' 'Globalization' is not just related to economic restructuring, but also to the cultural and ideological spheres. Many researches have manifested the tremendous impacts of globalization on the education and training sector in particular (Akoojee & McGrath, 2004; Burbules & Torres, 2000; King & McGrath, 2002; McGrath, 2006; Robertson et. al., 2002; Te Velde & McGrath, 2005; Torres, 2002). The impact of globalization, integration of the world economy and technological changes around the globe impose new demands on education (Adams, 2002; Mok & Welch, 2002). 'Quality' has become an important policy agenda in the recent years. The concern for 'service quality' is actually an idea which originates from the private business sector. Yet, it has well penetrated into the public sector, including the 'education' domain (Aucoin, 1990; Craft, 1994; Harman, 1996; Mok & Chan, 2002; Pollitt, 1986 and Sackey (1995). Driving for *'quality' in the de livery of educational service* has, therefore, become a *global tide of educational reforms* as well.

As a result of globalization, nation states have to compete with their counterparts globally, facing the reality that 'only the fittest' or 'the winners' can survive in the open global competitive environment' (Ho et al., 2005; Mok 2000, 2003a, 2003b and Mok & Welch, 2002). On one hand, controlling, monitoring, assuring and assessing the 'quality of education' are becoming a universal phenomenon. On the other hand, 'the impact of

globalization' and 'the financial restraints of the states' have created immense pressures for the restructuring of the public services all over the world.

With the increasing restraints on public expenditure, the public sector today is not concerned too much about the 'delivery of public values', but rather the 'management of scarce resources'. 'Education', being one of the major public services, is not immune from this 'global' wave of reforms (Altbach, 1998; Ho et. al., 2005; Mok, 2000 and Welch, 1996, 1998).

As Altbach (1998) comments, the "demands for accountability" and "fiscal constraints" in many countries have all challenged the professoriate and universities in general. In the Western Industrialized countries, for example, there is no more lavish financing of higher education from the Government and no more tenure for the Professoriate. Contract and part-time staff have become a popular trend in the universities in the U.S. and Europe. A greater and greater share of the burden of higher education is shifting onto the shoulders of individuals and families in order to ease the financial burden from the Government. Altbach (op. cit.) further points out there has been a significant growth of "Private Academic Institutions" not just in America, but also worldwide; even in countries which have traditionally and mainly depended on public funds, such as those in Asia. As a result of the stringent government budgets on education globally, educational leaders today have to seek additional funding sources, such as by introducing endowments and donations schemes to the institutions, offering self-financed or even profit-making courses, charging higher tuition fees, etc… To promote 'quality',

Governments around the globe also resort to a series of new corporate management strategies such as the creation of development plans, setting clear goals, initiating appraisal systems for staff, providing incentives, improvements in training; accompanied by assessment-driven measures such as quality indicators and quality assurance inspections.

It is hoped that with an enhanced transparency of school operations, joint participation by parents and society in school management, increased accountability of schools to the public and the adoption of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, schools would improve and continue to strive for 'excellence'. As to the educational management, the traditional forms of academic governance are increasingly criticized. Universities and schools are facing unprecedented challenges nowadays, even if the patterns of difficulties may vary from country to country, some common scenarios, such as 'diminished state funding', introduction of 'marketization' and 'privatization' concepts into the academic setting, persist worldwide.

Mok (2003a: 207) defines "marketizaton" and "privatization" as 'the ways market principles are introduced and practiced' in the education sector. "Marketization" is generally interpreted as the introduction of "market-oriented principles" and "privatization" is a strategy to "privatize" schools and universities or to "devolve a significant part of the cost of instruction to students and ask institutions to develop other revenue-producing strategies".

> When talking about 'marketization' and 'privatization' of education in these three selected Asian societies, I refer not only to the user-pays or self-financing principle being adopted in higher education, but also to the ways that market principles are introduced and practiced in running university education.
>
> (Mok 2003a: 207)

Bray (2004: 43) also offers a very clear and comprehensive interpretation of "Privatization":

> Privatization, by definition, is a process – an "-izaton" – rather than a state; … In some systems, privatization has arisen as a result of deliberate policy; but in others, it is the result of unplanned change. Four major models may be identified as follows:
>
> - *Transfer of ownership of public schools*. Deliberate transfer of ownership (and, by implication, control) of existing public schools to private hands is perhaps the most striking form of privatization. Such a move is especially radical when it involves a shift from not-for-profit to commercial operation, though this type of change is rare.
>
> - *Shifting sectoral balance without re-designating existing institutions*. This form of privatization occurs through a more evolutionary shift in the

balance of types of institution. Thus, the number and size of government schools might be held constant, but the number and size of parallel private schools might be permitted or encouraged to increase. Alternatively, the government sector might expand, but the private sector might expand more. Or the government sector might contract, but the private sector might not contract so much, might remain constant, or might expand.

- *Increased government funding and support for private schools*. Governments may strengthen the private sector by giving financial and other support to private schools. Some governments are experimenting with systems of vouchers, in which families can choose to send children to private schools but meet some or all the costs from a financial allocation earmarked by the government.

- *Increased private financing and/or control of government schools*. In this form of privatization, schools remain nominally under government ownership but the proportion of finance and/or control of non-government sources is increased. Governments in some countries have experienced a severe fiscal crisis, and parents and communities have had to increase financial contributions to their schools in order to bridge gaps. In other countries, governments' financial health has remained strong but for ideological and other reasons the authorities have required school

> principals to be more responsive to the market place. There are forms of privatization within the government system.
>
> *Bray (2004: 43)*

Bray (2004: 44) further comments that in some countries, "the majority of private schools are elite alternatives to public schools". However, in other settings, it was found that the majority of private schools may also be "second-chance" institutions for individuals who have failed to gain places in public schools. Such private schools are commonly more expensive for the students and their parents, but this is not always the case.

"Privatization" has strong economic, social, political and educational effects. According to the Research conducted by Jimenez and colleagues on Colombia, Dominican Republic and Tanzania (Jimenez et al., 1991; Lockheed and Jimenez, 1994), most of the evidence appear "positive" in that "privatization is able to increase the efficiency of education systems". In their studies, "private schools" were found to generally achieve better results at lower costs, and as such were more cost effective than public schools". However, there are also some contradictory findings in India showing that "Government-aided schools were the most cost effective, and fully government schools were intermediate (Bashir, 1997). Hence, the outcome is far from generalizable or certain.

Chapman (2002: 26) sums up that the dominant arguments for private schooling are that it is generally regarded as: (i) one of higher quality; (ii) increases the number of school places; (iii) is more efficient; and (iv) encourages additional private moneys in support of education. However, these arguments lack concrete evidence to support. According to Bray's (1998) study, four types of "private schooling" are identified: (i) the elite private schools that generally provide good-quality education at a high price; (ii) schools run by religious or other not-for-profit organizations that provide an alternative to the public system and that may be superior, comparable or inferior in quality; (iii) ***low-quality, low-cost institutions that cater to excess demand and give a second chance to those who are unable to get into the public system****;* and (iv) low-cost institutions that cater to students who could go to public schools but are discouraged from doing so by financial reasons or other obstacles. The findings are mixed and sometimes contradictory.

Some studies on private schools were found to be more efficient than public ones, partly because private school managers have more incentives to be efficient as they have the flexibility to employ part-time and other less costly teachers and staff. However, there are also some findings which show strong "elite public schools" in many countries. Hence, the "efficiency" of elite private schools is still subject to question.

"Privatization" is generally regarded as a form of "Decentralization" strategy (Adams, 2002; Bray, 1999, 2000 and Chapman, 2002). Then, what is "Decentralization"?

According to Bray (1999), “Decentralization” can take the following three major forms:

- *Deconcentration* – the transfer of tasks and work, but not authority.

- *Delegation* – the transfer of decision-making authority from higher to lower hierarchical units, but the authority can be withdrawn by the delegating unit at any time.

- *Devolutio*n – the transfer of authority to an autonomous unit which can act independently.

Adams (2002: 40) summarizes the objectives of adopting “Decentralization” strategy as follows:

- To find an alternative or addition to central government financing because of insufficient central resources, by requiring local governments to share financial responsibilities and develop private support;

- To improve efficiency of education as part of a general movement toward market-based development strategies that replace central planning;

- To increase the efficiency, relevance and effectiveness of education by encouraging participation of parents and the community; and

- To reflect new models of planning and decision making which, for purposes of increased relevance and improved quality, emphasize wider participation and collaboration.

However, a full implementation of "Decentralization" is still not observed in any country, so far. In the most enthusiastic settings, functions like "curriculum" and "testing" very often remain central functions of the Government, although districts, communities and schools are now taking more responsibility for activities, such as teacher selection and deployment, selection of textbooks and other instructional materials, facilities construction, maintenance and even financing (Chapman, op. cit.). Nevertheless, it is important to note that much of the value to education of greater decentralization will be determined by how communities and schools use their greater autonomy and resources to improve the quality of schooling and the leadership and experiences of the school principals and administrators.

The adoption of the "privatization" and "decentralization" strategies has become a global trend in the recent education reforms around the globe. The introduction of these "market-related strategies" or "Marketization" concept , by advocating the 3Es - namely "Economy", "Efficiency" and "Effectiveness" , forms the overall rhetoric of the 'Global' tide of Education Reforms under the philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism" and "Marketization" (Tse, 2005).

According to Tse's (2005: 101-102) Conceptual Framework, the philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism" is about "the adoption of private corporate management

practices in the running of the public sector and restructuring of the state in social policy or public services".

This "adoption of private corporate management practices" and "marketization", in fact, covers all the "market-related strategies", such as "decentralization" and "privatization" as previously discussed by other commentators worldwide (such as Altbach, 1998, 1999; Bray, 2000; Mok, 2000, 2003a, 2003b), by implementing the 3Es concepts of "economy", "efficiency" and "effectiveness" from the private business sector into the educational setting. The main features of Tse's (2005) "Corporate Managerialism" can be characterized as follows:

- Greater emphasis on output control, explicit standards and measures of performance; management by objectives or performance-oriented practices with extensive use of written contracts and performance agreements.

- A reduction in multiple accountability relationships and devolution or deregulation through the minimizing of opportunities for ministerial discretion in the detailed operation of government agencies.

- A reduction of government expenditure on public services and parsimony in resource use, often with a reliance on short-term employment contracts.

- An emphasis on economic rewards and sanctions.

- A distinction between the state's ownership and purchaser's interests; the separation of funding, advisory, delivery and regulatory functions; and an increase in non-state provision.

- Adoption of market principles and introduction of competition, with an emphasis on contestable provision and contracting out for service.

- An introduction of accrual accounting and an emphasis on capital charging and cost recovery.

(Tse, 2005: 101-102)

It is widely believed that by implementing the "Corporate Managerialist" and "Market-Oriented" strategies from the private business sector into the educational setting, (i.e. by introducing the strong Corporate Management strategy and by incorporating the 3Es concepts - "economy", "efficiency" and "effectiveness" from the private business and management area), the 'quality' and 'efficiency' of the educational management service will be greatly enhanced. However, as Chapman (2002: 22) points out, it is a mistake to confuse "efficiency" with "economy" or to believe that "a lower-cost activity is necessarily more efficient". It is even a bigger mistake if we think that "efficiency" can be improved by just lowering the cost of education, without considering the quality of the activity. Sometimes, lower cost leads to higher efficiency, but not always. Greater efficiency may also involve higher costs where more costly inputs lead to proportionately greater productivity.

Chapman (2002: 20) defines “efficiency” as “achieving the desired goals of education at lower cost or achieving more of those goals without increasing costs”. However, in reality, it is not a simple matter. To improve ‘efficiency’, Education Managers need to have a full picture of the ‘education production or instructional process’ at the institutional level.

As Windham & Chapman (1990) point out, many aspects of ‘efficiency’ can be understood in terms of the relationships among the different educational components, such as the interaction of educational inputs and processes which determines education costs; availability of resources and inputs; Government support and regulations; practicability and affordability of technology in particular countries; the overall economic, social and political conditions; cultural and religious contexts, etc… Unfortunately, it has almost become a global trend for the Governments worldwide to introduce ‘Education Reforms’ by “cutting costs” instead of by actually raising the “quality” of the inputs and production process of ‘education’. Three reasons help explain this situation:

(i) Expenditures tend to be more directly under the control of administrators, while changes to instructional quality require administrators to work indirectly, through teachers.

(ii) Cuts in costs are more quickly obvious than increases in quality.

(iii) Increasing efficiency by improving quality requires a far fuller understanding of the teaching and learning processes than many education administrators have.

Education Managers are thus under tremendous pressure to "increase efficiency" with the reduced Government funding. They have to mediate education efficiency in the manner in which they allocate expenditures, in the programs they introduce, and in the trade-offs they make between them.

The challenge for Educators today is whether to trade off an effective method of instruction for a lower cost but 'promising' one, or to yield to conventional wisdom as to what works rather than to rely on more systematic means of assuring that the mix of inputs and instructional strategies being used will actually result in their desired outputs. Education Managers today need to have a substantial knowledge of the education instructional process, as well as management.

As Chapman & Adams (2002) suggest, the increased concern for education 'quality' in many countries is a consequence of many diverse factors, such as (i) the shifting of focus from 'quantity' to 'quality' level as a result of the rapid expansion of the school educational systems in many countries in the last few decades; (ii) the restraints of the public resources and the inability to adequately staff and finance the rapidly expanding education systems; (iii) new demands for advanced skills and knowledge as a result of globalization; and (iv) global, regional and/or local financial crisis that have had an

adverse effect on education budgets and funds. Hence, a distinct 'new world order' has emerged in the "global" educational arena, characterized by the rhetoric of 'economic rationalism', 'customer choice' and the *three Es* (namely 'economy', 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness') under the new philosophy of 'Corporate Managerialism' and *'Marketization'* (Ball, 1998; Chapman & Adams, 2002; Flynn, 1997; Ho, 2005; Ho et. al., 2005; Huges, 1998; Mok & Welch, 2002; Tse, 2005 and Welch, 1996). These authors (op. cit.) find that schools and universities around the globe nowadays experience increasing pressure from governments, the main providers of higher education, to demonstrate maximum output from the financial input they obtain. The "market-oriented approach" has therefore become increasingly popular in the educational sector and the philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism" rules in most institutions around the globe.

As a result, Education Managers throughout the World are under enormous pressure to enhance the "quality" of the education by incorporating the philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism". It is hoped that the "effectiveness" and "efficiency" of the educational production can be enhanced in a reduced financial situation and to optimize the "economy" at the same time.

As already pointed out by Chapman (2002), one should not believe that "efficiency" can be improved by "just lowering the cost of production". A reduction in cost does not necessarily lead to greater efficiency, and very often, it also has some negative impacts. Nevertheless, the concepts of "efficiency" and "effectiveness" can be put together. A programme cannot be "*efficient"* unless it is *"effective*".

> The concept of efficiency already includes the concept of effectiveness.
>
> (Chapman, 2002: 21)

> To improve "efficiency", we cannot only consider the cost of an activity: we must also consider the quality and effectiveness of the activity. Efficiency can be improved by raising quality, by reducing cost, or through a combination of the two.
>
> *(Chapman, 2002: 22)*

The change in governance ideology in the education sector has no doubt changed the ways that academic institutions are managed, as well as the work-styles of teachers and academics. As Goldberg (2002) has suggested, the educational leaders in the new millennium face a dramatic state of uncertainty and pressure. This pressure may come from a range of 'performance expectations' in a climate of 'student performance' and 'financial accountability'.

As a result, educational leaders today have to perform the role of 'change agent' by implementing relevant education reforms in schools. The direction for these changes should enable schools to become more '***productive, effective, efficient and human'*** in order to deliver 'quality education' to students.

One should not ignore the fact that the emphasis on 'economic rationalism' and the practice of 'strong management' in running public educational service, has also caused 'unintended consequences'. (Altbach, 1998, 1999; Mok & Welch, 2002 and Salmi, 1994). Amongst all, the biggest *cost* of implementing the concept of 'Managerialism' in 'education' is 'dehumanization'. Mok (1998, 2003a, 2003b) regards that unlike market commodities, 'education' is a human service and a public good. When too much emphasis is put on 'market principles' and 'economic rationalism', education may finally result in failing to fulfill the noble task of 'human development'.

Some authors (Raskell, 1993; Rees, 1995; Stillwell, 1993) have also claimed that by adopting the private principles of 'Corporate Managerialism' in the academic setting, it might lead to some social and economic inequalities and will significantly undermine social solidarity and integration. As Rees (1995: 209) suggests, the costs of educational reforms may include "unemployment and associated poverty; part-time work and accompanying insecurity; stress, anxiety and loss of morale among employees; a persistent sense of powerlessness; and illnesses which may lead to premature death.". Ritzer (1998) even goes further to use the term 'McDonaldization' to show how strong the American business management concept is over the globe.

Ritzer (1998) argues that the American style of management and the philosophy of this US-based international fast food chain, with the emphasis on the 3Es, 'efficiency', 'economy' and 'effectiveness' of production, has not only influenced the private sector management all over the world, but also the public service management. As a result, certain private business practices such as 'marketization', 'privatization' and 'corporatization' have recently become the dominant themes of the educational policies and reforms introduced over the globe. This view is also shared by other education authors (Flynn, 1997; Halsey, 1992; Miller, 1995; Mok, 1998, 2000, 2003a, 2003b).

In the next section of our literature review, we shall turn from the 'West' to the 'East' and investigate if the same or similar features of the global wave of 'Quality Education Reforms' have been introduced in the academic sector in the Asian region as well. The aim is to see if the East and South East Asian countries have also been affected by the driving force of "Globalization", pursuing the same or similar 'quality education' reforms movement since the last or last two decades; and if they have also incorporated the same elements of the "Corporate Managerialist" and "Market-oriented" strategies from the private business sector into the academic setting.

2D. ‘QUALITY EDUCATION REFORMS’ IN ASIA

Bray & Lee (2001:1) note that the East Asian region is, in fact, composed of countries with widely diverse circumstances and political transitions, yet, they also have many commonalities, such as their ‘colonial transitions’, ‘interrelationships between education and economic changes’ and ‘transitions involving international forces and the changing role of the state’. Hence, the region does provide us an interesting setting for our research study. Bray & Lee (op. cit.) further point out that the political transitions in the East Asian Region influence the size and shape of education on the one hand; and on the other hand, they find that the educational changes in the region shape and contribute to political changes.

Mok (2003a) suggests the significance of the government’s role in introducing and implementing Education Policies and Reforms in East Asia, by commenting as follows:

> One of the explanations for the success of these East Asian societies in the field of education is in terms of purposeful government.
>
> *Mok (2003a: 203)*

The role of the Asian government has been stressed by many education critics as the reason for success in the ‘education’ policies in East Asia. The Asian governments’ efforts in promoting ‘education’ have also been appraised and described by scholars to be very instrumental in ‘raising the quality of education’ and in ‘promoting a learning

society' so that these Asian societies can not only maintain the competitiveness in the region, but also allow themselves to prepare for the future knowledge-based economy (Mok, 2000; Gopinathan, 2001; Green, 1999).

In addition, according to Morris & Sweeting (1995), the embedded culture of the traditional Chinese Confucian also helps reinforce the important role of education reforms in Asia and therefore gives impetus for the Governments in the region in implementing the various educational initiatives.

Chapman (2002) describes the growth of the Asian countries' education systems over the last two decades as "extraordinary" and "dramatic" and claims that:

> The extraordinary success of many Asian countries in expanding access and improving education quality is strong evidence of success in education management.
>
> *(Chapman, 2002: 3)*

The "extraordinary" success and "dramatic" growth of the education systems in many Asian countries over the last two decades, have at the same time, exacted a cost. As Chapman (op. cit.) observes, in many Asian countries, the education system expanded faster than qualified teachers and administrators could be recruited or trained.

> As a result, in some countries like Lao PDR, Vietnam and Nepal, a lot still needs to be done in order to really improve the quality of education in the Asian region.

Chapman's (op. cit.) above comments on the educational development in the Asian Region are echoed by other authors (Adams, 2002 and Bray, 2000). These authors (op. cit.) find that with exception to a few Asian leaders (such as Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Taiwan), the persistence of low-quality education is widely demonstrated, despite the governments' strong efforts in implementing education reforms in the region in the past 2 decades.

Their findings are summed up as follows:

Lao PDR:

There is a desperate need to improve the quality of their education inputs and processes due to the inappropriate curricula and teaching methods. Textbooks are scarce or non-existent in many schools. Access to instructional materials is diminishing as parents have to pay. Many schools also face the problems of financing. Besides, their lack of instructional materials has also been due to the absence of a reliable delivery/distribution system to the schools. It was reported that 84% of the teachers were not formally trained.

Vietnam:

Most schools are found to be poorly furnished and equipped; students lack textbooks and teachers do not have sufficient training.

Nepal:

There is a lack of formally trained teachers. The classroom instructional practices are very poor and schools need to be reformed to run properly. The rapid expansion of basic education system outpaced the production of formally trained teachers. There is also a need to reform the curriculum in order to fit into the needs of society and needs of the children. Teachers' morale is yet to be enhanced.

Indonesia:

Teachers' qualifications are found to be generally low, which may be explained by their low social status.

Pakistan:

Poor physical facilities and inadequate distribution of teaching materials are found. There is also a shortage of trained teachers, resulting in high student/teacher ratio. School fees are notably "high".

Philippines:

There was inadequate teacher in-service training. Besides, a teacher's salary is found to be relatively low in the country.

In fact, the above problems facing education systems in South and Southeast Asian countries are not new, and they appear to be alike: poorly trained teachers, inadequate supplies of textbook, weak management, irrelevant curriculum and poor school facilities. Yet, all these Asian Governments have claimed that they have placed a high priority for quality improvement in their countries' educational system under the banner of 'Quality Education Reforms'.

Mok (2003a:3) remarks that 'globalization and the evolution of a knowledge-based economy have caused dramatic changes to the character and functions of education in most countries around the world', and the 'business-like practices have been adopted to cope with competition in the global marketplace'.

According to Mok (op. cit.), the financial constraints and weakened state capacity in social policy provision and the external pressure generated by globalization call for restructuring and reforming education systems in the Asian societies as well. Amongst all these latest educational policies and reforms in East Asia, 'Decentralization' and 'Marketization' are found to be the two prominent features in their planning, which Mok

(op. cit.) describes as ‘similar trends’ in the Asian societies in pursuit of their ‘Quality Education Reforms”.

Mok (2002; 2003a; 2003b) comments that there are ‘similar trends’ but ‘diverse agendas’ in the approach of the East Asian Governments, as reflected in their education reforms dealing with the growing force of the ‘globalization’ in the region. Mok (op. cit) concludes that local factors of each country are also key determinants of their policies which explain the different agendas of the different East Asian Governments. However, in facing the same challenges brought along by the force of ‘globalization’, ‘similar trends’ of market-oriented strategies adopted by the Western countries, such as ‘Marketization’ and ‘Decentralization’ strategies which originate from the private business sector, have also formed the same framework in the education reforms and planning in the few Asian leaders in the region.

Indeed, many authors also believe that the recently introduced reforms in these Asian societies are concerned with ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their education systems (Bray, 2000, 2004; Hawkins, 2000; Su, 1999). The introduction of ‘Decentralisation’ and ‘Marketisation’ policies can not only release the financial burden of the government, but also help to improve efficiency and quality of delivery of education in the region.

All these policies are in line with the ‘global’ tide of education reforms since ‘Decentralisation’ and ‘Marketisation’ strategies are also regarded by many western

authors as the 'central elements of the currently global wave of reforms' (Henry & Feuerstein, 2003; Nir, 2003; Pick, 2004).

However, as Bray (1999) observes, in some Asian countries, there is a coexistence of trends that are "centralizing", "decentralizing" or "recentralizing" in the governance of education. On one hand, modern universities in some Asian societies, such as Hong Kong, Singapore and China are given more "autonomy" in academic governance where "decentralization" policy is implemented in the routine operations of the Universities. On the other hand, this so-called "autonomy" is in fact a "regulated" one by their governments, under the name of "quality assurance and accountability" (Bray, 1999; Mok, 2003a and Mok & Lee, 2000). Mok (2003a) claims this policy as "Centralized Decentralization" strategy employed by these governments. A close scrutiny of recent developments in the East Asian societies (Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Taiwan) reveals that the governments in these East Asian countries are adopting the similar policies of 'Decentralization', 'Centralized Decentralization' and 'Marketization' in their recent Education reforms and planning for their own countries, in response to the growing driving force of 'Globalization'. Now, let us turn our eyes to these four Asian leaders:

Singapore:

Lee & Gopinathan (2003) describe the development of the higher education reform in Singapore by dividing it into four stages:

The first stage started in early 1990s and was marked by the launch of an endowment fund by the government to diversify sources of university funding. The initiative is to make universities less dependent on government grants and thus alleviating the pressure on increasing tuition fees. The fund was founded with a base of S$500 million by the government. The two universities in Singapore had to raise S$250 million on their own to net the other S$250 million matching funds from the government, making a total of S1 billion within a five-year period. The purpose of the endowment fund is to support special and innovative projects related to scientific and technological researches. In 1997, the Singapore government raised the matching amount to S$2 for every dollar raised by the two universities for their own endowment funds on top of the previous dollar-for-dollar pledge.

The second stage was the establishment of an International Academic Advisory Panel (IAAP) to assist the universities to develop into world-class institutions in terms of teaching and research. The aim is to enhance the overall quality of the universities in Singapore in terms of teaching and research and achieve the goal of developing them into "world-class" and "all-round" tertiary institutions.

The third stage of higher education commenced in August 2000 when the first "private" university, Singapore Management University (SMU), was formed as a consequence of collaboration between the Singapore Institute of Management and the Wharton School of Business of the University of Pennsylvania in the USA. SMU is to focus on serving the

business and service sectors of the domestic economy. The university is empowered to confer its own degrees that will be recognized by the government.

In addition, it is given "considerable autonomy in student recruitment, funding and fee structures and curriculum". However, the government had ordered "a flat rate of tuition fees among all universities in Singapore". Therefore, instead of a genuinely private university, Lee & Gopinathan (2003) comment that it is more appropriate to adopt the term "privately-run but publicly-funded" to categorize this special nature. Again, in Mok's term, this is once again a strategy of "Centralized Decentralization" as adopted by Governments worldwide.

The fourth stage came in July 2000 when the Singapore Government accepted the recommendations made by the review committee on university governance and funding. The aim is to adopt the "flexible and market-sensitive appraisal and remuneration systems" to enhance and maintain the quality of university leaders, administrators and academic staff in order to compete with other world-class universities in the global education marketplace. The new remuneration scheme is consistent with "market-driven and performance-based principles".

As we can see, like other countries in the West, the Singapore Government has adopted the same "market-oriented strategies" and introduced the private business concepts of "economy", "efficiency" and "effectiveness", into the education sector. Higher education reform in Singapore is aimed to ensure a more efficient use of resources.

Although the universities are given "considerable autonomy", the Government continues to play an active role as a facilitator to generate a favourable environment for the local universities to become competitive in the global knowledge and education marketplace.

The state continues to control the universities, maintain its capability and capacity to govern the higher education sector in line with the country's desired economic and national development. Hence, once again, it is in fact a "centralized decentralization" strategy of the Singapore government.

Taiwan:

"Quality Education" has been defined by the Taiwanese government as "the pursuit of academic excellence by enhancing the overall capacity and efficiency of the institutional governance" (Ministry of Education, 2001). The higher education in Taiwan has indeed changed a lot, both "quantitatively" and "qualitatively", in the last two decades.

According to Lo & Tai (2003), the Taiwanese Government has initiated a series of education reforms since 1990s in order to make the country's education system "more open and innovative". Before 1980s, the Taiwanese Kuomintang government "monopolized" higher education and there was only very limited freedom for the universities and institutions in their running and administration.

Starting 1990s, the following significant changes in the Taiwan's education sector were noted:

1. The emergence of the Private Sector

The Taiwanese Government has strongly encouraged the growth of the "private" institutions and schools in the country since the late 1980s. There was a tremendous growth of the "number of private Higher Education Institutes" in Taiwan in 1990s. In 2001, the Taiwanese Government openly recognized the important role of the "private sector" in higher education provision in the *White Paper for University Education in 2001* (MOE, 2001) and the official figures for the "Private" Higher Education Institutions reached 103; while the "Public" institutions were only 51 in that year. The Taiwanese Government also revised the University Law and lifted some administrative procedures in order to facilitate the growth of "Private" institutions during the past decade.

2. Fiscal Decentralization

"Fiscal Decentralizatin" is another strategy adopted by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan to "decentralize" power to the national universities and encourage competition between the Public and Private Higher Education Institutes. Before 1994, all national universities were primarily funded by the Government with the "Public budget System". However, with the new reform introduced in 1994, the funding system was changed from that of the "public" to "University Fund System".

3. Empowerment of Academics and Self-Accreditation

The Taiwanese government has also implemented its "Decentralization" strategy through the "liberalization" of higher education in Taiwan in 1997 when the Taiwanese Government drafted and implemented the new "University Law", turning a new chapter for the public universities in Taiwan.

According to this new law, the "legal entity" of the public universities was formally established. In other words, the status of "national" universities was transformed to "independent" legal entities. Such amendments in law not only "decentralized" the power of "administration, financing, personnel management, curriculum, teaching and researching" to the institutions, but also meant the empowerment of institutions and academics. Again, this is another sign of "decentralization" strategy adopted by the Taiwanese government in carrying out the education reforms in the recent decade.

4. Strong Quality Governance: Internal and External Quality Evaluating Systems

According to Lo & Tai (op. cit.), as a result of the rapid expansion of the Higher Education Institutes in Taiwan, The Ministry of Education is now considering setting up an external evaluation system for all the institutions in Taiwan. The proposed evaluation

system would be introducing the private business management principle of "reward and penalty" system, to be run by non-state sectors.

The involvement of the government would be "minimal" in the system for the Taiwanese Government is shifting its previous "state-monopolized" to the present "state-supervisory" or "state-facilitating" model.

Once again, we can see that the Taiwanese government has employed the "decentralization" and "privatization" strategies in introducing its various educational reforms like the other Western and Asian countreies that we have discussed in the previous parts of the Literature Review section.

China:

As Postiglione (2003) observes, the ideology of 'globalization' and the perceived need to deepen participation in the knowledge economy has led universities in China to adapt and consolidate their advantages. "China's universities have rapidly responded to changes by resorting to the same market-oriented strategies" worldwide, such as shifting to formula funding; charging higher student fees; admitting adult learners into continuing education programmes; permitting students to choose their own jobs after graduation; consolidating small institutions to attain economies of scale; generating more of their own revenue; running enterprises; and cooperating with industry and banks. China's Universities have long been totally dependent on government funding for decades.

However, in the past decade, it was noted that the Central Peking University has generated 41.7 per cent of its funding. Other Universities followed suit, including Tsinghua University (33.6%), Fudan University (44.9%), Shanghai Jiaotong University (45.9%), Nanjing University (27.5%) and Zhejiang University (38%). Funding is generated from university-based industries, such as Beijing University's multimillion-dollar Fangzhen Corporation that includes a large number of research and application operations based in the Zhongguancun, also known as Beijing's Silicon Valley.

"Privatization" and "Centralized Decentralization" strategies are prominent in China's 'Quality Education Reforms' during the past decade. There has been a remarkable growth of the "private" schools and universities in China. Popularly run (minban) or Private colleges and universities are entering the scene for the first time since 1949, and their numbers are increasing rapidly. The official number of minban or "private" colleges and universities was 1,325 in the year 2000, enrolling close to one million - 981,700 students (Postiglione, 2003: 161).

As we can see, the philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism", i.e. by introducing the internally strong "Corporate Management" strategy, maximizing efficiency and outputs, achieving the economies of scale by introducing the 3Es concepts, such as "economy", "efficiency" and "effectiveness", forms the overall rhetoric of the education reforms found in China's universities as well. The universities in the Mainland China's system have made major shifts in the lines of control in the last few decades. "Consolidation" or "Centralized Decentralization" is one of the strategies employed to optimize the

universities' resources and maximize efficiency of the higher education on the mainland. It occurred at the turn of the twenty-first century and involved the merging of two or more institutions of higher education for the sole purpose of improving efficiency. With the State's decision in 1993 to establish 100 world-class universities, the so-called 211 project, universities are aiming for higher standards and economies of scale (Postiglione, 2003). The Ministry of Education continues to maintain direct control over the 3 to 4 per cent of China's state universities that compose the Ivy League of Chinese Higher education while over 400 institutions of higher education formerly under the authority of various central government ministries have been transferred to provincial or local education bureaus.

As we can see, the Chinese Government has resorted to both "decentralization" and "re-centralization" strategies to optimize resources by introducing the 3Es concepts of achieving "economy", "effectiveness" and "efficiency" of the universities. The State has in fact transformed the institutions not just for the sake of their survival, but also made them the most attractive institutions for international academic exchange and cooperation, and most able to generate funds through engagements in global business ventures.

In the next section, we will focus on the discussion about the development of 'Quality Education Reforms' in Hong Kong.

2E. ‘QUALITY EDUCATION REFORMS’ IN HONG KONG

The call for ‘quality education’ reforms has become a dominant theme of the educational policies introduced in Hong Kong since 1997. Indeed, ‘globalization’ is restructuring the ways in which we live, and in a very profound manner (Fukuyama, 1992, Giddens, 1999 and Ohmae, 1990). The impacts of ‘globalization’ are multi-dimensional and not just related to economic restructuring, but also the cultural and ideological spheres. In the realm of education, driving for ‘quality’ in the delivery of educational service has also become a global tide of educational reforms since the past 2 decades. Hong Kong, having long been exposed to the wave of Globalization, is also “under much pressure to shape up and partake in this global drive for excellence” (Ho et. al, 2005: 1).

Cheng (2002) remarks that the period from the mid-1960s until the late 1980s was the ‘Quantitative Era’ in Hong Kong. The emphasis on educational development was on the ‘quantitative’ area, such as the provision and the establishment of structures. Here below is a chronology of the educational expansion development in Hong Kong:

1965: White paper on primary education

1970: Compulsory Primary Education

1973: The Education Green Paper

1978: Nine-year Compulsory Education

1980: Higher and Vocational Education

1982: Establishment of Vocational Training Council

1986: Expansion in Higher Education

1989: Further Expansion in Higher Education

(Source: Cheng, 2002: 44)

During this period, the emphasis was placed on 'quantity' level, i.e. 'education expansion' in the territory. The issue of 'quality' was not touched at all by the government. As a result, as Tse (2002) comments, the target of 'quantity' was met at the expense of 'quality' during this period.

As Tse (2002: 145) notes, it was in fact until 1997, when the Education Commission finally published its *Report No. 7* that the Government officially claimed it to be a comprehensive strategy to promote a 'quality culture' in the school system. Driving for ***'quality'*** has also become the top agenda of the local educational reforms in Hong Kong since the past 2 decades.

The main objectives of Report No. 7 (Education Commission, 1997) are as follows:

1. To enhance community appreciation of the need for quality school education;
2. To include a quality culture in the school system to contribute to the personal growth of students, and the pursuit of excellence;
3. To provide a practical framework for key players in the school system to achieve the aims of education in an efficient, cost-effective and accountable manner;
4. To recommend an integrated strategy for quality assurance and development;

5. To provide incentives for quality performance;
6. To assist and remedy under-performing schools to encourage initiatives and continuous improvement; and
7. To recommend a framework for raising the professional standards of principals and teachers and enhancing their professional education and development.

The Education Commission considers it important that the community and all players in the school system should be committed to building a quality culture as a pre-requisite for quality school education and number of measures must be taken, including:

a. Setting clear and commonly accepted goals for school education and having these goals clearly understood by all players in the school system;
b. Translating the goals into achievable, observable and measurable quality indicators for self-evaluation and external assessment;
c. Allowing school management greater autonomy in general administration, finance and personnel matters but at the same time requiring a higher degree of accountability for school performance;
d. Having an efficient, equitable and cost-effective funding system which meets basic needs of schools and which is related to performance;
e. Providing incentives to recognize and encourage initiative and the pursuit of excellence;
f. Assisting and where necessary taking remedial measures regarding under performing schools;

g. Raising the professional standards of principals and teachers and enhancing their professional education and development; and
h. Introducing corresponding changes in the education-related executive and advisory structure, the curriculum, examinations and the academic system.

According to the Report No. 7, schools should be expected and thus motivated to improve and continue to strive for excellence. Hence, the major recommendations were made as follows:

1. ***Setting goals and developing indicators***: Education Commission recommends that the aims of education should reflect the changing needs of schools and the community and that schools should translate such aims into quality indicators. The concept of value-added achievement, which can provide the incentive for schools to make continuous improvement, and an equitable basis for self-evaluation and comparison among schools was introduced.

2. ***Putting in place a quality assurance mechanism***: Education Commission recommends internal quality assurance to be achieved through school-based management, co-operation among key players in the school system and self-evaluation by schools. All schools should have been put in place school-based management by the year 2000 in the spirit of School Management Initiative to better meet the needs of their students. The Commission also makes recommendation to the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) to commission a

study to examine the way forward for quality assurance mechanism, as part of an overall review of the education-related executive and advisory structure. There are also plans to conduct quality assurance inspections using the whole-school approach.

3. ***Providing funding flexibility:*** Government and aided schools are given more financial and management flexibility in the use of all items of resources in the form of providing an aggregate Block Grant to schools which are more advanced in school management or school performance.

4. ***Providing incentives to encourage quality school education***: A Quality Education Development Fund (QEDF) should be set up under the Education Bureau ad other education-related funds.

5. ***Raising professional standards of principals and teachers:*** The Government should promulgate a coherent pre-service and in-service training strategy for teachers. A General Teaching Council should be set up to enhance the standard of teaching and professional development of teachers. All schools should put put in place a fair and open performance appraisal system for principals and teachers.

6. ***Implementing related reforms:*** The Government should devolve as much administrative and financial authority as possible to all schools and encourage school-based reforms. The examination system should be reviewed to take into account school-based assessment of students.

According to Mok & Chan (2002), the *Report No. 7* (1997) outlines the following key concepts in the 'quality education':

Firstly, the Report stresses that the delivery of educational outcomes should be able to meet the needs and expectations of the community in an '***efficient, accountable and cost-effective way'.***

Secondly, 'quality education' is defined as the 'pursuit of excellence' in the paper. According to the Report, the pursuit of ***'excellence'*** should not only restrict to students in achieving 'excellence' in the academic domain, but also in other areas, such as sports and other extra-curricular activities, in order to promote the concept of 'whole-person development'.

Thirdly, there is a widening of educational choices to parents and students. A new concept of school diversity is introduced. There is a call for diversity and choices to the community. Hence, in the Report, the Hong Kong Government also urges schools in the city to develop their own individual characteristics.

Fourthly, as a result of the call for diversity of schools and choices to parents and students in the community, the Government also encourages schools and front-line teachers in Hong Kong to adopt the 'best teaching models' in schools, in the way that they can well suit the needs of students as well as the unique characteristics of the individual schools.

As Mok & Chan (2002:7) have pointed out, the *Report No. 7* is, in fact, an attempt of the Hong Kong Government in introducing the 'quasi-market mechanisms'.

> Ideas central to the Report are quality, quality assurance management, incentives, accountability, competitiveness, performance, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, standards, choices, appraisal, value-added, excellence, clear, measurable merit, funding, transparency, indicators, inspection, measure(ing), monitor(ing), and clients. On the other hand, professional, school-based, autonomy, participation, self-evaluation, flexibility and co-operation have become part of a merely residual vocabulary….. However, it is most regrettable that words like equality, rights, democracy, 'education for all', and educational opportunity are completely missing in this educational discourse.
>
> (Mok & Chan, 2002:7)

Tse (2002: 146) thinks that it is impossible to promote quality education without a clear concept of what it is and the Report No. 7's definition of 'quality education' is "underdeveloped, unclear and inadequate". The Report sets out 'the essence of quality school education' as:

1. Delivery of educational outcomes which meet the needs and expectations of the community in an efficient, accountable and cost-effective way;
2. Pursuit of excellence in both academic and other domains of education;

3. Participation of front-line educators to choose the best teaching and learning model that suits the needs of teachers and students of individual schools;
4. Provision of educational diversity and choice to parents and students.

Tse (2002: 146) finds that the main weakness of the Report is its failure to recognize the fact that "quality education is a contestable and contested concept". Within society, there are diversely different ideas of what constitutes quality education. Quality education inevitably involves conflicts in objectives (e.g. individual vs. socio-economic), as well as conflicts in interests or needs among different groups (e.g. bureaucrats, taxpayers, employers, school administrators, teachers, parents and students, and so on). We cannot just assume "a pseudo-consensus" but have to "face the conflicting definitions and recognize their differences".

The stress on Quality Assurance (QA) is found to be the prominent theme of the reform. Quality is monitored through both internal and external quality assurance mechanisms. There are measures for internal quality assurance by schools, such as school-based management (SBM), participation of parents and teachers, and self-evaluation by school. There is also an external quality assurance mechanism. Starting from 1997-1998, different sections of the Education Department were reorganized into one Quality Assurance Inspection Unit (QAI) to provide external review of school performance and to encourage school self-evaluation. The Unit is in charge of overseeing all aspects of a school, with the following key features:

1. It is based on common, open and objective performance indicators, formulated on the basis of the Statement of Aims, to provide tools for the assessment of the quality of education in schools.
2. It is built on interacting and transparent QA processes, namely school self-evaluation and QAI.
3. It takes into account the strengths of existing QA activities and School-Based Management (SBM) and the traditional values and changing needs of schools.
4. It maintains a balance between providing support to schools through partnership and exerting pressure through monitoring.
5. It aims at achieving quality school education through school improvement and accountability.

Ball (1998) also comments that the Government's new Education Reforms movement is in fact a further step towards a 'market-oriented' approach in the governance of educational service in the city. This is especially reflected in the Government's call for the diversity of schools and wider choices to students and parents. Such reform is viewed by Ball (1998) as a 'market-oriented' move.

Cheng (2005) echoes and shares his perspective that the development of the Hong Kong Educational Reforms can, in fact, be divided into 3 phrases:

1. The first wave of educational reform in Hong Kong was conducted in 1970s by the British Government, with the focus on internal process improvement through external intervention or input approach.

2. The second wave of educational reform was conducted since the mid- 1990s, with the introduction of the concept of "effectiveness" in terms of "school-based management, quality assurance, accountability and stakeholders' satisfaction with large-scale reforms".

3. Since the publication of the Quality Education Reform Proposal by the Education Commission in 2000, Hong Kong is now embracing the third wave of educational reforms (Cheng, 2005).

> *"The World has Changed, So Must the Education System!"*
>
> Education holds the key to the all-round development of a person and prepares him/her for work and life.
>
> (Education Commission, 2000)

The Reform in 2000 is a gigantic one in terms of its "depth and magnitude" (Cheng, 2000, 2005; Mok, 2003c; Mok & Chan, 2002; Poon & Wong, 2004). It has covered the *entire education system, academic structure*, admissions system, curriculum, assessment methods, *medium of instruction, teachers' certification and training.*

According to the Education Commission (2000), the goals are mainly three-fold:

1. Reduce examination pressure
2. Create more room for students to develop their potential and engage in more meaningful activities;

3. Achieve educational equity.

Cheng (2005: 191) claims that Hong Kong is going to pursue future effectiveness with a very strong concern for the relevance to the future of next generations and society in **globalization**".

The Education Commission claims to have adopted the principles, including "student-focused", "no-loser", "quality", life-wide learning" and "society-wide mobilization". The Reform Package, as proposed by the Education Commisssion (2000: 11) covers the following areas:

1. Reforming the curricula to provide comprehensive and balanced learning experiences;
2. Improving the assessment mechanism to facilitate teaching and learning;
3. Removing obstacles to learning in the system to create room for teaching and learning;
4. Reforming the University admission system to promote the concept of all-round development;
5. Increasing post-secondary learning opportunities to nurture more high quality talents;
6. Formulating resource strategies for the effective use of society's resources.

For the Curriculum, the Education Commission aims to provide schools with a structure for outlining and developing different curriculum framework that includes eight Key Learning Areas (the bases for knowledge building – also a platform 'to enhance cross-subject cooperation and facilitate students to "learn how to learn"), generic skills such as collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, communication skills, information technology skills, self-management skills, creativity, numeracy skills and study skills; values and attitudes (nurturing of students' personal dispositions, through the related topics and learning targets in the eight Key Learning Areas). The Curriculum Development Council has also proposed a beyond ten-year schedule for implementing curriculum reform: short-term strategies (2000-2005), medium-term strategies (2005-2010) and long-term strategies (2010 and beyond).

As Cheng (2001) comments, even though the directions and principles of educational reforms proposed are generally welcomed by the public, how and why these proposals and recommendations can be effective to serve the principles of educational reforms and new aims of education in practice remains a major concern among the public. Without clear research evidence and sound knowledge base to support these proposals, it is really difficult to convince the public or educators that they are feasible, effective, and practical in implementations.

Due to the large-scale changes and the wide coverage of crucial issues in the reforms, the Proposal by the Education Commission in 2000 was found to have created a lot of

pressure on school Principals, as reported on 17 December 2005 (Ming Pao Daily) as well as on the front-line teachers, especially the language teachers. [2]

Amongst all, the change of curriculum and the new academic structure (3+3+4), with the introduction of the New Senior Secondary School (NSS) curriculum in Hong Kong, and the various language initiatives and benchmark requirements for language teachers and schools are found to be the most pressing ones.

Poon (2019) points out that the changeover of sovereignty on 1 July 1997 marked a new era in the development of language education in Hong Kong.

As mentioned in the Education Commission Report (2000:4), the aim is to "nurture a new generation of learners who are "capable of life-long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change… and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large".

Poon (op. cit) also notes that the curriculum reform documents have entirely changed the direction of Chinese language education not only on paper, but also in practice, by adopting an "integrated skills" approach. Apart from training language skills, cultivating a sense of aesthetics, responsibility to the community and awareness of Chinese culture and ***national identity*** are also incorporated into the objectives of the Chinese language subject.

[2]A list of the major educational initiatives introduced in the city since 1997 is available on p.8 and in Annex I. This will form a basis of discussion with the front-line teachers in Chapter 4 of the Case Study.

As for the English language teaching, “teachers are encouraged to try out the so-called ‘new’ methods or concepts such as task-based language learning, integrated skills, language arts, shared reading, phonics, authentic materials, student-centredness, etc.., some aspects of which have been included in the English curriculum for decades.

In addition, a report on language education policy has been published in 2003 (SCOLAR, 2003) since the handover in 1997. The SCOLAR report proposed a wide scope of recommendations, including the “school sector, universities, parents, employers, the mass media, and the wider community with a view to raising language standards in Hong Kong.”

The following recommendations were made:

1. To develop and assess basic competencies in Chinese and English of primary and secondary students;
2. To develop standards-referenced public examinations
3. To set the level of Chinese and English in line with overseas standards required for university admission
4. To encourage employers, particularly the government, to adopt the language competencies expected of working adults as requirements for recruitment and/or promotion;
5. To develop a Putonghua proficiency scale for local workers;

6. To create a more motivating language learning environment for local students and working adults;
7. To focus more on the teaching of English grammar, phonics, and language arts, and on Cantonese pronunciation and modern standard Chinese writing;
8. To encourage schools to properly deploy native-speaking English teachers so as to enrich the English environment in schools;
9. To provide more intensive and focused professional development programmes for panel chairperson of language subjects;
10. To set up a task force of district-based teaching consultants to help individual schools improve their language curricula and pedagogy.
11. **To require all English and Putonghua teachers to meet the language proficiency requirements for teachers within the time frame set by the government;**
12. To require new language teachers joining the teaching profession after 2004-2005 school year to hold at least a Bachelor in Education degree, majoring in the relevant language subject;
13. To provide an incentive grant covering 50% of the course fees to encourage serving language teachers to acquire the recommended qualifications
14. To provide Chinese language teachers with subsidies to attend Putonghua summer immersion courses in Mainland China;
15. To endorse the Curriculum Development Council's long-term goal of teaching Chinese language in Putonghua;

16. To engage Chinese language teachers from Mainland China to help interested schools to try teaching Chinese language in Putonghua as an interim measure.

As we can see from the language initiatives introduced since 1997, apart from the element of "globalization", "localization" or "nationalization" is also incorporated. This is clearly revealed in the addition of "Putonghua" into the curriculum as well as the incorporation of the appreciation of the Chinese culture in the Chinese subject.

Poon & Wong (2004: 153) find that the policymaking in language education changed in 1997 because a change in the political centre inevitably affects governance in education. They argue that the role of the Education Commission, as well as other advisory bodies, have diminished since 1997 because the consultative advisory system is perceived as part of the colonial governance of pre-1997 Hong Kong. Some ad hoc language policies after 1997, for example, the biliterate/trilingual policy was simply announced by the first Chief Executive in the aftermath of the handover without going through any rigorous policymaking process.

Poon (2019) further predicts that the term 'Chinese' currently used in Hong Kong but not defined in the official legal documents will be more precisely defined by the PRC in the future, aligning with the Mainland China. Hence, 'Chinese' means Modern Standard Chinese as the written form and the national language Putonghua as the spoken form. 'Cantonese' will be regarded as a Chinese dialect by the locals, as Shanghainese being the dialect used in Shanghai. However, it is noted that Cantonese is well loved by Hong

Kong people because "it embodies the spirit of Hong Kong – a spirit that Hong Kong people are proud of" (Poon, 2020: 24). English as a global language will continue to be valued in Hong Kong, if only the 'one country, two systems' policy can be sustained after 2047.

In the tertiary sector, the following prominent features are also found in Hong Kong, closely following the trend of the "Global Wave of Quality Education Reforms" and the "Quality Education Reforms in Asia", as reiwed in the previous sections, 2C and 2D:

1. *Privatization of the Higher Education Institutes*

Similar to Singapore's, China's and Taiwan's governments, the HKSAR Government has also resorted to the forces of the "private market" for the expansion and provision of more Higher Education Institutes. As outlined in the Education Commission's Report (2000a), "Review of Education System: Reform Proposal", the Government "will facilitate tertiary institutions, private enterprises and other organizations" to provide courses such as "professional diploma and sub-degree courses".

The HKSAR Government has openly encouraged the provision of "Privately-run Higher Education Institutes" since 2000. As reflected in the Policy Address Speech of our Former Chief Executive, Mr Tung Chee-Wah in 2000 (*Policy Address, 2000*), the objective of the HKSAR Government is that within ten years, i.e. by 2010, 60% of our senior secondary school leavers will receive tertiary education. The former Permanent

Secretary for Education, Mrs. Fanny Law, also stated in the public that "privatization seems to be the trend" for universities in globalization (Law, 2001).

There has been an expansion of "sub-degree courses" since 2000, offered by the "self-financing" branches in local universities. They are provided on the basis of being "market-oriented" and "self-financed", in which the provision from the state is minimal. A "self-financing principle" was chosen to run those sub-degree programmes and the expansion of sub-degree programmes is decided by the "market needs". Hence, like other governments worldwide, the HKSAR Government has adopted the "privatization" and "marketization" strategies from the private business sector into the academic setting and is gradually moving from its previous role of being the sole "provider" of higher education to that of a "facilitator" of "Privately-Run Higher Education".

According to Postiglione (2003), on top of the driving force of "globalization", it was mainly due to the economic recession caused by the Asian economic crisis in 1998 that finally "pushed it (Hong Kong) to reforms similar to those in other countries". In Postiglione's (op. cit.) opinion, however, Hong Kong has been relatively slow in its responses to the "global" and "regional" changes towards the development of "private higher education", despite its reputation for "laissez-faire economics". Nevertheless, it is now exploring "privatization" and its next expansion will also be "market-driven" and "non-government sponsored".

2. Marketization and Commercialization of Courses & Research Outputs

Although the HKSAR Government has pledged to create more higher education opportunities for the youngsters in 10 years, interestingly, it is at the same time, distancing itself from being the "provider" of such "higher education opportunities" by continuously reducing the financial resources of the local public-funded universities and institutions (Lo & Tai, 2003).

The "self-financing principle" not only applies to the new "sub-degree courses" in Hong Kong's Higher Education Institutes, but also to all the existing public universities and institutions. As Lo & Tai (op. cit.) note, programmes like MBA courses that have market values in Hong Kong are "commercialized" to make profits for the institutions. Not only the "taught courses" are commercialized, but also a number of "research outputs" that could bear "high market values". According to Lo & Tai (op. cit.), "commercialization" of research can take two forms: (i) selling the research outputs directly to the market: (ii) by engaging the Universities or Higher Education Institutions in collaboration with business and industrial sectors. The establishment of the "RandD Corporation Limited" by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) in 1993 and the "Enterprise Development Centre" by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU) are two good examples to demonstrate this point. These Research Centres aim at developing research projects that have market value in society. Their ultimate Research Outputs are put into the open market for profits.

3. Imposing a Quality Assurance System

As Mok (2000, 2002, 2003a, 2003b) observes, although Universities in Hong Kong in recent years have enjoyed more autonomy in curricula, programme design as well as the flexibility in financial management under the one-line budget system, this is, in fact, once again the Hong Kong Government's attempt to "centralize" and "control" the Universities and Higher Education Institutions in Hong Kong by adopting the 'Decentralisation' tactic, which is in fact, another form of "Centralized Decentralization" strategy.

The University Grants Committee (UGC) in Hong Kong, is a government body, responsible for financial resources to the eight public universities in Hong Kong, and simultaneously overlooking their quality performance by introducing various kinds of quality assurance exercises such as Research Assessment Exercises (RAE), Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review (TLQPR) and Management Reviews (MR) in order to make individual universities accountable. The performances of these exercises by the Universities in Hong Kong will have significant impacts on their allocation of 'funding' for teaching and research. In the RAE Exercise, for example, those University Faculty Members who have their research outputs identified as the standard set by the UGC are considered to be "active researchers" and ultimately, "more funding" will be allocated to the "cost centre" or "universities" of the "more active researchers".

As pointed out by various authors (Cheng, 1995; Mok, 2000, 2003a, 2003b), such exercises have brought along adverse effects on the Universities in the territory, as the "research outputs" are measured in a "standard" and "quantitative" way according to the UGC's set of criteria rather than in a real "qualitative" manner. As to the TLQPR and MR Exercises, although their original aim is to enhance the 'quality' of teaching and learning as well as to promote the effectiveness of the management of the Universities in Hong Kong, in practice, this is another mechanism of "resource allocation" by the HKSAR Government to the Universities in the city. "Value-for-money" is the primary criteria for the UGC's Evaluation Exercises. Again, we can see that the HKSAR Government has adopted the approach of "Corporate Managerialism" in running the educational service in the city, by introducing the concepts of 3Es: "efficiency", "economy" and "effectiveness", from the private business sector into the academic setting.

Mok (op. cit.) concludes that such move of "Quality Assurance Mechanism" as imposed by the UGC on Hong Kong's public universities, is not simply a form of "Decentralizing" strategy, but also that of the 'Centralized Decentralization' tactic adopted by the HKSAR Government in steering its control remotely over the public Universities in Hong Kong, via its extension arm of the University Grants Committee (UGC). Hence, the government's control over the public universities in Hong Kong is ultimately strengthened instead of being weakened.

As many authors (Bray, 2000; Cheng, 1995, 2002; Mok, 2000, 2003a, 2003b; Tse, 2002, 2005) have pointed out, in examining the development of the 'Quality Education Reforms' in the territory since the past 2 decades, we find that the Hong Kong Government has also followed the 'global' tide of 'quality educational reforms' worldwide by adopting the same "Corporate Managerialist" approach and introducing the "market-related" strategies into the academic setting.

As we can see, the prominent features of the overall reforms in Asia (for both of the developing countries in the South Asia and the few Asian leaders alike) since the last 2 decades, are characterized by the same "market-related strategies", such as "Privatization", "Decentralization", "Recentralization" or "Centralized Decentralization", under the same philosophy of the "*Corporate Managerialism'*, with the rhetoric of the 3Es concepts (namely 'economy', 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness'*)*, which are introduced from the private business sector into the academic setting. This new philosophy of "Corporate Managerialism" was not just implemented in the Higher Education Sector, but also in the Primary and Secondary Schools in Hong Kong since 1997.

As Tse (2005: 120) suggests, promoting quality education with the measures of managerialism bears a high price: ***an intensification of teacher workloads***.

> *The hasty implementation of a large number of reforms has imposed a massive and complex task on schools and teachers. The pursuit of efficient*

> *and effective service, by way of increasing quantification and measurement enhancement, or the use of quasi-market strategies, often strengthen control over human autonomy and result in de-humanization and alienation on the part of educational practitioners. External control and management strategies will result in standardization, quantification and preoccupation with image-presentation, as well as teachers' loss of autonomy. More and more time has been spent on window dressing, such as drawing up mission and vision statements; preparing annual school reports, school plans and QEF proposals; filing and paperwork; filling out questionnaires and measuring performance against indicators. The underlying ideology of total quality control brings the problems of standardization, rigidity and disempowerment, imposing external assessment and criteria on individual schools, in every aspect of school culture and ethos, management, teaching and learning processes, as well as personal growth and student development. Adoption of these measures implies* ***invasion of professional autonomy and a suffocation of initiatives and innovations.*** *Also, there is a serious problem of goal-displacement as normal processes of teaching and learning are disturbed to fulfil the needs of assessment per se. After all, the control mechanism is itself* in contradiction with the spirit of *autonomy. (Tse, 2005: 121)*

As a result, on 23 January 2006, thousands of teachers joined the rally organized by the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) in Hong Kong.

Chapter 3:

Research Methodology

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3A. Case Study

'Case Study' is a common research method involving an in-depth study or examination of a particular case. There are different types of case studies and various reasons for a researcher to employ such data collection method, depending on the goals of the researcher / investigator and situations (Stacks, 2013). It was found that case studies, in particular, have been gaining popularity in educational evaluation and research (Kushner, 2000; MacDonald & Walker, 2006).

'Case Study' can be a study or examination of individuals, events, actions or organizations, which is widely used in various disciplines, such as Business, Education, Medicine and Social Sciences. A case study in Business Management could be a study or an analysis of a particular business or marketing strategy of a particular company; a case study in Education might be an examination of a particular school or teachers'/students' performances and/or behaviours; while a case study in Medicine may examine a specific patient's past medical history and current illness; and a case study in Social Sciences could be an analysis of a particular social phenomenon.

Woods & Calanzaro (1988) describe 'case study' as an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual, group, community or some other unit(s) in which the researcher examines in-depth data relating to several variables.

Hamel (1993) and Yin (2013) share the same view that case studies help to examine complex phenomena in the natural setting to increase understanding of them. This method of research allows the researcher to take a complex and broad topic, or phenomenon, and narrow it down into a manageable research question or questions. The researcher will then be able to gain a more in-depth insight into the phenomenon.

Generally speaking, there are five types of 'Case Studies':

1. *Illustrative Case Studies*: The nature is mainly 'descriptive'. The case studies are straight-forward, illustrative and sometimes explanatory, aiming at giving readers a common language about the topic in question.

2. *Critical Instance Case Studies*: These studies can involve one or multiple research sites. This method is particularly helpful for examining a particular or unique incident with no generalization purpose. It may also help to identify or answer cause and effect questions.

3. *Cumulative Case Studies*: These studies usually serve to aggregate data collected at different times and from several different research sites. This method is employed when there is proof that the collection of past data will allow for greater generalization without additional cost or time being spent on new, possibly repetitive studies by the researcher.

4. ***Exploratory (or pilot) Case Studies****:* These studies are usually performed before implementing a large-scale investigation. The main function is to help identify questions and select types of measurement prior to the main investigation.

5. *Comparative Case Studies:* This type of case studies discusses one approach, which encourages researchers to compare horizontally, vertically and temporally.

The approach of an Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study has also been adopted in this Research Paper, which will be further explained in the next section.

3B. Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study

Babbie (2007) suggests that an exploratory research usually takes place when problems are in a preliminary stage.

It is generally agreed that an exploratory approach is good if a problem/situation/product is new or has not been studied more clearly (Babbie, 2007; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018; Proctor, 2000; Shields & Hassan, 2006).

As mentioned in Chapter 1C (p.10), little has been done in the previous educational research on an individual school's responses to the outer context of 'quality education reforms' in the city and in particular, (p.11), in a unique setting of a Senior-Form Private Secondary School which is fading out in Hong Kong, it would, therefore, be appropriate to adopt an Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study approach to investigate the subject matter.

According to Shields & Rangarjan (2013), an Exploratory Case Study helps determine the best research design and data collection methods. The biggest advantage is that it offers flexibility and can address research questions of all types (what, why, how, etc…).

As mentioned in Chapter 1B (p.9), there are mainly 3 objectives of doing this Research Study:

1. To investigate the strategic responses of the chosen school (both at the Management and teaching levels) to its outer context of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city;

2. To examine the challenges facing the research school, especially its English language teachers, in implementing the school strategies.

3. To understand the stress and views of its Senior-Form English language teachers who were also supposed to pass their English Language Proficiency Test starting from 2006, on top of facing the various educational reforms introduced in the city.

The first objective is mainly to deal with the 'what' and 'how' questions at the school or institutional level; while the 2nd and 3rd objectives are aimed at achieving at an ***in-depth, individual level of the Senior-Form English language teachers***, including but not limited to questions like "what", "how" and "why", etc…, which is also the **research focus** of the Thesis Paper.

An Exploratory (or Pilot) case study approach, therefore, offers flexibility to the researcher in designing the questionnaires and in-depth interview questions for it addresses all types of research questions, such as why, how and what. This is especially suitable for analyzing or examining people's responses, opinions, attitudes and behaviours, since a quantitative survey alone cannot serve such purposes.

In view of the flexibility of an exploratory research design, as well as the appropriateness and relevance to achieving the 3 main objectives of this Thesis paper, an "Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study" has been adopted by the researcher.

Nevertheless, no research methodology is perfect. As pointed out by many critics, investigators and researchers need to be mindful of the data interpretation and treatment in the preliminary stage. Very often, the data collected in exploratory research cases are only "Pilot Cases" or some condensed cases before implementing a large-scale investigation as their basic function is to help identify questions and select types of measurement prior to the main investigation.

The main pitfall of this type of Exploratory Case Study is that "initial findings" may seem convincing enough to be released prematurely as "conclusions" (Jackson, 2011; Stacks, 2013). Researchers, therefore, need to be careful with the initial findings and should not jump to a conclusion promptly.

Another major disadvantage is the difficulty in selecting, organizing, analyzing, integrating and finally presenting the large volume of data generated from the 'Exploratory Case Study'. Reporting of findings is particularly challenging for researchers at times, particularly in relation to the word limits for some research papers. Hence, researchers need to define the 'research focus' clearly and report findings only related to the scope of the 'research focus'.

3C Research Focus

As discussed previously (p.101), the research focus is on the '***Senior-Form English language teachers'*** of the selected school, with the following 3 main objectives:

1. To investigate the strategic responses of the chosen school (both at the Management and teaching levels) to its outer context of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city;

2. To examine the challenges facing the research school, especially its **English language teachers**, in implementing the school strategies;

3. To understand the stress and views of its **English Language teachers** who were also supposed to pass their English Language Proficiency Test starting from 2006, on top of facing the various educational reforms introduced in the city.

As discussed in the Introduction Part (p.6), on 22 January 2006, thousands of teachers joined the rally organized by the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) in Hong Kong. This was the first time such a large-scale academic protest took place in the city. 90% of the teachers polled felt stressed; 82.9% joined the protest due to the "hasty educational reforms introduced by the Government" (p.7). A summary of major educational reforms was listed from 1997 to 2012. (*p.8, those initiatives related to the "language reforms" were also highlighted with an* *).

Indeed, the academic year of 2006 was a challenging year for those language teachers (namely the English and Putonghua Teachers), since they would need to pass their Language Benchmark Tests, on top of implementing the various educational reforms introduced by the Government since 1997.

This was also the trigger point for the researcher to conduct an in-depth investigation into the school setting to understand the stress and challenges of the frontline teachers, especially the English language teachers.

As the selected Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong did not opt for teaching in Putonghua in its Chinese curriculum, there was, at that time, no urgency for its Chinese language teachers to pass the Putonghua Benchmark Test. Hence, the research focus of the Case Study would be solely on its "***Senior-Form English language Teachers".*** Are those English Language Teachers of a Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong facing more or fewer challenges than their counterparts from the Government and Aided Schools? What are their views, challenges and strategic responses towards the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city?

All these issues would be defined as the scope of the 'research focus' of the Thesis Paper and will be explored and further discussed in Chapter 4, "*A Case Study of the Challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong (A Microscopic Study)"*.

3D Conceptual Framework

The researcher had established a list of criteria for the selection of the appropriate framework(s) prior to applying and integrating them into the final research interview questions of the Case Study in Chapter 4.

The Conceptual/Analytical Framework(s) used for the analyses in the Case Study of this Thesis Paper must satisfy the following conditions:

Criteria for the selection:

1. **Relevance to our Research Topic**

   The Conceptual Framework itself must embrace the concepts of "Globalization" and "Quality Education Reforms", since they not only form the overall backdrop, but also the backbone of the overall research design of this Thesis Paper.

   The Conceptual Framework must be able to provide a comprehensive definition of 'quality education' or at least it can embrace different versions/definitions of 'quality education' available in the current educational literature, as discussed in Chapter 2, "Literature Review".

2. Qualitative Research Design

The Conceptual Framework must be mostly ‘qualitative’ in nature, enabling the researcher to achieve the 3 main objectives of the Research by conducting in-depth interviews in a ‘qualitative’ manner. Therefore, the researcher will not take into consideration of those highly ‘quantitative’ frameworks/analytical tools, requiring a lot of quantitative data, such as figures, performance indicators and tremendous inputs from the stakeholders of the research school, including the current ‘quality assurance mechanism’ and ‘performance indicators’ used by the Education Bureau (pp.76-77), since they are not in line with the overall ‘qualitative’ design of an Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study.

However, a simple and short survey with no more than 20 questions / measures / performance indicators can still be considered, if such quantitative data is deemed necessary prior to conducting in-depth interviews with the stakeholders concerned. In-depth questionnaires should only be limited to the few ‘research focus’ group participants.

An ideal Conceptual Framework should enable the researcher to design and explore in-depth questions surrounding its various variables / hypotheses / measures / propositions to optimize the ‘qualitative’ research findings.

3. **Applicability and Suitability to the unique setting of the chosen school**

The research school is a "Senior-Form Private Secondary School", admitting only F.4 to F.7 failure students (p.11; those students who failed in the internal and/or public examinations). This is also as Bray (1998) describes, type (iii), "***low-quality, low-cost institutions that cater to excess demand and give a second-chance to those who are unable to get into the public system"*** (p.47). The Conceptual Framework must be able to address the unique characteristics of the selected school.

4. Easy-to-understand Framework

Due to the unique setting and characteristics of the research school (as explained above in point 3), the Conceptual Framework and research questions must be simple, straightforward and easy to understand for all the stakeholders involved in the research school. An 'easy-to-understand Framework' not only ensures clear communications to all parties concerned, but also the validity and correctness of the findings.

5. Flexibility

The Conceptual Framework must allow flexibility in the overall design of the interview questions, including but not limited to questions, such as what, why, how, etc…, as explained in the previous section of the Research Methodology, 3B "Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study", (p.101).

6. Exploratory in nature

The Conceptual Framework must be exploratory in nature, or at least it can allow an "Exploratory (or Pilot) Case Study" to take place. It must allow the researcher to explore, identify questions and/or select measures for the possible main investigation in the future, providing scope for future studies.

7. Humanistic in nature

Finally, the Conceptual Framework must be 'humanistic' in nature as one of the main objectives is to "understand" the stress, views and challenges of the front-line English Language Teachers of the chosen school.

The framework is aimed at helping the researcher not just to design, but also to identify/answer the research questions, to examine and understand the stress, views and challenges of the English Language Teachers. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that there will be no further intensification of workloads on the school's stakeholders, especially its English Language teachers, for the sake of conducting this Research. The research design is conducted not only at an institutional level, but also to be extended to the personal/individual level of the stakeholders, especially the English Language teachers.

Hence, the approach of the Framework must be 'humanistic' in nature, giving all the stakeholders room and flexibility to express themselves.

Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework:

Ho (2005) views education as a process of production and he thinks that 'quality education' should produce value-added in a cost-effective fashion. According to Ho (2005), at least, the following six aspects of "value-added" can be derived from an effective education process:

- Self-control skill
- Reflective Skills
- Social Skills
- Communication and Reasoning
- Knowledge about the world and society
- Vocational or Professional Knowledge and Skills (Job-Related)

I discuss three aspects of the **institutions** that affect the efficiency of education production: ***examinations, autonomy, and opportunities for upward mobility***.*"*

P1: "The education experience potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organizational skills, social skills, and communication skills, over and above the knowledge transmitted."

P2: "The education process involves both imitation and drilling, and creative explorations and reflections. Maintaining interest through creative activities and self-

confidence through an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the process much more effective and less frustrating for students."

P3: "It is important to attract quality graduates to go into teaching . Allowing teachers a high degree of autonomy and supporting their endeavours through adequately equipped schools and quality textbooks are at least as important as material incentives to attract quality teachers."

P4: "Examinations and drilling can be useful and much less harmful if results from examinations are not used to penalize students psychologically by designating them to the 'bottom fifth' or the 'bottom third' and thus labeling them as inferior."

<u>At the Social Level:</u>

P5: A Comparison between Marginal Benefits and Marginal Costs, broadly defined, should form the basis for government funding of education, the salary levels of teachers, and the tuition fees of students. The current uniformity of pay scales across fields in Hong Kong most probably is not optimal.

P6: The educational ladder should be designed to allow sufficient room for developmental purposes at each stage of development while the curriculum should recognize the emotional and psychological needs of the student.

P7: The government has an important role in maintaining a level playing field and in opening channels for upward mobility for law-abiding citizens. This is necessary before civic education can be effective.

Evaluations on Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework:

Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework was found to have satisfied all the above 7 criteria (pp.105-108). It is relevant to our research topic of 'Globalization' and 'Quality Education Reforms'. Ho's (2005) own definition of "value-addedness" also embraces different interpretations of 'quality education', as discussed in the Literature Review, Chapter 2.

Ho's (2005) framework does provide room and flexibility for an exploratory case study to take place, not only at an institutional/individual level, but it can also be extended further to a social level investigation in the future. Hence, it does provide scope for future research studies.

Ho's (2005) framework is, overall, easy-to-understand, with high flexibility and applicability to any institutions in Hong Kong, including the selected school. The framework is also 'humanistic' in approach since Ho (2005) takes into consideration of the issues like "exams" and "labelling effects", which address the unique setting and characteristics of the research school and its students specifically; and he advocates on teachers' "autonomy", instead of "control mechanism".

In view of the above reasons, Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework was chosen to form the basis of the research design for the in-depth interview questions in the Case Study in Chapter 4.

Case studies may involve both ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ research methods. (Yin, 2013).

Although the overall research design of this Thesis Paper is ‘qualitative’, it is sometimes necessary for case studies to involve ‘quantitative’ findings as well. As discussed previously (p.106), point 2 in the Criteria List, a short questionnaire with no more than 20 questions / quantitative / performance scores are also acceptable.

The ‘Conceptual Framework’ to be chosen should fit into the overall ‘qualitative’ research design of the Case and should be relevant to the research topic of “Globalization” and “Quality Education Reforms”, as discussed in the Literature Review, Chapter 2.

Chapman & Adams (2002:16), “10 Characteristics of a Quality School”

The “10 characteristics of a Quality School” summarized by Chapman and Adams (2002: 16) are listed as follows. It will form the 5-point scale questionnaires to the School’s stakeholders in the Case Study:

1. Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking;
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;
4. Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;

6. A valid, reliable examination system;
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;
8. Ample direct instructional time;
9. Adequate financing; and
10. Effective organizational structure and support

In addition, Chapman and Adams (2002: 13) have consolidated some 'core' and 'facilitating' elements from the international education literature for the improvement of ***'leadership', 'efficiency' and 'efficacy'*** dimensions of a school. These Corporate Managerialist terms are not unfamiliar and indeed we have discussed a lot in the Literature Review section, Chapter 2. These elements would be incorporated into the annex part of the interview questions to the educators for their comments and evaluations.

Overall, the measures of Chapman and Adams (2002) fit into the overall qualitative research design of the Thesis since their concepts are, in fact, complementary with Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework. Hence, the various measures of Chapman and Adams (2002) were also chosen and incorporated into the overall design of this Research Paper, which remains 'qualitative' in nature and allows an exploratory (pilot) case study to take place in the research school in the academic year of 2009-2010. In fact, all the stakeholders involved in the Research Project were first-time participants.

Details of the research design, choice of samples and data collection methods will be further explained in the next section, Chapter 3E, "Data Collection Methods".

3E. Data Collection Methods

In this Research Project, a mixed-mode approach has been taken, i.e. both 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' data has also been collected, though the overall research design is exploratory in nature.

Some Primary Data Collection Methods were adopted in the Case Study, including: (i) Questionnaires; (ii) In-depth interviews; and (iii) Class Observations.

(i) Questionnaires

Prior to an interview, each participant was given a brief questionnaire comprising ***10 questions*** on the overall performance of the school and the English Panel, based on the "10 characteristics of a quality school" as summarized by Chapman & Adams (2002: 16) from the previous international research study.

The advantage of using the quantitative design of a "questionnaire" in this section is that it can offer readers a clear overview of the quality performance of the School and that of the English Panel in a 'quantitative' and 'measurable' way. In particular, we can clearly identify the ***strengths and weaknesses of the School from the "quantitative" scores*** of the questionnaires since the total scores for each area are designed in the format of percentage for easy reference and calculation.

The aim is to find out the ‘quality school’ scores given by its own stakeholders based on the generic “10 characteristics of a Quality School” in the following dimensions:

- Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking;
- Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;
- Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;
- Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;
- A safe, well-maintained learning environment;
- A valid, reliable examination system;
- Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;
- Ample direct instructional time;
- Adequate financing; and
- Effective organizational structure and support

The questions of the questionnaires were designed in a 5-point scale format: (1) Very poor; (2) Poor; (3) Average; (4) Good; (5) Very good. The full mark for each questionnaire is, therefore, 5 points x 10 dimensions = 50 points. Each participant was required to give scores to 2 areas – (a) School as a whole; (b) the English class / the English Panel as a whole. Hence, the full mark for the whole Questionnaire is 100%.

The ‘quality performance’ of the School and the English Panel can, therefore, be reflected clearly in a ‘quantitative’ and ‘measurable’ manner; which is the big advantage of using the design of a ‘questionnaire’ in the Case Study.

However, many of the issues and parameters involved in ‘quality education’ cannot simply be reflected or explained in a ‘quantitative’ manner, such as the opinions and views of the school stakeholders, which is a major weakness of using the ‘quantitative’ data collection method. To compensate for such weakness, a qualitative approach of an ‘in-depth interview’ design was, therefore, adopted in the data collection process of the research school as well, which also played a major part in this Research Paper.

(ii) In-Depth Interviews

The advantages of conducting “in-depth interviews” are numerous. The main one is that it would be particularly helpful to researchers who would like to understand the research subject in a more qualitative manner or to explore the matter in a multi-dimensional approach (Proctor, 2000; Shao, 2002). Since the aim of this part of the Study is to explore and investigate the various concepts of ‘quality’, ‘quality education’ as well as the challenges brought along by ‘globalization’ and ‘the quest for quality education reforms’ in the city to the ‘teachers’, it is justifiable to adopt the ‘qualitative’ design of in-depth interviews in the study.

In-depth interviews have indeed formed the major part of the Case Study, generating at the same time, a lot of useful and valuable data from the research participants.

The composition of the Research Participants is as follows:

School Management:	The Principal
Senior-Form English Teachers:	English Panel Head & Teachers of F.6 & F.7 (3 English Teachers; namely Teacher A, B & C + 1 English Panel Head)
Students:	16 students of several F.7 Classes (Arts, Science & Commerce) (A sample of 3-5 for each quarter; from 1st to 4th quarter results)
Parents:	4 parents from a F.6 class (A sample of 1 parent; each from 1st to 4th quarter results)

Having completed Part 1, "Questionnaire", each participant was invited to stay for an individual interview, ranging from 20 minutes to 30 minutes for students and parents; and between 2 and 3 hours of interview time for the Principal, the English Panel Head and the English teachers.

Initially, interviews were arranged with the Principal, the English Panel Head, 2 Senior-Form English Teachers and some students in March 2009. However, due to the outbreak of the Human Swine Flu and the possible suspension of classes during April and July

2009, the interviews were then postponed to the following academic year of 2009-2010. Formal invitation letters to the research participants were finally sent out in October 2009 (since the first month of September was a busy period for both teachers and students) and, as a result, the interviews finally took place between November 2009 and February 2010.

A semi-structured interview approach has been adopted in this part of the Research since this type of interview can better control the timing and questions raised in the interview process, ensuring the efficiency and 'quality' of the interview; while at the same time, offering some flexibility to both interviewer and interviewee. In some cases, either party may need to further develop certain issues or ideas, as long as they are of interest to the research study. Thus, a semi-structured interview approach was taken in this case.

Individual Short Interviews with Students:

In order not to disturb students' usual classes as well as their after-school studies, all the interviews were conducted during their free periods. In addition, the researcher deliberately set the interview time to last only between 20 and 30 minutes. The objective of the interview is to give the student participants a chance to explain their scores given in the questionnaires and to comment on their School and the English Panel as a whole. During the interview, they were free to comment on the concept of 'quality education', the issue of 'teacher quality' in their school, their school's Management, Hong Kong's

examination system as well as the old and new academic structures for the Senior Secondary Schools in Hong Kong.

The selection of students was based on the "strata sampling" method. The researcher asked the English Panel Head for help in picking 3-5 students from each quarter, at random, based on their English academic results, from the F.7 students' name list. The rationale is to collect views and opinions from both strong and weak students, covering students from the 1st to the 4th quarter academic results. In the end, 16 students from several F.7 classes (Arts/Science/Commerce), comprising students from the 1st to the 4th quarter academic results, took part in the questionnaire and short interview sessions during the period of November to December 2009. All the interviews were audio-recorded with their consent.

The rationale for choosing F.7 students in my Research is that being the final year students, they naturally have more to share with us than their junior-form schoolmates since they have more knowledge about the school's background, the quality and performance of their teachers, their learning materials, curricula and exam system. In addition, all of them are adults and have reached the age of 18, also fulfilling the age criterion for the Research participants set by the University's Research Ethics Committee. Besides, they have gone through the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Exam in their F.5 studies and are sitting the Hong Kong Advanced Level Exam soon. They certainly are in a better position to comment on the pressure exerted by the exam system in Hong Kong, if any, than their junior schoolmates. With the introduction of the New Academic

Structure (3-3-4) this academic year, these F.7 students are the last 3 cohorts surviving in the old academic system. It would be justifiable for the researcher to interview them and hear their voices and comments on the old and new academic structure from the user's point of view. Each interview was held individually with a student participant so that each student could express his/her views freely, without any interference from the peers.

Individual Short Interviews with the Parents:

4 individual interviews took place at the research school on the Annual Parents' Day on 27 February 2010. Each interview lasted for about 20 to 30 minutes. They were all audio-recorded with the participants' consent.

The rationale for the choice of sample parents is the same as that of the students. On the Parents' Day, between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon, the researcher went to Teacher A's class and invited 4 parents (1 parent each from the 1st to 4th quarter), in order to understand the needs and expectations from parents of students from the 1st to the 4th quarter academic results.

The Parents' Day started from 8.30 am until 1.00 pm on 27 February 2010. Those working parents usually come to school either at the early time-slot of 8.30 am - 9.30 am or at the last time-slot of 12.00 noon -1.00 pm. In order not to cause any inconvenience to them, the researcher chose to interview parents coming at the time-slot

of 10.00 am to 11.30 am, who usually do not need to work on Saturdays and thus could stay behind after meeting their children's Form Teacher.

The questionnaires to the Parents were the same as those to the F.7 Students. Although it would be ideal to interview parents of F.7 students as well so that their scores and comments could be compared with their children's, it is the Research school's policy that the Annual Parents' Day is only open to Parents of F.4 and F.6 classes, in order not to give too much pressure to the F.5 and F.7 students, who are preparing for their public exams. As an alternative, therefore, the researcher picked 4 parents from Teacher A's class, representing parents of students from the 1st to 4th quarter academic results in a Form 6 class. The reason for choosing Teacher A's class is that she was the only Senior-Form English language teacher during the academic year of 2009-2010, who was at the same time the form-teacher of a Form 6 class. All the other Senior-Form English language teachers, that is, the English Panel Head, Teacher B and Teacher C, were the form teachers of F.7 classes during the academic year. As a result, 4 samples were taken from Teacher A's class.

Individual In-Depth Interviews with the Front-line Educators

Individual in-depth interviews were arranged with the Principal, the English Panel Head, 2 full-time Senior-Form English Teachers (Teacher A and Teacher B) and 1 part-time Senior-Form English Teacher (Teacher C) of the Research school, after completing the same questionnaires, during the period of November to December 2009. Each of their

interviews lasted for about 2 to 3 hours. All of them took place at school and were audio-recorded with their consent.

As explained previously, Chapter 3D, "Conceptual Framework", the interview questions were formulated around Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework while the questionnaires were based on the 10 parameters by Chapman and Adams (2002).

The three aspects of the institutions that affect the efficiency of education production as suggested by Ho (2005) - ***"examination, autonomy, and opportunities for upward mobility",*** were explored in the interview with all the School's stakeholders – the Principal, Teachers, Students and Parents:

P1: "The education experience potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organizational skills, social skills, and communication skills, over and above the knowledge transmitted."

P2: "The education process involves both imitation and drilling, and creative explorations and reflections. Maintaining interest through creative activities and self-confidence through an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the process much more effective and less frustrating for students."

P3: "It is important to attract quality graduates to go into teaching . Allowing teachers a high degree of autonomy and supporting their endeavours through adequately

equipped schools and quality textbooks are at least as important as material incentives to attract quality teachers.

P4: "Examinations and drilling can be useful and much less harmful if results from examinations are not used to penalize students psychologically by designating them to the "bottom fifth" or the "bottom third" and thus labeling them as inferior."

As suggested by Chapman & Adams (2002: 9),

> "Increasingly, educators, researchers, and policymakers believe that teachers ***supported by effective management*** are the key to education quality and change."
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 9)*

In view of this, the Principal and teachers were further asked during the interview to evaluate the effectiveness of the School 'leadership' and/or the 'Management Support' in affecting or even raising the 'quality' of their teaching at school. As Chapman & Adams (2002) have also summarized some 'core' and 'facilitating' elements in the dimensions of 'leadership', 'efficiency' and 'efficacy' from the international educational research studies, these elements would, be also incorporated into the interview questions in the form of Annex Part, "Annex I".

Given the design of the semi-structured interview, the teachers were free to comment on all or just choose 3 elements which they thought were the most important ones from the

list of the '***leadership', 'efficiency' and 'efficacy'*** dimensions. They could also comment and share their teaching experience, especially in the case that they had resorted to these elements in their past school/classroom management and/or teaching experience; and in particular, whether they had been proved to be successful in enhancing the 'quality' of teaching-learning in their English lessons in the research school.

Ho (2005) thinks that "autonomy" is the key factor in attracting and retaining 'quality' teachers in schools. However, as summarized by Kemmerer (1990), there are other incentives to attract and retain 'quality teachers' from the previous international educational research as well. In view of this, Kemmerer's (1990) list of teachers' incentives was incorporated into the interview questions, "Annex II", for the Principal and teachers of the Research school to choose and comment. They were asked to rank the most 3 important incentives in their mind and/or in their past teaching experience from the list, including but not limited to "***autonomy***".

Identifying the challenges facing the educators, and in particular, the Senior-Form English Language Teachers in the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city, is also one of the main objectives of the Case Study. The Principal and teachers were, therefore, asked directly during the interview to choose and comment on those educational initiatives which had a great impact on their teaching career or which proved challenging to them. A list of the summary of the past Educational Reforms introduced in Hong Kong since 1997 was enclosed in the interview questions to the Principal and

teachers, “Annex 3”. The educators could then refer to the list for easy reference and choose those important initiatives to comment.

It is hoped that through the design of in-depth interviews with the various school’s stakeholders - the Principal, the English language teachers, the students and the parents, the various concepts of ‘teacher quality’, ‘quality education’, as well as the challenges facing the School and the Senior-Form English language teachers in such pursuit of ‘quality education reforms’ in the city could be explored and investigated in a more in-depth and multi-dimensional manner.

(iii) Class Observations

> Although the concept of quality teaching remains elusive, teachers and their behaviour in the classroom are at times considered convenient indicators of school quality and very frequently are at the centre of attempts at quality improvement.
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 17)*

In view of the above, it is imperative that one should conduct ‘class observations’, on top of the ‘questionnaires’ and ‘in-depth interviews’ in order to have a clear picture of the ‘blackbox’ of teaching and learning of the chosen school.

> Improvements in the quality and, to some extent, the efficiency and equity of education depend on the nexus of teaching and learning. ..However, to a degree it is a self-contained system, and ***different schools (or even classrooms) may respond to a given set of inputs in different ways***. The implication of teachers and students may be influenced through national policies but cannot be mandated from the central offices of ministries of education.
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 9)*

On top of examining the "teacher's behaviour" during the 'class observations', it would also be interesting to observe the students' behaviours as well. The rationale is to explore the validity of the comments made by Chapman & Adams (2002: 9) and see if "different classrooms may respond to a given set of inputs in different ways". To serve this purpose, the following were made in the "class observations" of the Research school:

- 6 Class Observations were conducted during the academic year of 2009-2010 in the Research school. All of them were video-recorded with the consent from both the teachers and students involved. The class observations were conducted among several Senior-Form classes (F.6 and F.7 classes) in the same school; covering 4 lessons in English language, 1 lesson in Chinese History and 1 lesson in Mathematics and Statistics.

- Among the 4 English lessons, 2 were conducted by the same teacher (Teacher B), who had less than two years of teaching experience and who had not yet received

her teacher training. As she was teaching one Arts Class and one Science Class in F.6 during the academic year of 2009-2010, it would be justifiable to observe her 2 classes and see if she needed to cater for the different learning needs of Arts and Science students as well.

- The other 2 English lessons were conducted by experienced English language teachers with more than 5 years of teaching experience. One was conducted by another English Teacher (Teacher A) and the other one was conducted by the English Panel Head.

  Both of them had received teachers' training and gained more than 5 years of teaching experience. It is hoped that we will be able to comment on the different pedagogies by the 'trained' (English Panel Head and Teacher A) and 'untrained' (Teacher B) English language teachers through the 'class observation' activity, as well as to evaluate the different responses from their classes.

- Apart from the 4 English language classes, the researcher has also video-taped 2 non-language lessons, namely a period of Chinese History from a F.7 class (an elective subject from the same English class taught by the English Panel Head); and a period of Mathematics and Statistics from a F.6 class (an Elective subject involving a combination of Arts/Science/Commerce students). The rationales are:

- to see if there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours, given the medium of teaching changes from 'English' to 'Chinese' or to 'Mixed-Mode';
- whether there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours in classroom, between the compulsory English lesson and an elective one.

In line with the English Language Proficiency Requirements set by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong, an exercise of the classroom "Language Proficiency and Assessment Test – English" (LPATE) was set up.

The researcher had asked for help from a local English Language Expert (an Associate Professor in the English Centre at the University of Hong Kong). He agreed to act as the 'Assessor' and gave scores and comments to those video-taped English lessons of the Research school.

The criteria were the same as the English Benchmark Test set by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong for the English Language Teachers in Hong Kong, Paper 5, "Classroom Language Proficiency and Assessment Test – English" (LPATE). The researcher invited all the English language teachers to participate in the exercise and only 2 of them (Teacher A and Teacher B) accepted her invitation. Hence, the video clippings of Teacher A's and Teacher B's English classes were further passed on to the English language expert for comments and assessments after her 'class observations'.

The English Language Proficiency and Assessment Test Report, issued by the English Language Expert, will also be reported in Chapter 4 of this Thesis Paper.

The findings from the ‘Class Observations’ also serve as a triangulation of the previous findings from the ‘questionnaires’ and ‘in-depth interviews’ in the research school.

Chapter 4:

A Case Study of the Challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong

(A Microscopic Study)

Chapter 4: Case Study

- A Case Study of the Challenges Facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong (A Microscopic Study)

This Chapter reports findings of the various stakeholders involved in the chosen Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong, including the Principal, English Panel Head, English Language Teachers, Students and Parents. The Research explored from the Leadership Level (the Principal of the School); then to the Middle Management Level (The English Panel Head); and finally to the Front-line Level (English Language Teachers) of the Senior Forms of the Research school. In addition, some Senior-Form Students and Parents were invited to take part in the questionnaire and interview sessions. In this way, different comments, needs and expectations from the relevant stakeholders of the School were incorporated into the research, providing a better and fuller understanding of the various 'challenges' facing the educators; and in particular, those facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of the research School. It is hoped that at the end of the Case Study, not only are we able to collect the 'quantitative' data from the questionnaires, but also the 'qualitative' one from the 'interviews' and 'class observations' in order to enable us to gain a wider understanding of the challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of the school in the backdrop of the city's quest for 'quality education reforms' movement since 1997.

4A – QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS FROM THE 'QUESTIONNAIRES'

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(i) Quantitative Findings from the 'Principal':

The following table is a sum-up of the scores given by the Principal to the "School as a whole" in Part I of the questionnaire.

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	**4**
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	**4**	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	**4**	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	**4**	**4**
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	*1*	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	**4**
Total Scores:	32/50 **64%**	37/50 **74%**

As to Part II of the Questionnaire, scores to the "English Panel as a whole", the Principal was given a choice to give scores to the English Panel himself or to leave it to the English Panel Head to complete it for him. He opted for the latter one. There were mainly two reasons for his doing so: first, to show his complete trust in the English Panel Head; and second, to save time in the interview process so that he could proceed to the in-depth interview questions straightaway. In this light, it was agreed that we would take the scores given by the "English Panel Head", representing the Management's scores to the English Panel, as the Principal's own scores to the "English Panel" in the questionnaire as well.

The total scores given by the Principal to the School is **64%**; and the scores given by the Panel Head to the English Panel, on behalf of the Principal, is **74%.** Given the design of the grading system of the 5-point scale in the questionnaire, '3' is an average mark for each variable to be tested, the total score of over 60% is considered above-average and satisfactory. The total scores of **64%** (School as a whole) and **74%** (English Panel) are, therefore, satisfactory and relatively high marks, respectively.

Basically, the Principal is in total agreement with the '10 characteristics of a Quality School' (Chapman & Adams, 2002). He finds that all these 10 features are important elements in the formation of a 'quality' school.

Amongst all, he finds that item 9, "***Adequate Financing",*** is the most ***crucial element,*** yet also the ***weakest*** one at his School**.**

(ii) <u>Quantitative Findings from the 'English Panel Head':</u>

The following table is a sum-up of the scores given by the English Panel Head to the School as a whole and the English Panel in particular:

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**<u>School as a whole</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**<u>English Panel</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	**4**
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	**4**	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**4**	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	**4**	**4**
8. Ample direct instructional time;	**4**	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	3	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	**4**
Total Scores:	35/50 **70%**	37/50 **74%**

The total scores given by the English Panel Head to the School as a whole is **70%**; and the scores to the English Panel is **74%.** The total scores of **70%** (School as a whole) and **74%** (English Panel) are, therefore, relatively high marks.

(iii) Quantitative Findings from the 'English Language Teacher A':

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	**4**	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	3
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	*2*
Total Scores:	30/50 **60%**	28/50 **56%**

Teacher A is a qualified and experienced English language teacher, with teacher training and University major in the English subject. She has over 5 years of English language teaching experience. This is her first year of joining the Research school. Prior to this, she was teaching at a Band-3 Government-Aided School in the New Territories in Hong Kong.

The total scores given by Teacher A to the School as a whole is **60%**; and the scores to the English Panel is **56%.**

Although the total scores for both 'School as a whole' and 'English Panel' are around average marks, there are some distinct discrepancies between the scores given by Teacher A and the Management (The Principal and the Panel Head), especially in her scores given to the 'English Panel'. There are notably 3 areas where Teacher A only gave **'2 points'** to the English Panel: ***'Effective Leadership', 'Adequate Financing' and 'Effective Organizational Structure and Support'*** while the Management's scores for these areas are '4', '3' and '4', respectively. This is a significant finding which clearly reflects the discrepancy between the Management's view and that of the Front-line English teacher.

As to the School as a whole, Teacher A is most impressed by the various teaching methodologies employed by many of our teachers while she finds that 'financing' is the weakest area in her School.

(iv) Quantitative Findings from English Language Teacher B

Here is a sum-up of the scores given by English Language Teacher B to the School as a whole and to the English Panel in particular.

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	*2*	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*2*	*1*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*2*	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	*2*
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*1*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	3
9. Adequate financing; and	*1*	*1*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*2*	*2*
Total Scores:	*20/50* ***40%***	*20/50* ***40%***

Teacher B joined the Research school immediately after her graduation from a reputable local University in Hong Kong in 2008, with her degree major in English Language. Though she has received the relevant subject training in her University study, according to the Education Bureau's requirements for the English Language Teachers in Hong Kong, she is not yet a qualified English language teacher until and unless she has completed her Post-Graduate Certificate in teacher training (PGDE) in English Language Teaching before she becomes a qualified English Language Teacher in Hong Kong.

(v) Quantitative Findings from English Language Teacher C

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	**4**
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*1*	3
9. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	**4**
10. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*1*	*1*
11. Ample direct instructional time;	2	*1*
12. Adequate financing; and	*1*	*1*
13. Effective organizational structure and support.	*1*	*1*
Total Scores:	*19/50* ***38%***	*24/50* ***48%***

Teacher C joined the Research school a few years after her graduation. This is her second job. She had worked in a NGO for a couple of years prior to teaching. At the moment, she is teaching Liberal Studies and English Language subjects in the Research school. This is her fourth teaching year. In her first three years, she was teaching English Language subject. Teacher C is not yet a qualified teacher since she has not yet received her post-graduate teaching Certificate qualification and did not major in the English Language in her undergraduate studies.

According to the Education Bureau's requirements for the English Language Teachers in Hong Kong, she can only become a qualified English language teacher until and unless (i) she has completed her Post-Graduate Certificate in teacher training (PGDE) in English Language Teaching, (ii) has completed a Bachelor's or Master's Degree in English Language Studies, and (iii) has passed or applied for exemption from the English Language Proficiency Test for English Language Teachers (English Benchmark Test).

* * * * * *

Due to the length restraint of this thesis paper, we only discuss the total overall scores among the School Management, the front-line English Language Teachers, the 16 students and 4 parents in the next summary section.

A full set of the individual scores the 16 students and 4 parents is, however, enclosed in Annex III of this Thesis Paper.

Summary and Significance of the Quantitative Findings (Questionnaires)

The 'quantitative' findings give us a quick glance at the performance of the 'School as a whole' and the 'English Panel' in each of the 10 parameters as suggested by Chapman & Adams (2002) in the form of quantitative scores.

To sum up, the total scores given by the School Management for the 'School as a whole' and the 'English Panel' are as follows:

	School as a whole	*English Panel*
Principal	64%	74%
English Panel Head	70%	74%
Average for the Management:	***67%***	***74%***

However, there is a sharp contrast between the scores given by the Management and the front-line English Language Teachers:

	School as a whole	*English Panel*
Teacher A	60%	56%
Teacher B	*40%*	*40%*
Teacher C	*38%*	*48%*
Average for the English Teachers:	***46%***	***48%***

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the overall scores given by the students and parents are good. The parents, in particular, give good scores to both the School as a whole and the English Panel.

		School as a whole	*English Panel*
Student 1	(+2)	50%	52%
Student 2	(0)	50%	50%
Student 3	(-12)	58%	*46%*
Student 4	(-2)	58%	56%
Student 5	(-2)	*44%*	*42%*
Student 6	(+4)	56%	60%
Student 7	(0)	58%	58%
Student 8	(-14)	68%	54%
Student 9	(+12)	56%	68%
Student 10	(-2)	60%	58%
Student 11	(+2)	60%	62%
Student 12	(+18)	*44%*	62%
Student 13	(-8)	58%	50%
Student 14	(+6)	50%	56%
Student 15	(+2)	*34%*	*36%*
Student 16	(0)	*32%*	*32%*
Average for students:		***52.25%***	***52.63%***

Amongst the 16 students interviewed, 4 students gave a failure to the 'School as a whole' and a failure to the 'English Panel'. The failure rate is 25% (4/16) and the pass rate is 75% (12/16). Though it is not a 100% pass rate, the overall result is not bad.

It is interesting to note that the difference is quite high between those scores given by the students to the 'School as a whole' and to the 'English Panel'. The range is from (-14) to (+18). The scores also reflect the diverse needs and expectations from the students. In fact, ***the diversity of students' abilities,*** interest and perceptions also poses challenges to the teaching methodologies and strategies of the School Teachers and Management in pursuit of 'quality education'.

These will also be further explored and discussed in Chapter 4B, Qualitative Findings and Discussions, In-Depth Interviews part.

However, it is comforting to see the quantitative findings from the 4 Parents. The pass rate is 100% (4/4).

The average for the parents' scores given in the questionnaires to the school as a whole and the English Panel are: 64.5% and 65.5% respectively. All the 4 parents were satisfied with the performance of the School and therefore gave good pass marks to both the 'School as a whole' and 'the English Panel' as follows:

		School as a whole	*English Panel*
Parent 1	(+6)	64%	**70%**
Parent 2	(0)	66%	66%
Parent 3	(0)	54%	54%
Parent 4	(-2)	**74%**	**72%**
Average for Parents:		***64.5%***	***65.5%***

3 of the scores are impressive, ***70%, 72%*** and ***74%***, reflecting their total satisfaction Nevertheless, according to the Parents, there is still room for improvement for the School and the English Language Teachers. These will be further explored and discussed in the next part, Chapter 4B, "Qualitative Findings and Discussions – In-Depth Interviews".

The researcher stresses that these findings are only indicative.

As mentioned on p.102, the "initial findings" should not be treated or released prematurely as "conclusions" (Jackson, 2011; Stacks, 2013).

As an exploratory research, we should only come to the final conclusion when all the data is available and triangulated.

Chapter 4B: Qualitative Findings

and Discussions

(In-depth Interviews)

A Microscopic Study of the Challenges Facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong

Chapter 4B: Qualitative Findings & Discussions

(In-depth Interviews)

This chapter reports qualitative findings of the 'in-depth Interviews' conducted with the relevant stakeholders of the School.

As discussed previously in Chapter 3, Research Methodology, all the interviewees were invited to stay and express their comments and thoughts about 'quality education' after completing Part 1, Questionnaire. In this part, a semi-structured interview approach was adopted in order to allow both the interviewer and interviewee more flexibility to discuss and explore the issues surrounding the topic of 'Quality Education'. All the 4 parties of the stakeholders of the School were invited to take part in the interviews:

(a) the School Management (The Principal and the English Panel Head)

(b) 3 Senior Form English Language Teachers (Teacher A, B & C)

(c) 16 Students from 1st to 4th quarter academic results who were in the form of F.7

(d) 4 Parents of students from 1st to 4th quarter academic results who were in F.6

A set of questionnaire for the School Principal, Teachers, Students and Parents is enclosed in the Annex Part of this Thesis Paper, Annex I. The questionnaire is the same for all the stakeholders and the measures were set upon the 10 parameters of a 'Quality School' by Chapman & Adams (2002).

For the students and parents, only short interviews between 20 and 30 minutes were conducted in order not to disrupt their busy class or work schedule. They were invited to express freely their general views and opinions on 'quality education' and to what extent they agree or accept what their school is offering to them. For the interviews with the Principal, English Panel Head and the 3 English Language Teachers, however, in-depth interviews with the duration between 2 and 3 hours were conducted since the focus of our Research is on 'teachers', and in particular, the Senior Form English Language Teachers of the chosen school. They were given at least 2 weeks in advance to prepare for the interview questions. A sample of the in-depth interview questions is also enclosed in this Thesis Paper, Annex II.

The interview questions were set upon the Conceptual Framework of Ho (2005) and his suggested four propositions at the institutional level were explored.

P1: The education experience potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organizational skills, social skills, and communication skills, and over above the knowledge transmitted.

P2: The education process involves both imitation and drilling, and creative explorations and reflections. Maintaining interest through creative activities and self-confidence through an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the process much more effective and less frustrating for students.

P3: Allowing teachers a high degree of autonomy and supporting their endeavours through adequately equipped schools and quality textbooks are at least as important as material incentives to attract quality teachers.

P4: Examinations and drilling can be useful and much less harmful if results from examinations are not used to penalize students psychologically by designating them to the "bottom fifth" or the "bottom third" and thus labelling them as inferior.

Chapter 4B reports some of the most important findings from the in-depth interviews regarding 'quality education' from the *perceptions, experience and understanding* of the interviewees. It also explores the ***challenges*** facing the School in such pursuit of the 'quality education', and in particular, those challenges facing the front-line English Language teachers of the Research school.

Here below are some of the crucial issues in our discussions:

1. Definitions and Interpretations of 'Quality Education' by the stakeholders.

2. The 4 propositions of Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework were explored.

3. Challenges facing the school Management and teachers in pursuit of 'quality education' were discussed and explored in the in-depth interviews.

I. Definitions and Interpretations of 'Quality Education' by the stakeholders.

The Principal:

- The Principal agrees that in the broad sense, "quality education" refers to education of "excellence".
- In applying the concept of "Quality Education" in his particular School, which is a band-3 Private Secondary School in Hong Kong, he admits that it would be extremely difficult to relate "excellence" to his students. He would, therefore, totally agree with Ho (2005) and define "quality education" as a "value-added" one in such setting.
- Although it would be difficult to talk about achieving excellent academic results in his school, he does believe that he has hired all the good teachers in his school

and if they can help their students to become a better person; that is, by making a positive change to his students not just in terms of "knowledge and academic performance", but more importantly, in terms of their **"**attitude towards life and people", he would regard this education process as "value-added" and "positive". This also serves the purpose of schooling, making a positive contribution to society. It can, therefore, be defined as "quality education" as well.

- To a large extent, the Principal's view is similar to Ho's (2005) Concept of "Value-Added" and he is, so far, happy with the provision, delivery and outcome of the education service offered by his School since his leadership in 2005.

- He believes that all the teachers at his school are doing their best to make a change to their students in a positive way and the outcomes are, so far, satisfactory. In this light, he is proud to say that his school is also providing "value-added", which is also a kind of "quality", schooling to his students.

English Language Panel Head

- Basically, the English Panel Head agrees with Ho's (2005) concept of "value-added" and he defines the purpose of education should be "learning for learning".

- In view of such purpose, he himself is more inclined to defining the pursuit of quality education as the "interactive approach of teaching and learning"**.** In his belief, to pursue 'quality education', teachers should be well-prepared for the

lessons, making tailor-made teaching materials for their students in order to cater for their learning needs. The "inputs" and "outputs" are inter-affecting.

Teacher A:

- She defines 'quality education' as an education which "supports life-long learning" which is also the goal of the Education Bureau, Hong Kong. She believes the critical success factor for the delivery of 'quality education' at school is to have capable, motivated and well-trained teachers who can motivate and enlighten students' learning. Hence, amongst all the 10 characteristics of the 'Quality School' as suggested by Chapman & Adams (2002), she would rank item 2, "***capable, motivated and well-trained teachers***" as the most important one.

Teacher B:

- She is in favour of defining 'quality' as **'**excellence' (Peters and Waterman, 1982). She finds that Ho's (2005) definition of "value-added" as an interesting and a more achievable approach.

- At a first glance, she disagrees with Ho (2005) as she finds that the standard of 'quality' has somewhat been compromised, from the "excellence" level, down to the "value-added" or "improvement" status. However, on second thought, she also finds that in reality, if a teacher has already done his/her very best in

providing what he/she thinks to be an 'excellent' education to his/her students, ultimately helping them make an improvement in terms of knowledge and/or learning attitude, this can also be regarded as 'quality education', no matter what the students' final academic scores in the public examinations are, as the intellectual ability of the students might hinder them from achieving flying colours. This kind of positive change brought along by a teacher to students should also be regarded as a "value-added" and "quality" education. Hence, she thinks that Ho (2005) has brought the definition of 'quality education' to a more practical and achievable level.

- However, she insists that in terms of attitude, one must only define 'quality' as 'excellence' so that both students and teachers will not lower their target of achieving 'excellence', instead of just achieving "value-added" or "improvement" in education; though in reality, she admits that a "value-added" performance of students is also a good measure or outcome of the provision of 'quality education' to students.

Teacher C:

- She largely shares the view of Ho (2005), the concept of "value-added", especially in the chosen school setting, although in a broad sense, 'quality education' should refer to 'excellence'. As long as teachers can make a difference and positive change to their students' attitudes and behaviours, that is, adding value to them, they are already providing 'quality education' to them.

- She quotes some examples of her previous students, such as those with behavioral problems or bad habits like drinking and drug-taking problems in their school days who are now integrated into society and have normal jobs. She is happy with this change and how our schooling has made a difference to them.

Students & Parents:

- All of them agree with Ho's (2005) "value-added" concept. If the School can add value to them in a positive manner, it is already delivering a kind of 'quality education'.

- The students and parents of this school are more compromising in terms of 'excellence' in academic results. They fully understand that they or their children came to this school because they failed in their previous public exams. They are, therefore, more realistic and would not expect themselves to undergo drastic change in their academic performance.

- The parents, in particular, appreciate the patience, motivation and capability of the teachers of the Research school in helping and improving their children, both academically and behaviorally.

- They all agreed that their children have improved a lot in terms of learning attitude and behavior after being admitted to this School.

II. The 4 propositions of Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework were explored

> ***P1: "The education experience potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organizational skills, social skills, and communication skills, over and above the knowledge transmitted.***

The Principal:

- The Principal believes that all these skills are important. When asked to rank their importance, he thinks that "***life skills"*** should come before "job skills", and then to be followed by "knowledge".

- The order of importance is as follows:
  1. Self-control skills;
  2. Communication & Reasoning Skills;
  3. Social Skills;
  4. Reflective Skills;
  5. Vocational or Professional Knowledge and Skills;
  6. Knowledge about the world and society.

- The Principal places "self-control skills" in the premier position because he thinks that if students can acquire the "self-control skills" at school by learning to obey the school regulations, they will then be able to integrate themselves into society in the future and follow laws and orders when they grow up. This is especially the case for his F.4 and F.5 students who, in his term, "do not behave like a real human being"; that is, do not know how to respect people, laws and orders.

- If he can keep them studying and learning in school, it has already helped reduce possible chaos and destruction caused by these youngsters in society. If he can further help these students change their attitudes and acquire the "self-control skills" as well as other life skills, such as the "communication & reasoning skills", "social skills", "reflective skills" at school, he is delivering "value-added" educational experience to them. It is always important to develop one's "life skills" for basic survival in society before one is able to demonstrate one's "job skills" and "knowledge skills".

- To a great extent, therefore, the Principal agrees with Ho's (2005) Concept of "value-added". He also believes that his School is delivering such kind of "value-added" educational experience to his students successfully, emphasizing the acquisition of "life skills", more than the "job skills" and "knowledge", through the various extra-curricular activities at school, such as the Sports events, Choral Speaking, Debating and other Cultural activities.

- Besides, the Principal is always proud to claim his School as a "real" school, helping his students to "learn to become a real human being", with strict classroom and school regulations, on top of the student-oriented approach of 'quality teaching' by 'quality' teachers (though his students may not be 'quality' ones).

The English Panel Head:

- The English Panel Head shares with Ho's (2005) concept and agrees that educational experience is more than just the transmission of "knowledge". "Life skills" should always come first.

- In his mind, "life skills", such as the "Social Skills & Reflective Skills" are the most important ones; followed by "self-control skills" and "job skills". The least important skill, amongst the above, is the "knowledge" skills. It is because he thinks that the concept of 'quality education' should be 'learning for learning'; and it should be a life-long one. Hence, acquiring "life skills" is the most crucial element in education.

- He also emphasizes the training of "life skills" in his classroom, mostly in English writing lessons, where he asks questions and discusses some social issues with his students to develop their critical thinking skills.

Teacher A:

- She also agrees with Ho's (2005) conceptual theory of "value-added" and that "life skills" should be placed on top of the "knowledge" and "job skills".

- In her opinion, the 3 most important skills are as follows:

  1. Reflective Skill

  This is regarded by Teacher A as the most important kind of 'life skill' that a school should equip its students with. She thinks that schools should train students to exercise their analytical and reflective skills more in order that the latter can learn to become real "life-long learners" in the future. This is more important than just the "knowledge" or "job" skills.

  2. Knowledge about the world and society

  A school is a place where knowledge is transmitted and therefore Teacher A thinks that a 'quality school' should also provide students with the necessary subject knowledge so that they know what is happening around them in the world and society.

3. Communication and Reasoning

Teacher A thinks that students need to develop their communication and reasoning skills well in order to communicate with people. Besides, students need to have a reasoning power to distinguish the right from the wrong.

- Teacher A says she would like to emphasize these skills in her daily teaching. In her English lessons, for example, she loves to incorporate some current affairs and social issues into her classroom discussion. She tries her best to discuss some hot topics, such as the Paparazzi, Domestic Violence, Drug Abuse, etc…

- In doing so, her English lessons can be more related to the reality. Not only can her students learn the English vocabulary and expressions for these current affairs, but also some knowledge about society and the world.

- Teacher A highly supports the implementation of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum (NSS) for the English subject. She thinks that it is a task-based learning, conducted in a more interesting and participatory approach. It is less boring than our traditional English grammar teaching. Students can also be trained to exercise their communication skills, as well as their independent and critical thinking skills.

- In her English classes, both life skills and exam skills are emphasized for she also shares Ho's (2005) view that educational experience should equip students with "life skills" over and above the knowledge transmitted.

Teacher B:

- Teacher B shares the view of Ho (2005) that educational experience should equip students with life skills over and above the knowledge transmitted. She thinks that the 'life skills' and 'job skills' are more important than 'knowledge'. She understands that not everybody is born to be a good learner and therefore she appreciates the teaching and training of other personal and job skills to students, on top of knowledge.

- Amongst the skills suggested by Ho (2005), she thinks the following 3 skills as the most important ones:

  1st: self-control skills

  2nd: social skills

  3rd: job skills

- Teacher B thinks that one must be able to control oneself before one can get along with other people. Having acquired and mastered one's self-control skills, one will find it easier to develop his social network.

- ‘Social Skills’ are also important since human beings are ‘group’ animals. One cannot survive without establishing a good relationship with others.

- For practical survival reasons, one should also be well-equipped with ‘job skills’, on top of ‘knowledge’. This is especially the case for her students in a band-3 school as most of them may not be able to pursue higher education after graduation from the Secondary School and may need to work in society.

Teacher C:

- At the personal level, she agrees with Ho’s (2005) concept that ‘life-skills’ should come before ‘job skills’ and ‘knowledge’. However, in applying to her students of the research school, she would rank the order of importance in another way.

- She agrees that for her Form 4 to Form 5 students, ‘life skills’ and ‘job skills’ are more important than ‘knowledge’ since most of them are not really interested in furthering their studies in future. However, for her Form 6 to Form 7 students, she would rank ‘knowledge’ as the most important skill in these 2 years since their goal is to enter a University or Higher Education Institution. Hence, she needs to focus on teaching them ‘knowledge skill’ and or exam skills.

- On top of teaching English Language subject, Teacher C has started teaching Liberal Studies since the research academic year of 2009-2010. She strongly believes in and emphasizes the 'analytical' skills training in her daily teaching and discusses a lot of current affairs in her classes. She also tries to do it in her English Language classes but finds it difficult due to the language barrier of her students.

All the in-depth interviewees share Ho's (2005) concept that '***life skills'*** are more important than just the 'knowledge' skills.

P2: "The education process involves both imitation and drilling, and creative explorations and reflections. Maintaining interest through creative activities and self-confidence through an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the process much more effective and less frustrating for students."

<u>The Principal:</u>

<u>"Imitation and Drilling" vs. "Creative Explorations and Reflections":</u>

- The Principal strongly believes in "drilling" as he himself came from the background of "Elite" Educational System in Hong Kong, struggling hard for the entry to the then only English-medium University in Hong Kong more than 40

years ago. He is a man who trusts that "*practice makes perfect*", especially under such a highly-competitive public examination system in Hong Kong. As mentioned previously, he also likes to hire some fresh graduates, instead of experienced educators, to join his teaching team as the former are more familiar with the latest public examination syllabuses and curricula, who will then be able to help their students in the "drilling" and preparation for the public examinations as well.

- However, the Principal would give full "autonomy" to the teachers in their course design and their way of delivery of classes. He would totally leave his teachers to decide whether they would like to combine "drilling" and "creativity" together in their classes or just focus on traditional classroom mode of teaching and practice.

- The Principal strongly believes that teaching itself is an "art" and every teacher is an "artist" to design his/her own work. He, therefore, gives a lot of flexibility and autonomy to his teachers to do their "artwork" of teaching.

- However, according to the Principal, doubts are cast on the simultaneous application of traditional "drilling" and "creative explorations and reflections" in his school context, in particular, since

(1) It very much depends on the teaching styles, motivation and methodologies of the teachers as "drilling" also involves a lot of contribution from the

teachers, such as the marking of mock papers and giving feedback to students;

(2) It involves the participation of the students as well, who are mostly poorly-motivated and uncooperative to do their "drilling" and/or intellectually incapable of exercising their "creative" and "reflective" skills.

- He strongly believes in "drilling", but if teachers can balance "creativity" and "drilling" in their classes, it would also be good but he truly understands the difficulty involved in his band-3 school.

English Panel Head:

"Imitation and Drilling" vs. "Creative Explorations and Reflections":

- The Panel Head agrees with Ho (2005) that "the education process involves both imitation and drilling". He thinks that "drilling" is equally important for both teachers and students. From the students' perspective, they need to practise and get the feedback from their teachers in order to know their performance. From the teachers' perspective, they need to know how much their students have learnt in the learning process. So, 'drilling' does play an important part in the teaching and learning process. 'Feedback' from teachers is also important. In his opinion,

marking students' assignments and giving feedback to his students are intellectually challenging.

- Given the large class sizes of his School, it is not feasible to plan too many writing assignments for his students. He would give 1 piece of 'writing' and 1 piece of 'practical skills' writing as coursework for his F.6 students every month.

- As for the manner of marking, he would stick to the public examination marking format, marking only 3 paragraphs instead of the complete essay. Due to the poor English standard of his students and the large size of classes, "marking their writing is already a very challenging task", he comments.

- Of course, 'excessive drilling' is bad. To strike a balance between "creativity" and "drilling", in writing lesson, for example, he can ask his students to discuss some current affairs or topics which can stimulate their critical and reflective thinking skills. In this way, he can also put the 'reflective skills' and 'exam skills' training in the classroom in a balanced way.

<u>Role-Model:</u>

- According to the English Panel Head, the research school is the 4th school in his teaching life. He finds that, so far, the current Principal is the best one compared with his previous schools', who is also a good role-model for teachers to learn, in terms of his leadership and expertise in teaching, serving as good "role-model"

for the students as well. He agrees with Ho (2005) that the learning process involves both "drilling" and "imitation". Hence, it is important for teachers to set a good example for their students.

- Apart from the Principal, at home, the Panel Head has been strongly influenced by his mother who is also an English teacher. She has also served as a good role-model for him. Her aspiration of her son's future, education and way of upbringing has had a great impact on his life: she has been speaking in English at home since he was a little child, teaching and helping him a lot in the English language learning. As a result, he developed a liking in the language and took up the subject as his major in the University study. He then joined the teaching profession after graduation. In his early life, he has learnt and "imitated" a lot from his mother, accounting for his final choice of English language teaching in his career. Now, as an English teacher and Panel Head, he finds that he has been learning from and "imitating" the Principal of this School a lot.

- He concludes that both his "mother" and the current "Principal" have influenced him a lot and that teachers should set a good role model for their students.

- The Panel Head believes that he himself is a good "role-model" for his students. He speaks good English and is well-prepared for the classes every day.

Teacher A:

Imitation & Drilling:

- Teacher A strongly believes in "imitation" and "drilling". She finds that they are very useful in helping students learn English language. In her English language teaching scheme for F.6 classes, every cycle, there is at least a session on Listening, Writing, Reading Comprehension and Practical Skills Practice. For Speaking session, there may not be sufficient time for a big class of 45 students to practise individually, so, she has to arrange the Speaking Practice after school. As most of our students have a rather weak English language foundation, she finds that it is particularly important to provide additional support to enhance their writing skills. Therefore, in her weekly writing lesson, she tries to arrange different writing workshops focusing on the discussion of sentence structures and grammar teaching on top of the routine writing practice and correction.

- As mentioned, she strongly believes in "reflective skills" training, where the "creativity" of her students can be explored and trained as well. Yet, this kind of training is only applicable to those able students. For most of her students, she would need to provide more scaffolding and learning support by providing a kind of "imitation" and "drilling" platform through the daily assignments. It is, of course, also important to give the students "feedbacks" afterwards so that they can

learn from their mistakes and her comments on their assignments. Normally, she returns all her students' assignments within 1 month.

- She thinks that through the regular training and drilling, her students can learn in a more step-by-step approach. Therefore, she also shares with Ho's (2005) view that an appropriate dose of imitation and drilling will make the learning process more effective and less frustrating for her students, especially for her less-able students at this School.

Role-Model:

- Teacher A admits it is important for a teacher to be a good role-model for his/her students, not just in terms of the way of teaching, but also in terms of one's personal attributes, manners and behaviours.

- Overall, she finds that she is a good role-model for her students. She has set a good example of being a responsible teacher: being well-prepared for every lesson and giving them the relevant feedback.

- In terms of her personal attributes, subject knowledge, capability and motivation for teaching, she finds that she is a good role-model for them. However, in terms of her teaching methodology and the skill of creating an interesting or interactive classroom ambience, she admits that there is still room for improvement. She

believes that there is something to do with her character since she is a very traditional teacher.

- Besides, being a Discipline Teacher at school may help her to create a certain respectable image, but at the same time, a fearful figure in the eyes of her students. She understands that this may explain the certain distance between her and her students. Her strategy is to try to convey the message to her students that she is approachable to everyone during and after lessons.

- In short, Teacher A agrees with Ho (2005) that imitation and drilling form an important part in the learning process. An effective dose of drilling can make the learning process more effective and less frustrating for students.

- She always tries different methodologies to strike a balance between "creativity" and "drilling" in her English lessons. Besides, she recognizes the importance of being a good role-model for her students, for an effective dose of "imitation" and "drilling" will prove to be effective in the learning process.

Teacher B:

- Teacher B strongly believes in "drilling". This is especially the case in Hong Kong where students need to sit public examinations.

- She does not agree with the Education Bureau's highlight on "creativity" and "all-wide learning", with a tendency to de-emphasize the importance of "drilling" the recent educational reforms in the city. She prefers the old examination systems of HKCEE and HKALE to the new 3-3-4 system. She strongly believes in "drilling" and task-based learning, which the old system can better cater for such learning needs.

- Besides, "creativity" and "drilling" are not mutually exclusive. For instance, she can easily integrate some hot topics for discussion into her English classroom for discussion in order to stimulate their creative thinking skills in her F.6 and F.7 classes; and then followed by some writing assignments or project presentations. Hence, it is a matter of teaching strategy to combine the two different learning modes, "creativity" and "drilling" into her classroom, and it works well in the old system.

Teacher C:

- As mentioned previously in the part of P1, Teacher C puts a lot of emphasis on the training of "analytical skills" and exam skills in her classes since she is teaching Liberal Studies on top of the English Language subject.

- She strongly shares the view that "creativity" and "drilling" can co-exist. Its success depends highly on the participation and commitment of both 'teachers' and 'students'. Yet, due to the language barrier, it is difficult to balance the two

things in her English classes while it works well in her Liberal Studies classes since her students can discuss and explore many issues freely in their mother-tongue language.

All the interviewees agreed to the importance of "imitation and drilling" as well as "creative explorations and reflections" in the education process. P2 was found valid and applicable to the research school setting, though there were indeed difficulties in the actual implementation of balancing the 2 seemingly conflicting elements, "drilling" and "creativity". It was concluded that success depends not just on the 'quality' of the school 'teachers', but also the quality of 'students' as well.

P3: "It is important to attract quality graduates to go into teaching. Allowing teachers a high degree of autonomy and supporting their endeavours through adequately equipped schools and quality textbooks are at least as important as material incentives to attract quality teachers."

<u>The Principal:</u>

- According to the Principal, the criteria for 'quality teachers' are as follows:
    1. Teachers are "qualified" under the existing constitutional requirement by the Hong Kong Education Bureau;
    2. They should be experts in their areas of teaching, with their University's majors in their taught subjects, as the Principal believes in "professionalism".

- A teacher must be "qualified" first before he/she becomes a "quality" one. The Principal thinks that teaching experience is not important. On the contrary, he prefers to hire some fresh graduates since they are more familiar with the latest public examination syllabuses. As long as they have a heart for teaching, he would offer them an opportunity for teaching at his school.

Emphasis of "autonomy" in his School:

- As mentioned before, the Principal believes that "teaching itself is an art" and "every teacher is an artist". He, therefore, gives a high level of "autonomy" to his teaching staff to do their teaching artwork. He believes in "professionalism" and "expertise" and he always likes to hire those fresh and 'quality' graduates to join his teaching team.

- In his opinion, **"**expertise" and "a heart for teaching" count more than "experience". Hence, he also hopes that he can attract and retain those 'quality graduates' at his school by giving them a high degree of "autonomy" and **"**respect", since he knows that his school cannot offer good "material incentives" and "upward mobility" in his school, such as good salaries and promotional prospects, like the Government and Aided Schools. Yet, he always claims that this is also because of "this lack of upward mobility" that keeps his staff more united and harmonious; free from the power struggles in the Government and Aided Schools.

- When asked what attracted him to join the teaching profession, the Principal replied that it was his dream of becoming a Principal during childhood and now this wish has been fulfilled.

- Hence, after graduating from the University of Hong Kong more than 40 years ago, he joined the teaching profession straightaway, without second thought.

- "Salary" was also an important factor in his choice of career at that time.

Abuse of Autonomy:

- The Principal, however, confesses that he may offer too much "autonomy" to his teaching team and some abuse cases were reported; setting a bad example for his students.

- He knows that some teachers participate in soccer gambling, horse-racing, mahjong-gambling and lottery a lot; some spend a lot of time speculating in the stock market during office hours; some of them swear a lot; some are pre-occupied with their private tuitions and evening classes after school; some teachers are constantly late or absent for classes, some do not mark students' assignments, or even mock exam papers, etc..

- Theoretically, the Principal agrees that teachers should be a "role-model" for students and agrees with Ho (2005) that the students easily "imitate" their

teachers' behaviours and manners easily. However, the Principal insists on offering "autonomy" to his teaching team, not just in terms of their teaching materials and methodologies, but also their personal styles.

- The Principal thinks that basically it is not against the school regulations for his teachers to have their own private lives and hobbies, such as gambling and stock speculations, as long as they do not perform openly and boldly in front of their students during classes.

- He explains that some of his teaching members lack motivation in teaching since they are paid less than those offered by the Government and Aided Schools. Hence, at this stage, the Principal insists on offering an absolutely high degree of "autonomy" to his teaching team, even if this "autonomy" has somewhat been abused by some members.

- His bottom line to his teaching force is:

  "I don't care if they hire someone else to mark their students' assignments and papers at the end of the day, but they must make sure that they get their teaching and marking job done before taking up any evening part-time duties or engaging in their own personal pursuits of gambling and speculations…."

- When the Principal was asked to rank the importance of "Incentives for Teachers" (Kemmerer, 1990) in Annex II of the Questionnaire, he only chose "salary" as the

only and the most important element. He thinks that "material incentives" affect teachers' motivation most.

- When asked to compare its importance with "autonomy", he still ranks "salary" as the most crucial one. He does not agree with Ho (2005) that "autonomy" should be "at least equally important as material incentives". To his mind, "material incentive", such as salary, is more important than "autonomy".

- As "salary" is not as competitive as the Government and Aided Schools and there is "no upward mobility" in his Private School, the only way that the Principal can attract and keep his 'quality' teaching staff is by giving the latter in return: "autonomy", "respect" and a "harmonious working environment".

Panel Head:

- The Panel Head believes himself as a 'quality' teacher and that his students can learn a lot from him. His definition for a 'quality' teacher is that the teacher must firstly be a 'qualified' one under the existing constitution: receiving the relevant language and teachers' training, which he believes as the pre-requisite of a 'quality' teacher and the common expectation from students, parents and society.

- Secondly, a 'quality' teacher would also mean that the teacher should have some intrinsic qualities, such as good teaching skills, communication skills and charm.

To be more specific, the 'quality' teacher should possess: (1) subject knowledge; (2) communication skills; (3) reflective thinking skills; (4) passion for teaching; (5) adaptability.

- Without these characteristics, the teacher can only become a "qualified" one, but not a "quality" one. He believes he himself possess all these skills as well.

Autonomy:

- The Panel Head agrees with Ho (2005) that "autonomy" is extremely important to attract and keep 'quality' graduates. When asked to rank the order of importance and compare it with the elements of incentives as summarized by Kemmerer (1990), the Panel Head opted for those elements of "working conditions" as the most important ones.

- In the midst, the "autonomy" and "ability range of students" being the foremost important; followed by "school and classroom facilities" and "the number of students".

- As mentioned, he joined the teaching profession out of his passion and love for the teaching job, not out of the "material incentives" that the teaching job can offer him. Hence, the elements of "working conditions" affect his decision to stay or leave from the current teaching post.

- To a great extent, he agrees with Ho (2005) that "autonomy" and "support for classroom facilities and textbooks" are at least, equally important than the "material incentives".

- In his case, and he believes, in the case of his English Panel, "autonomy", "peers' support" and "support for the school facilities and textbooks" are even more important than the "material incentives". He knows that many of our colleagues in the English Panel have a great passion for teaching, not out of the "material incentives".

- Hence, the School should offer them more "autonomy" and support in order to improve their working conditions, such as the class size, ability streaming of students, which he is currently working hard on the new Ability Streaming English Programme for the F.6 English Classes this academic year (2009-2010).

- He appreciates the "autonomy" and flexibility offered by the Principal at school. He finds there are few restraints than the other Government or Aided Schools that he had previously taught at. He finds that "autonomy" is important for it not only gives him the flexibility to teach, but it also represents the 'trust' and 'recognition' from the leadership in terms of his capability. Being the Panel Head, he thinks that it is also a kind of recognition from the Principal.

- He finds the 'material incentives' brought along by the 'upward mobility' of being the Panel Head unimportant; rather, the 'spiritual rewards', such as the

recognition from the Principal and appreciation from his students, serving as a token of appreciation and thus motivating him to work harder in this School.

- In addition to his own family background, the English Panel Head admits that it is also because of his own passion for performance and attention-seeking that makes him become a teacher. He really enjoys his teaching job, not because of its material rewards, but his passion for teaching and performing.

Teacher A:

Autonomy:

- Teacher A strongly supports the idea of a relatively high degree of 'autonomy' for teachers, which she also enjoys in this school. However, she also admits that she can be flexible and is open for changes and discussions in terms of her curriculum design and teaching. She confesses that she herself does not in fact need too much autonomy. Rather, she would prefer to stick to a systematic set of teaching curriculum and scheme of work, if there is such a system at the School.

- As to the 'materials incentives' and 'upward mobility' of a teacher, she is not particularly impressed by these two incentives either. Rather, she would think that a teacher's own passion for teaching and the relevant support given to him/her through an adequately equipped school count more than the "autonomy", "material incentives" and/or "upward mobility".

- In her case, she prefers to be more focused on teaching, and if possibly, teaching in a relaxed and supportive teaching and learning environment and she finds the "working conditions" as the most appealing incentives as suggested by Kemmerer (1990).

- Amongst all, the following 3 conditions are of paramount importance to her:

1. Classroom Facilities

   The classroom facilities are important for they directly affect the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. For example, a good access of internet and computer set-up is vital to the smooth flow of the delivery of a lesson, but even this basic facility is absent in the Research school.

2. Number of Students

   The number of students affects the quality and workload of a teacher. Handling a big language class size of 45 students is a tough task. It increases the workload of a teacher and therefore negatively affects the quality of outputs (e.g. teaching outcomes, marking of assignments, etc…). On the other hand, a small-class size enables her to better take care of her students and thus enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching.

3. Ability range of Students

   The diverse ability of students restrain her from designing some challenging tasks for the more-able students while at the same time, preventing her from preparing some tailor-made teaching materials for the less-able students.

Hence, the ability range of students does affect the quality of teaching and learning in a classroom.

Reasons for her joining the teaching profession:

- The main reason is that she has a heart for 'teaching'. This is the simplest and strongest reason. She is deeply interested in the teaching profession because she finds the job very meaningful. Being able to share the skill in language learning in a step-by-step approach with her students and seeing an improvement in their lives gives her a sense of satisfaction.

- She thinks that this is this kind of satisfaction that keeps her in the teaching profession, and in particular in a Band-3 context. She does not have a strong preference for teaching bright students; rather, she would like to teach those cooperative and obedient students, no matter what their learning abilities are. Another reason for her choice of teaching at the Research school is the location: it is near her home, which saves her time and energy in commuting.

- Teacher A agrees with Ho (2005) that "autonomy" is, no doubt, an important incentive in attracting or retaining 'quality' teachers. However, she finds that the working conditions, such as the classroom facilities, class size and the ability streaming of her students, count more than "autonomy" and other "material incentives". In her case, she would like to stay focused on the improvement of

the quality of teaching and learning. Hence, working conditions, such as classroom facilities, class size and ability streaming of students are more appealing to her.

Teacher B:

- Teacher B thinks that 'quality teachers' are different from and more than 'qualified teachers'. They should not just be just able to pass the qualifications framework set by the HKSAR Government, but also be good in terms of their personality, teaching performance, integrity, etc… She agrees with the Government's policy to set up a mechanism to monitor the quality of teachers, such as the Language Proficiency and Assessment Test for language teachers and the specialist teachers' training in the language subject.

- She thinks that "autonomy" is important to teachers, but it is not as important as the 'working conditions'. Amongst the various incentives as suggested by Kemmerer (1990), in the Annex II of the Questionnaire, Teacher B has opted for the following:

  1st : Number of students/ Class Size:

  Teacher B finds that the current class size of her school is very big, over 40 students in F.7 classrooms. It is indeed difficult to mark their A-Level papers (a set of 5 exam papers for each student in the Use of English Subject) in detail.

2nd: School and Classroom Facilities

The School and Classroom Facilities are important for they play an important role in her day-to-day teaching process. If the school cannot offer such support, she will feel frustrated as not only will it affect her original class design and teaching methodology, but also the outcome, that is, the 'quality' of her delivery of 'education' to her classes.

3rd: Teacher's Autonomy

Too much restraint to teachers will only hinder the quality of teaching since teachers will then be unable to realize their full potential in teaching. She thinks that a good monitoring system is important. It must be realistic and practical enough, giving enough flexibility to teachers for making adjustments and changes, without affecting their "autonomy". Teacher B thinks that "autonomy" is important, but not equally or more important than the "working conditions".

- Teacher B sums up that the "working conditions" are more important than the "autonomy" and "material incentives". Though she shares Ho's (2005) view that it is important to give "autonomy" to teachers, at the same time, she thinks that a monitoring system should be set up for 'quality' supervision purpose. It is no doubt that she is enjoying the "autonomy" offered to her by the School.

- However, she will appreciate it if the School or the English Panel Head can provide the relevant instructional supervision and support to her by setting up a

good review and monitoring system for her colleagues as "autonomy" can be easily abused by people should there be no controlling system. For example, an English Panel member of the Senior-Form of her School never corrects students' assignments, writings and even mock exam papers, while receiving no penalty from the Principal and creating a bad 'role-model' for students and tarnishing the image of other English Panel members as well.

- She thinks that it is very important for teachers to be a good 'role-model' for students, not only in terms of subject knowledge, but also in terms of their attitude towards teaching, their day-to-day preparation for the classes, their sense of responsibility as well as personal behaviours and conducts during and after classes.

Teacher C:

- Teacher C agrees that "autonomy" of teachers is crucial in the delivery of 'quality education' to students and that she is treasuring this benefit in the research school. However, an abuse of "autonomy" is frequently seen in the School. For example, some teachers do not mark students' assignments, some lack motivation in teaching and do not prepare for classes, some are more interested in gambling, investment and speculations or engaged in part-time teaching jobs, etc.. She definitely believes in the importance of having a good role-model for students as students "imitate" and learn from teachers.

- Her own concept of ‘quality education’ lies on the following 3 elements:

  1st : Teacher’s Role Model

  2nd: Class Size

  3rd A school-wide recognition for success

- She thinks that teaching a small class size and having a school-wide recognition for success would enhance the effectiveness of teaching. Generally speaking, she would rank the following 3 elements as the most attractive incentives to attract and retain ‘quality teachers’:

  1st: Class Size

  2nd : Classroom Facility

  3rd: Career Development

  4th: Remuneration

- She thinks that the actual working conditions, such as ‘class size’ and ‘classroom facility’ count more than ‘autonomy’ or other ‘material incentives’ in the delivery of ‘quality education’ since the class size and classroom affects the ‘quality’ of teaching and learning. These are also the missing elements in her school, accounting for the loss of ‘quality teachers’ every year.

- Given the fact that the research school has limited financing and cannot offer teachers the same ‘material incentives’ than other Government or Aided Schools

in Hong Kong, she would treasure the 'autonomy' that the Principal and the Panel Head are offering to her. Yet, the 'quality' of teachers themselves count more. They must have a passion for teaching and be a good 'role-model' for students.

Hence, it was generally agreed by all the teachers that "autonomy" is important, but not "a high degree" as it would easily be abused by the irresponsible or unmotivated teachers. Working conditions, such as 'small class size' and 'classroom facilities' count more.

P4: "Examinations and drilling can be useful and much less harmful if results from examinations are not used to penalize students psychologically by designating them to the "bottom fifth" or the "bottom third" and thus labeling them as inferior.

Student Characteristics:

It is worthy to further explain the characteristics of the students of the research school, on top of what have been described in the Introductory and Conceptual Framework Chapters. Given the intake of the low-quality students (especially for those F.4 and F.5 classes who were admitted to the School as a result from expulsion from their previous schools, due to their poor academic performance and/or poor conduct), in the Principal's mind, his minimum requirement from the teachers is to help these students "learn how to become a real human being" , such as learning how "to behave properly, obeying school rules and regulations, respecting teachers and other people in school and society".

As to the F.6 and F.7 classes, since even the top students at his school only scored at around 10 points in the HKCEE public examinations (while the minimum points of admission to F.6 classes at Government and Aided Schools are 14 points+ and the maximum points are 30 Points), yet, some of them still managed to enter colleges and universities in the end.

The Principal:

- As a Principal, he is already more than satisfied with the "value-added" academic progress of his students. These academic achievements, of course, are the joint efforts of both the teachers and students.

- As the Principal himself grew up with the "Elite Educational System" introduced in Hong Kong more than 40 years ago, he strongly believes in the streaming of students as a result of the public examination results in Hong Kong. He thinks that the streaming of "able" and "less-able" students would be good for society as a whole.

- According to the Principal, there is no harm for the labeling effect on students. One has to accept that there is "no real fairness" in any society in the world. Everyone's ability is different. Some people may be good at studying and doing research, some may be good at singing, acting, carpentry, plumbing, design, etc….

- If someone is not academically strong enough to enter a university, he/she has to explore his/her interest and ability and develop it elsewhere, such as going for some vocational training and apprenticeship or go to work directly in society.

- He quotes Germany as an example:

  "In Germany, there is a good higher educational system. However, if you are particularly good at or interested in certain field, for instance, carpentry, you can also develop your skill and become an expert in that area without necessarily going to university. You can also develop your own career or business in that field without being prejudiced or despised by the German society."

- The Principal thinks that there is no need for Hong Kong to follow the global trend and develop in such a short time so many universities since the past decade, for the sake of the "majority" of students who are, in fact, not academically strong enough or "qualified" to study at the university level at his time.

- He thinks that the government is just wasting taxpayers' money and society's resources as a result of the expansion of Universities and Higher Education in Hong Kong.

- Besides, the Government is just pulling down the standard of the University education by its rapid expansion of higher education. There is no point to standardize the University education. As a result, 'quality' suffers: both the University entrants/graduates and society as well.

- He thinks that the Government is trying to "secondarize" our initial Elite University education in Hong Kong and lower the standard of Universities.

- The Principal also prefers to keep the old 5-banding system in Hong Kong so that all the school standards can be clearly identified, instead of the current 3-banding. He is totally against the idea of abolishing the banding system as advocated by many educationalists. He finds that it would be unfair to those really bright and "Elite" students. The "Elite" educational system of Hong Kong, which was practised more than 30 years ago, should be restored so that society can put more resources on nurturing and grooming those top "band-1" students who can finally enter university.

- According to the Principal, this was also what we did 30 or 40 years ago in Hong Kong: whereas there was only 1 English-medium University; 1 Chinese-medium University and 1 Polytechnic.

- For the majority of students who are between "band-2" and "band-5" categories, and who cannot pursue university and higher education studies in the end, they can choose to work in society straightaway or find some relevant vocational training. It would, of course, be an 'honour' for the 'Elite Minority' to enter university who also deserve a bright prospect in their future.

- As for the average students, being the 'majority', there is no strong hard feeling or labeling effect on them since they understand that the university education really

belongs to the "Elite" students. In this way, the 'quality' of university graduates will not suffer and it will be fairer to those "Elite Minority" who are our future pillars and therefore deserve our society to put more resources in the university to groom them.

- He is, therefore, opposed to Ho's (2005)' suggestion for a 2-banding system.

- The Principal thinks that the clearer the "labeling" and streaming system for the "able" and "less-able" students, the better. It would be fairer to students, parents, educators and society as a whole, since they have a right to know the standards of the schools. The "labeling" effect is, anyway, unavoidable in society. He, therefore, prefers the Government to restore the old banding system of schools.

English Panel Head:

- He thinks that the "labeling effect" is unavoidable in any educational system. To cope with the problem of the labeling effect on his students, what he is trying to do is to talk to his students and help them understand the limitations and problems of the existing educational system in the city. Hence, they should see their own strengths and learn to overcome their learning problems. He agrees with Ho (2005) that in terms of Secondary Schools, there should only be 2-bandings in order to eliminate or at least reduce the "labeling effect" on students. There should only be one small group of Elite students while there should be one big group of average students in Hong Kong.

- He also agrees with Ho's (2005) suggestion that there should only be one small group of Elite schools; while the needs of a big group of the average students should be satisfied in order to reduce the labeling effect on students.

- In terms of the Universities and Colleges, he is happy with the current development, with 8 Universities in the city.

- He thinks that if we go back to only 1 or 2 Universities in Hong Kong, as the Principal suggests, Hong Kong will be less competitive with our counterparts in the world. This is not going in line with the current times.

- In short, he agrees with Ho (2005) that there should only be 2 bandings of Schools in Hong Kong to reduce the labeling effect of the "bottom-3" or "bottom-5" students.

Teacher A:

- Teacher A agrees with Ho's (2005) suggestion that there should only be 2 bandings in order to eliminate the possible labeling effect on students.

- She understands that the labeling effect will anyhow not be able to be eliminated completely since parents, students and society have certain expectations from and comments on certain well-performed and poorly-performed schools.

- Even if there is already an official list of Elite Band-1 and the average Band-2 schools in the territory, within the Band-2 schools, society will still do the unofficial ranking of the Band-2 schools, perhaps by dividing them into Band-2A (average) and Band-2B (below-average) schools. Hence, a total elimination of 'labeling effect' is unachievable.

- Even though the above situation might be the most likely scenario, Teacher A still supports Ho's (2005) proposal for she thinks that such a government policy does help to prevent penalizing students psychologically by designating them to the "bottom fifth" or the "bottom third" and thus labeling them as inferior, although a complete elimination of the "labeling effect" is unavoidable in any society.

- In school, she also finds that many of her students have a rather low self-esteem as a result of their failures in the HKCEE public examinations and the labeling effect brought along by society. Her strategy and advice to these students is to ask them to do their best in their own capacity and be careful when making their friends. She thinks that the only way to help them overcome those negative feelings or labeling effects is to remain positive and enthusiastic. Besides, the peers' influence plays an important role in shaping an adolescent's development. Hence, it is important to advise her students to make friends prudently in order not to go astray.

Teacher B:

- Teacher B, however, disagrees with Ho's (2005) fourth proposition of changing it to a 2-banding system. She thinks that it is not the system, but the personal attitudes/psychology which affects the labelling effect.

- In terms of actual teaching, it is even more difficult to teach in a mixed-ability class (Band 2-3). She believes in "ability streaming". Differentiating students' ability is one of the best ways to enhance the 'effectiveness' of 'quality teaching'. Hence, she prefers the old system of 5 banding to the current 3-banding system; not to say that it is now suggested by Ho (2005) to further reduce it to 2-banding.

- Of course, no system is perfect, but relatively speaking, in terms of teaching effectiveness, the previous 5-banding system is much better", she comments.

Teacher C:

- She shares the views of Teacher B that it would even be worse to reduce it to 2-banding system. She strongly believes in 'class size' and 'streaming' of students' ability in order to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Whether it is 5-banding or 2-banding, there is still a 'labelling' effect on the bottom band.

- She also agrees with Teacher A that society may somehow still classify into 2A, 2B or 2C banding, even if the school banding system is further reduced from 3-banding to 2-banding.

- The labelling effect is unavoidable in society. Rather, as a teacher, she always spends some time talking to her students and asking them not to look down on themselves.

- She quotes one example about one of her students having problems with wearing her school uniform in the street, who always has an extremely low self-esteem whenever she wears the school uniform. She spent some time talking and sharing her past experience with that student. Finally, she understood the philosophy and gained her confidence.

- It is not the school uniform which tells something to people around you, but your own attitudes and behaviours that actually affect people's attitudes towards you.

Students & Parents:

- 14 out of 16 students interviewed welcomed the idea of changing to a 2-banding system to avoid or reduce the 'labelling effect' on students.

- All parents, however, opposed to this idea. They would prefer a clearer streaming and banding system of schools in Hong Kong.

Although there is a good reason for Ho (2005) to make a proposition to change the banding system to 2, the labelling effect by society seems unavoidable. This idea is welcomed by the band-3 students, but not by their parents. In practice, P4 is highly controversial among the educators of the research school. They still think that differentiating students according to their abilities is the best way to enhance 'quality teaching'. Besides, one cannot change the views of others. Labelling effect is, anyhow, unavoidable in society.

III. Challenges facing the School and the English Language Teachers

To sum up, there are mainly 3 great challenges facing the School and the English Language Teachers: 1***. Inadequate Financing; 2. Diversity of Students; 3. Hasty Education Reforms in H.K.***

1. Inadequate Financing

The Principal:

- As reported in Chapter 4A, 'Quantitative Findings", "inadequate financing" is the only area that the Principal gave a failure score, "1".

- The research school is a Private Co-Educational Senior Secondary School, offering the main stream curriculum of the Hong Kong Education Bureau for classes from F.4 to F.7, operating in a non-profit making mode of a private institution and not receiving any Government subsidies up to the moment of writing. Therefore, it is the tuition fee of the students which forms the main source of the school income. The other source is from the School Foundation itself.

- As a result, financing is very limited and the Principal has to be very cautious in the use of every cent of the money. In the first year of his office, there were

really some financial problems. However, since the second year of his leadership, the Principal has been able to make a good financial reserve for the School. Starting from the third year of his management, the School was able to make a stable income and even a decent profit, despite all the financial restraints.

- The Principal attributed such success to his own leadership and the dedication of his 'quality' teaching team, forming a "word-of-mouth" goodwill. The School provided "value-added" educational service to those who were labelled as "bottom-5" or "bottom-3" students in society.

Strategies to cope with such challenge:

1. ***Quest for 'quality' and Earning 'word-of-mouth'***

- The Principal and all the staff are doing their best and questing for the delivery of 'quality education'. On top of what has previously been discussed in the 4 Propositions Section, such as the positive change of students' attitudes, behaviours and subject knowledge, the School also won some prestigious awards in the past 3 years in the academic and athletes' field. For example, in 2008, the Girls' Basket Ball Team of the school won the award of the first prize of the "Inter-School Basket Ball Tournament - Girls" in Hong Kong while the Boys' Soccer Team won the "Inter-School Premier Soccer Match – Boys" in 2009.

- During the past 3 years, the School also participated in and won a lot of prizes (2nd and 3rd prizes) during the Annual Inter-School Speech Festivals in both English and Chinese Languages. All these achievements, in terms of both academic performance and sports activities, have helped the School to earn a good name in the education sector; thus, the enrolment figure of students keeps increasing year by year, solving the problem of "limited financing".

- The 'word-of-mouth' effect as a result of the school's quest for 'quality' strategy results in an increase in 'quantity' of both students and income.

2. Hiring 'quality' teachers & Granting them 'autonomy'

- Due to the "inadequate financing" of the School, the Principal knows that he cannot offer "material incentives", such as good salaries and prospects of promotion to his teaching team, he, therefore, offers an absolutely high freedom and "autonomy" to his teaching team, in terms of teaching scheme and schedule, methodologies and flexibility in the administrative work and duties. Granting a high degree of "autonomy" to the teaching force is another strategy adopted by the Principal in coping with his current challenge of the lack of funds. However, this strategy is controversial as "autonomy" was somewhat abused by some of the staff members, as previously discussed in Proposition 3 section.

3. Planning to apply for a Direct Subsidy Scheme from the Government

- During the research academic year, the Principal is looking for other alternatives to seek other financial aids, such as the application for the Government's Direct Subsidy Scheme for schools.

- According to the Principal, in mid-1970s, when the Hong Kong Government was implementing the "Compulsory Education Scheme" in the territory, it invited many private schools to join the Subsidy Scheme in order to widen the Government and Aided Secondary Schools net for the allocation of school places to the children at that time. His school was also invited several times by the Government to participate in the Aided Scheme but the then Principal declined the offer since firstly, they thought that there were no financial problems for the School to continue to remain self-sufficient; and secondly, they were afraid of making the necessary changes in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Government and Aided Schools.

- According to the Principal, the then Principal and many shareholders lacked an insight into the future. They would simply like to remain everything unchanged - their own autonomy and independence in the School's Management and decision-making, including their free choice of curriculum, selection of students, the setting of tuition fees of students and pay scale of staff, as well as other human

resources policies such as the appointment and recruitment of staff, bonus and reward system, the age of retirement and the pension scheme. As a result, up to the moment of writing, the School remains to be a "Private" School.

- As the current Principal comments, if he were given a chance to take up the Principalship of the School at that time, he would have definitely accepted the offer from the Government and changed it to an Aided School.

- What he has done in this Private School in the past 4 years could have been done in multiples in an Aided School; and with more than 20 years, he believes he could have surely led the School to a new height since an Aided School is fully entitled to the financial support from the Government and therefore offers more financial strength that is conducive to the overall development of the School.

- "Adequate Financing", as he mentions in Part I, Questionnaire, is the most crucial element in running an organization, which is currently the weakest issue in this Private School.

- The latest Education Reforms have brought along the introduction of "Direct Subsidy Scheme" (DSS) into the territory. There is a chance for the School to apply for the "DSS" and the current Principal strongly advocates this idea. "The DSS issue is always on our agenda, but it seems that the Top Management lacks a consensus," the Principal comments. He further remarks that even with the final

endorsement and support from the Top Management (Supervisor and all the Shareholders), it is not an easy task for the final approval to be granted by the Government to a Private School.

- "It is always 10 times easier to switch from an Aided School than from a Private one to a DSS", the Principal concludes.

- Hence, gaining approval for the application for the Direct Subsidy Scheme for the School is another challenge facing the Principal at this stage.

- It involves firstly obtaining a consensus from the Top Management (Supervisor and all the Shareholders of the School); and secondly the formal application and the final approval from the Government.

English Panel Head:

- As reported in Chapter 4A, "Quantitative Findings", all the English Language Teachers gave a poor score, "1" or "2" to "Adequate Financing" to both the "School as a whole" and "The English Panel". Without "Adequate Financing", there are many limitations to enhance the classroom facilities or improve the working conditions of teachers. This is a great barrier to enhance the 'quality' of teaching and learning.

- Although in the Questionnaire, Part I of the Research, Chapter 4A, the English Panel Head gave a "3" score to the parameter of 'Adequate Financing' and an overall good mark to both 'the School as a whole' and 'the English Panel', finally, he confessed in the in-depth interview session that there was insufficient funding for the English Panel.

- What about if "financing" is not a problem for the English Department, what strategies would the English Panel Head take in order to enhance the effectiveness of English language learning and teaching?

The following was suggested by the English Panel Head:

1. <u>Downsizing the class size to maximum 25 students in each class</u>

   Class size is always the premier issue to be tackled in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching, and in particular, the English language teaching. In his view, a maximum of 25 students in each class is ideal.

2. <u>Hiring of Native English Teachers (NET)</u>

   Any language learning involves an immersion with the native-speaking environment. English language learning is no exception. A NET teacher is, therefore, essential in order to enhance the effectiveness of English language learning, especially in the areas of listening and speaking.

When asked how many NET teachers he expects to hire for this School, he thinks that the ratio should be the same as his ideal class size, that is, 1 to 25 students. Hence, based on the current number of students, he would suggest hiring 12 local English teachers and 2 NET teachers.

3. Setting up some English Language Teaching & Learning Resources

At the moment, the English language teaching and learning resources are purely dependent on the textbooks and the English Teachers' own resources. Setting up an English Language Resource Library for Teachers and Students; putting some resources on the school-based curriculum for the English subject; offering more diverse English language learning programmes, such as sight-seeing and visits; and organizing more extra-curricular activities that can immerse with the English language.

At the moment, since there is no funding for the above areas, the English Panel thinks that he has to be practical and economical in all areas of English language teaching. In other words, '**quality' suffers as a result of the lack of funding** although the English Panel Head did not admit it directly.

At least, it is quite clear that the above strategies are what the English Panel Head has in his mind in order to ***improve the 'quality' of English language teaching, should there be no financing problem.***

Teacher A

- Due to the limited financing, Teacher A cannot expect to have a well-equipped School as a Government or Aided School has, such as the ***installation of all the audio-visual equipment in the classrooms.*** There is no television, no computer, no overhead projector or visualizer in the classrooms.

- ***Classroom facilities*** are important for they directly affect the quality of teaching and learning. For example, a good access of internet and computer set-up is vital to the smooth flow of the delivery of her lessons, but even this basic facility is absent in the Research school.

- Besides, there is no funding or budget for buying English teaching materials, additional exercises and reference books for teachers.

- Apart from the free-of-charge seminars arranged by the Education Bureau, there is no subsidy for teachers to attend the relevant training workshops, which are important for the professional development of teachers. Hence, she does not share the feeling that there was encouragement or support from the English Panel or from the School Management in the areas of Professional Teacher Development.

- She also thinks that hiring at least a Native English Teacher (NET) and offering some English Enhancement Courses or Language Workshops for both Teachers and Students are important. However, these programmes and courses may involve money, and therefore, 'limited financing' is the number-one challenge facing the School and the English Language Teachers, hindering the development of the School.

The above suggestions were also shared by Teacher B and Teacher C.

Students & Parents:

- Some students and parents also offered suggestions to the English Panel for the introduction of Native English Teachers and better classroom equipment. These are the areas for improvement. However, they also understand that 'limited financing' is an issue.

- Amongst all, they are more concerned about the 'quality' of teachers and as reflected in their questionnaires and interviews, Chapter 4A, most of them are satisfied with the 'quality' of teachers and education that the school is offering. 75% of students gave a pass to the both 'School as a whole' and 'the English Panel'. 100% of parents are satisfied and gave a pass to both "school as a whole' and 'the English Panel'.

Strategies:

There was a ***consensus*** among all the English Panel members that they would wait and see if the Principal can successfully apply for the DSS to get the Government's financial subsidy as there is nothing that they can do in solving the 'financing' problem.

2. **Diversity of Students / 'Quantity' vs. 'Quality'**

The Principal:

- Due to the financial restraints of the School***, "quantity"*** always comes foremost in the admission policy of new students. The internal slogan of the admission policy of the school is like the film, "*Not One Less*" because every student's tuition fee counts**.** As a result, 'quality' suffers. Both teachers and students have to bear the big class size and diverse backgrounds of students.

- Although there is a formal interview for admission, the applicants are seldom rejected; no matter how poorly they performed in public examinations or in their previous schools, both academically and behaviourally, as ***"not one less" admission policy rules***.

- As a result, there are always serious problems with the 'quality' of the student intake of this School - not just in terms of their intellectual abilities, but also their

discipline and behaviours. Teaching these students and managing a school comprising all kinds of problematic students pose another great challenge to the educators, especially to the Principal, of the School.

- There is, however, a lack of consensus in the Management Team on the issue of "quality improvement".

- According to the Principal, the School has been established over 50 years in Hong Kong and the Management Committee had had no plan of "quality improvement" in terms of teaching and learning before he took up his office in 2005. The objective of the School Foundation was simply to offer a chance to the young students (usually those failures) to complete their Secondary School education in Hong Kong before releasing them to work in society. This is also the aspiration of the parents who send their children to the School. They simply want to find a place for their children to settle down before sending them to work in society. They do not have high expectations from their children in terms of their academic ability or conduct improvement as a result of their schooling. As long as their children do not make troubles to people around them, they are already very satisfied.

- The Principal, of course, has expectations from his own students and teaching team. As mentioned in Part I, Questionnaire, the Principal is always happy with the majority of his teaching team who are highly motivated and professional in

trying different teaching methods or organizing different activities in order to teach their students, not just in terms of "knowledge", but also "life skills", such as their "self-control skills".

- Besides, as he always emphasizes, his school is a private but ***"real school, with formal curriculum, school rules and regulations",*** unlike those profit-making private institutions. Hence, even if his students are all failures in public exams, they can at least acquire the self-control skills by learning to abide by rules and regulations at his school. When they are going to work in society in the future, they will then be able to obey laws and orders, respect people in society and become good citizens.

- Due to the Principal's firm belief in "Elite education" and the harsh reality of the "limited financing", there is always a ***conflict between "quantity" and "quality***" of the student intake. For the sake of survival, the School has no other option but to accept every single student (usually failure in terms of academic performance and/or conduct), posing a lot of challenges to the Principal and teachers of the School in order to "add value" to these students.

- "Unless we can secure the financial subsidy from the Government or have a solid financial foundation and school reputation ourselves, we are not in a position to choose our students. ***Being a Private Secondary School, we have to rely on our students' tuition fees for the sake of survival***", the Principal explains.

Strategy:

He regards the application for the "Direct Subsidy Scheme" as the only alternative for the School's future.

English Panel Head:

- Due to the "*Not One Less*" admission policy, 'quality' suffers as a result of the 'quantity' of students' intake of the School. As the Principal mentioned, "we are not in a position to choose our students. Every student's tuition fee counts."

- As a result, the School has to admit many students who failed the English subject in the HKCEE public examination to proceed to F.6 and F.7 studies, should they choose NOT to repeat their F.5 studies.

- There are, of course, some students who passed and scored fair results in the English subject but were still not yet qualified to be admitted to their previous Band-1 school to study F.6.

- Hence, there is a ***great diversity of English language ability among our students,*** posing another great challenge to our English Language Teachers.

- The English Panel Head put the top 3 choices of the various incentives for Teachers, as suggested by Kemmerer (1990), in the Annex II of his Questionnaire:

- *Teachers' Autonomy & Ability Range of Students;*
- *School and Classroom Facilities;*
- *Number of Students / Class Size.*

- He thinks that "***teachers' autonomy" and "ability range of students"*** are the most important elements in keeping and motivating 'quality' teachers, and in particular, 'quality English language teachers' in his school. However, he knows that due to the 'inadequate financing' of the school, he has to accept the 'big and diverse class size'. As a result, 'quality' suffers.

- He also knows that there is nothing he can do to change the School Policy but what he can is to help the English Panel by implementing the "***ability-streaming" policy*** for the F.6 classes this year in order to deal with the challenge of teaching classes of a great ***'diversity of ability'.*** He hopes the 'ability streaming' policy for F.6 students this year would be able to help both the students and teachers.

<u>Strategies:</u>

- Starting from this academic year, the Panel Head is planning to streamline the English ability of students so that the English teachers can prepare tailor-made learning materials for their students, according to their abilities. There is a Pilot Scheme in the English Panel for all the F.6 classes this year. All the students are divided into different English classes, according to their performances in their F.5 HKCEE public examination results

Teacher A:

- Handling a big language ***class size of 45 students is another great challenge for teachers,*** especially for the Senior-Form English Language Teachers at the chosen School.

- The heavy and demanding workload negatively affects the quality of teaching outputs, for example, marking of assignments and preparation of teaching materials for a large and diverse ability class.

- On the other hand, a small-class size teaching enables teachers to better take care of their students. Teachers mark fewer papers and have more time preparing for their curriculum and teaching materials.

- The ***diverse ability*** of students is definitely another restraint for English language teachers in designing some challenging tasks for the more-able students while at the same time, preventing them from preparing some tailor-made teaching materials for the less-able students. To strike a balance, in the end, they can only prepare 'average' teaching materials to please the general needs of students. Hence, the ***ability streaming*** of students is necessary in raising the 'quality' of English Language Teaching at School.

Teacher B:

- Teacher B further suggests the following to enhance the 'efficiency' of English Language teaching and learning. The currently '***big class size'*** and '***diverse ability'*** of students are not conducive to effective learning and teaching.

- She ranks the following 3 most important elements:

  1st important: Orderly and disciplined school and classroom environment

  2nd important: Positive Teacher Models

  3rd important: School-wide recognition of academic success

- Teacher B finds that it is very important to have an "orderly and disciplined school and classroom environment" to raise the efficiency of teaching and learning. Otherwise, those students who really want to study will be affected. She finds it difficult to cater for the different and diverse needs of a big class.

- Being a Private School, "quantity" always counts, as a result, "quality" suffers.

- However, she is very grateful to the full-time Discipline Master of the School who is very helpful and efficient in handling those students with serious discipline problems so that she can maintain the discipline for the rest of her class.

Teacher C:

- Teacher C shares more or less ***the same view*** and she ranks as follows:

  1st: Teacher's role model

  2nd: class size and streaming of students' abilities

  3rd: school-wide recognition for success

- These 3 elements not only count more than the 'material incentives' or 'autonomy' to teachers, as previously discussed in P3, Ho's (2005) propositions, in 'attracting and retaining quality graduates and teachers, but also in ***enhancing*** the ***'efficiency' and 'effectiveness'*** of the English Language learning and teaching.

<u>Strategies of both Teacher B and Teacher C:</u>

- To handle a class of lowly-motivated students, both teachers share the view that the best strategy is to develop a "***Positive Teacher Model".*** Students can tell the performance and passion of teachers. If you have a passion for teaching and are well-prepared for your class, no matter how naughty and bad the students actually are, they will respect you whole-heartedly.

- Besides, a ***"school-wide recognition of academic success"*** is another important factor in improving the efficiency of teaching and learning.

3. Hasty Educational Reforms in H.K.

The Principal

- The Principal is totally against the change of curriculum to New Senior Secondary School (NSS). He would prefer the old HKCEE (F.5) and HKALE (F.7) public examinations.

- He also disapproves the hasty pace of HKSAR Government's introduction of educational reforms in the past decade, posing a lot of threats and challenges to his school and teachers.

- Yet, he agrees that there should be a strict control on English Language Teachers, with the introduction of English Language Proficiency Test, etc…

Panel Head:

- Like the Principal, the Panel Head thinks that amongst all the education reforms introduced in the past decade in the territory, the newest one***, "3-3-4" being the biggest challenge as it affects both the content and the assessment criteria of the School***.

- For instance, there is a new curriculum for the new public examination, Hong Kong Senior Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE), in 2012, with the incorporation of the School-Based Assessment (S.B.A.) component in various subjects and the implementation of Liberal Studies being one of the Core

Subjects, on top of the current ones: Chinese, English and Mathematics. As the Panel Head comments, "instead of 'chalk and talk', there is really a revolutionary change in classroom teaching."

- The implication for teachers is to be more prepared for the New Secondary School (NSS) curriculum and the HKDSE public examination, incorporating the new assessment criteria, teaching materials and components into the pedagogy so that students can be trained to be independent and critical thinking.

- He finds that it is a great challenge to both teachers and students, especially to those at his school, where many of their students are intellectually less able to be creative and critical thinking.

- Besides, as the Principal mentions, the replacement of HKDSE with the HKALE and HKCEE public examinations in 2012 would mean the end of the survival of their school as currently they strongly rely on the failures of the two public examinations for the supply of new student intakes.

- The lack of the new student intakes means the lack of income source for the School. The Panel Head also agrees with the Principal that application for the DSS is the best strategy to cope with the challenges brought along by the educational reforms introduced in Hong Kong.

- However, he also views the current situation optimistically. Even if the School's DSS application fails, he still sees that there is another opportunity to go into small-class teaching. In doing so, the quality of teaching and learning will be able to improve, helping the School to earn a reputation of 'quality education'. In other words, he strongly believes the '***class size'*** affects the quality of teaching and learning, on top of the 'diversity of student ability'.

- On the whole, the English Panel Head agrees with the 3-3-4 educational reforms. He thinks 4-year University study is good for students and society.

- He also strongly believes in the incorporation of the new elements in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum, with the emphasis of creativity, critical and independent thinking skills on top of the traditional drilling.

- Although the curriculum is relatively new and that some colleagues complain the hasty pace of the reforms, in his opinion, the Education Bureau has done enough to offer resources and support to teachers in Hong Kong, especially to the English Language teachers.

- He is impressed by the provision of all the training workshops and seminars organized by the Education Bureau as well as the free on-line teaching resources launched on the Bureau's website. He is also confident that all of his English Panel members have received sufficient training and are ready for the new NSS English curriculum.

- When asked to comment on the whole School's readiness for the NSS as well as the possible switching from a CMI Private Secondary School to an EMI DSS, his comments are rather conservative, though positive. On one hand, he confessed the current weaknesses of his school, such as the limited financing, teaching and manpower resources, as well as the poor quality of its students. He understands that in terms of language support, curriculum planning, teaching materials and pedagogy, not only the English teachers, but also teachers of the whole School, would need to make certain adjustments from a CMI to an EMI school environment. On the other hand, he is optimistic about the future.

- As he concludes, **"**Yes, it is indeed a challenging task, but where there's a will, there's a way".

Teacher A

- Teacher A agrees that the Education Reforms introduced by the Education Bureau of Hong Kong in the past decade have posed a lot of challenges and threats to the educators, especially to the English Language Teachers, in the city.

- She also confessed that she was also one of the victims of the education initiative - "forced closure of the under-enrolled schools in Hong Kong". As a result, she had to look for another teaching job last year due to the under-enrollment of her previous Aided School and finally joined the research school.

- Despite this, she fully supports the rationale of the 'quality education reforms' introduced by the Government, and in particular, those initiatives for the Language Teachers.

- Amongst all, she finds that the following are the most important initiatives which she thinks can help raise the quality of English Language teaching and learning in the city: (a) Native English Teacher Scheme; (b) Specialist Teaching and Training for Language Teachers; and (c) Language Proficiency Tests for language teachers.

(a) Native English Teachers (NET) Scheme

- Teacher A shares the view that many NET teachers are gifted in teaching language Arts, such as Drama. This is especially the case for the introduction of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum in the English subject, where language arts place a very important role in the new curriculum and assessment component. Besides, as they are native English speakers, it would be much better for them to teach the local students some English Language speaking skills than for the local English teachers.

- She thinks that the NET scheme will only be good for the local school children. As she says, "not only can they learn to pronounce and speak correct English in the end, but also in a native intonation and accent."

- It will also help to improve both of their speaking and listening skills in the end. However, she has also received some complaints from her previous students in her previous aided school that the NET teachers did not know very well about the syllabuses and requirements of the public exams for the English subject in Hong Kong. To solve this problem, the NET should be well-trained and kept informed of the public examination requirements by the Education Bureau. Other than this, she fully supports the Government's objectives and initiatives.

(b) Specialist Teaching: Subject knowledge + Teachers' Training.

- She also believes that teachers should be well trained, not just in terms of their subject knowledge, but also in terms of their teaching methodologies in order to help their students learn more efficiently and effectively.

(c) Language Proficiency Test

- To improve the language proficiency of language teachers in Hong Kong, all English and Chinese (Putonghua) language teachers, except those teachers granted with exemption, are required to undertake and pass the Language Proficiency Benchmark Tests within a specified period of time after joining the teaching profession.

- Teacher A finds that it does pose a lot of challenges to language teachers in Hong Kong.

- Yet, she agrees to the principle and rationale behind such reforms introduced by the Hong Kong Government in order to guarantee the quality and proficiency of the English Language Teachers in the city.

- Since Teacher A is a fully qualified English language teacher, with her University major in English language subject and having received her Teacher Training (English Major), she also falls into the category of those teachers being exempted from the Language Benchmark Tests. Hence, this initiative does not pose any threat or challenge to her.

- The biggest challenge for her, as well as for the educators in her School, is probably the ***introduction of 3-3-4 academic structure in 2009***. Starting from this academic year, there will be no exit point for the F.5 graduates. All the F.4 students will be automatically promoted to F.5 and then finally to F.6, (even though they may actually attain the F.1 standard). Hence, it will create more problems to teachers as it will only intensify the problem of the diversity of the language ability of the students at her School.

- To cope with such diversity problem, at the moment, she is arranging extra tutorials and assignments for those students falling behind. In addition, she keeps herself open and keeps acquiring and employing different teaching methodologies in motivate her students in learning.

- Due to the learners' diversity, she understands that her pedagogy needs to be more student-oriented. For the stronger group, more drillings will be given to them. For

the weaker group, a more interesting approach is adopted in order to reinforce their background knowledge and stimulate their interest in learning English.

- As to the financial problems of the School, she understands that there is nothing she can do. She hopes that with the new initiative of the 'Direct Subsidy Scheme' brought along by the Education Reforms in the city, the School can apply for the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) successfully.

- If the School can be ultimately converted into an English-medium of teaching (EMI), Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) School, the students will be able to benefit more as there will be more resources for the School and the English Panel.

Teacher B:

- She strongly dislikes the 'Mother Tongue Policy', the implementation of Chinese Medium of Teaching (CMI) in Secondary Schools by the HKSAR Government after 1997. Obviously, this is a wrong language policy with political motive to please the Chinese Government.

- The abolition or limitation of English Medium of Teaching (EMI) Secondary Schools in Hong Kong explains the declining English language standard of her current students. Besides, the 'mother-tongue policy' deprives students from their exposure to English language learning environment.

- She is also against the introduction of the new NSS curriculum. This was discussed in the previous section, Ho's (2005) second proposition, P2, "drilling" and "imitation". She prefers the old public education and examinations system.

- She agrees with the rationales behind all the English Language Proficiency Exams for English Language teachers, Continuous Professional Development and English Language Education qualifications. As a fresh graduate, however, she needs to undertake all these professional training courses and examinations, she feels stressed.

- She is afraid that she or maybe her counterparts may lose their initial teaching passion and motivation after satisfying all these exams and qualifications requirements in a few years.

Teacher C:

- She shares Teacher B's stress and worries about the various English Language initiatives and qualifications requirements for English Language teachers. As she did not major in English Language in her undergraduate studies, she would also need to satisfy all the language requirements in order to be a 'qualified' English Language teacher. Hence, since the start of the academic year 2009-2010, she switched to teach the new subject, "Liberal Studies" and only keep 1 class of F.7 students.

- She was fortunate to have a chance to teach this new subject. Hence, most likely, she will give up teaching English Language in the following academic year as she has already enrolled in the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGDE) in Liberal Studies to order to become a 'qualified' Liberal Studies subject teacher in 2 years.

- She finds that it would be much easier to fulfil the qualifications requirements for a subject teacher, than an English Language teacher. There are indeed so many barriers and challenges for her to go through before she can truly become a 'qualified' English Language Teacher as stipulated by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong.

In the next section, Chapter 4C, 'Class Observation', we will closely investigate one of those challenges facing the English Language teachers by following the Education Bureau's language initiative of implementing the 'English Language Proficiency Assessment Test' through 'Class Observation' of the English Language teachers of the Research school, namely Teacher A and Teacher B.

Chapter 4C: Class Observations

Chapter 4C: Class Observations

> Although the concept of quality teaching remains elusive, teachers and their behaviour in the classroom are at times considered convenient indicators of school quality and very frequently are at the centre of attempts at quality improvement.
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 17)*

The Process:

As discussed and explained in Chapter 3, Research Methodology Part (pp.125-129), on top of the 'questionnaires' and 'in-depth interviews', 6 video-taped class observations were conducted at the research school during the academic year of 2009-2010, with the consent of both the teachers and students involved in the classes.

The researcher had the honour to invite all the English Language teachers of the research school to take part in the video-taking of the 'classroom observation' as well as to take on the challenge of having their video-taped English language class to be passed on to an English language expert (who was an Associate Professor in the English Centre at the University of Hong Kong at that time) for a formal 'Classroom English language proficiency' assessment test.

The English Language Expert would then give scores to their proficiency on 'Classroom English Language' according to the criteria of the 'Language Proficiency and Assessment Test – English (LPATE)' for English Language Teachers set by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong. A formal and confidential 'Class Observation Report' with scores (based on the same criteria of LPATE) would be sent to each teacher afterwards.

At the end of the invitation, 3 of the English Panel Members accepted the researcher for a 'class observation'; namely the English Panel Head, Teacher A and Teacher B. In the midst, Teacher A and Teacher B further took on the challenge to have their video-taped classes assessed by the English Language expert afterwards.

To demonstrate the fact that teachers of the research school, especially the English Language teachers, in many cases, have to cater for the diverse learning needs of students, the researcher asked one of the English Language teachers to arrange video-taking of 2 diverse classes. Teacher B, who taught both F.6 Arts and Science Classes, was very kind to offer the researcher to video-tape 2 of her English Language classes. One class observation was conducted for her F.6 Arts Class (with better English language standard) and the other one was done for her F.6 Science Class (with a lower English standard).

In order to show the differences of students' responses and behaviors between the English language class and an elective subject class conducted in Cantonese, the researcher also invited 2 other subject teachers to join the 'classroom observation'

exercise. She was fortunate enough to have the permission to have video-taped one Chinese History Class (F.7) and one Mathematics and Statistics Class (F.6) on top of the four English classes. Hence, at the end, 6 class observations were conducted and video-taped smoothly.

She was very grateful to all the teachers and students involved in the process.

Objectives:

The objectives of the 'Classroom Observations' are to see:

1. whether the same English Language teacher would need to resort to different pedagogies due to the diverse learning needs of different classes;
2. if there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours, in different modes of teaching: 'English' and 'Cantonese';
3. whether there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours in classroom, between the compulsory English lesson and an elective one;
4. if there would be any difference in English classes conducted by a 'qualified' English teacher (Teacher A) and a 'not yet qualified' young English language teacher (Teacher B), as well as their scores for their proficiency on 'Classroom English Language' given by the English Language Expert.
5. if they can serve as a triangulation of data from the previous findings in Part 1, Questionnaire (Chapter 4A) and Part II, In-Depth Interviews (Chapter 4B) before we come to the final conclusion of the Case Study.

Findings and Comments from the Researcher:

The findings are very positive. It was indeed a great privilege for the researcher to have a chance to sit down and enjoy all the six lessons. All the teachers were well-prepared for the lessons.

Objective 1: whether the same English Language teacher would need to resort to different pedagogies due to the diverse learning needs of different classes?

- It was observed that the same English Language teacher (Teacher B) would have to switch to different pedagogies due to the diverse learning needs of different classes. It was obvious that Teacher B did make a lot of adjustments to cater for the diverse learning needs of her weaker class (F.6 Science). In contrast with her stronger class (F.6 Arts), she had to do quite a lot of translations into Cantonese while teaching her Science Class.

- Although from the theoretical perspective of English language teaching and learning, it would be good to expose students to the fullest English listening and speaking environment. In reality, the actual language abilities of the students need to be considered as well.

- During the lesson with her stronger class (F.6 Arts) where she could conduct her whole lesson in English language, Teacher B still demonstrated her great concern, patience and care by using simpler English expressions to the class, in order to make sure that her whole class fully understood her lesson. She did demonstrate different pedagogies to cater for the diverse learning needs of her students.

- Teacher B's patience and care for her students is further reflected in the English Language Expert's Report. She is indeed "*a good teacher who explains things clearly and systematicall*y". Teacher B is also *"calm, gentle and composed"* and did *"relate well"* to her students. (p.311)

- *"... I'm sure they feel that you are not only in the classroom to impart knowledge, but that you really care for them." (p.311)*

Objective 2: if there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours, in different modes of teaching: 'English' and 'Cantonese'?

- It was found out that students did behave differently in different medium of teaching. During the 2 class observations for "Chinese History" and "Mathematics and Statistical Science" when the medium of teaching is Cantonese, obviously, students were more enthusiastic in responding or answering questions raised by the teachers.

- ❖ Obviously, they were more attentive, participative and enthusiastic in attending "Cantonese" mode of teaching classes.

- ❖ These were greatly contrasted with their behaviours in the 4 video-taped English lessons, where we can see they were struggling hard with the comprehension of the English language before they could answer questions raised by the English teachers.

- ❖ Either struggling or boring faces were seen in the English lessons where happier and more confident faces were found in their Chinese History and Mathematics and Statistical Science classes.

- ❖ It shows clearly that 'English language' is the barrier of their communication and participation in classroom learning. Students performed, behaved and responded much better in lessons which were conducted in their ***mother tongue***.

Objective 3: whether there would be any difference in students' responses and behaviours in classroom, between the compulsory English lesson and an elective one?

- ❖ ***'Interest'*** is another reason explaining why the students could be more participative and enthusiastic in their elective classes. Both 'Chinese History' and 'Mathematics and Statistical Science' are elective subjects and they have a liking in them. This is clearly shown on their happy faces in the 2 elective class observations; while boring faces were shown during the 4 English class observations, no matter how much work and effort the English Language teachers

had made in preparing and conducting their classes (only some strong students managed to respond to the English language teachers). Some did not show any interest in their English classes at all because it was just a compulsory one; not an elective one which was really out of their interest and choice!

- ❖ As the Mathematics and Statistical Science teacher told the researcher, if it had not been because of the 'camera' on that day, more of his able students would have had taken the initiative to come out and do the calculations on the blackboard. They would have been even more responsive and interactive!

- ❖ They had a liking in these 2 electives and therefore chose them. "Interest" is definitely another factor explaining their different behaviours in different classrooms.

Objective 4: if there would be any difference in English classes conducted by a 'qualified' English teacher (Teacher A) and a 'not yet qualified' young English language teacher (Teacher B), as well as their scores for their proficiency on 'Classroom English Language' given by the English Language Expert.

- ❖ The full scores and comments by the English Language Expert on Teacher A's and Teacher B's Proficiency Test, 'Classroom English Language' are enclosed in Annex IV – Benchmark Test Reports for Teacher A ad Teacher B. (p.309)

- Both Teacher A and Teacher B managed to pass the scores of the Classroom English Language Proficiency Test. (p.309)

- Both were regarded as "good teachers" by the English Language Export on his 2 Observation Reports. (pp. 310-311)

- Teacher B, though young and not yet qualified in the existing Language Requirements for English Language Teachers in Hong Kong, was highly appreciated by the English Language Expert in his report on her performance.

- As reflected in the Language Expert's Report on Teacher B:
  "You speak beautiful English and therefore a good model for your students…. I personally think that you are a gifted teacher, and hope very much that you will consider teaching as your long-term career." (p.311)

- Her scores were even higher than those of Teacher A, who was an experienced and fully qualified English Language Teacher under the existing qualifications framework set by the Education Bureau. (p. 309)

- Neverthelesss, Teacher A was also praised by the Language Expert as below:
  "It is obvious to me that you are competent and experienced teacher. You were well-prepared for your lesson, and made interesting powerpoint slides that attracted the attention of the students. You also tried to make the class more interesting by including a mixture of instruction and pair work." (p.310)

Objective 5: if they can serve as a triangulation of data from the previous findings:

Some critical issues, forming the basis of discussion in the previous in-depth interviews, were also noted in the 'Class Observations'. Hence, it was worthwhile to conduct these 6 'class observations' as the previously collected 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' data in Chapters 4A and 4B can finally be triangulated in the 'Class Observation' part.

- ***Class Size***: The 4 video-taped English classes (Compulsory subject) clearly show the big class size of 40-45 students per class; while in the elective subject of Mathematics and Statistical Sciences, there are only around 10-15 students; and in the Chinese History (Elective) subject, there are around 25 students. As a result, more interactive pedagogies can be adopted by the teachers of the Elective Subjects. Students can be more participative. It also explains why students in the Elective classes could be more responsive than attending their English classes. Students can easily come out of their place and do the calculations on the blackboard (p.229). However, in big English classes, there is only limited space for teachers and students to move around, which is a great challenge for the English language teachers of the school.

  Given the narrow classroom space, it would be difficult to ask students to come out to write something on the board or to play games or undertake any fun activities in classroom in Compulsory English Language classes.

A small class size provides such flexibility to the curriculum design for teachers, especially in English language lessons (Carless, 2004, 2011; Carless & Harfitt, 2013; Harfitt, 2013, 2016; Harfitt & Tsui, 2015; Harfitt, Fung & Liang, 2018).

Due to the limited space, it is not an easy job to move their chairs around and conduct English group discussions. Hence, English language teachers have to sacrifice their personal time after school and organize students into small groups to conduct 'speaking' practices, on top of marking the assignments of a big class size, which are essential for the English learning and exam purposes. Handling the big class size is both challenging and burdensome for the English language teachers, as discussed in the in-depth interview section, Chapter 4B (pp.208-211).

- **Classroom Facilities:** With the video-taped classes, we can clearly understand the disappointment of Teacher A, who complained in the interview section that the school was not a well-equipped school as a Government or Aided School "with the installation of all the audio-visual equipment in the classrooms, etc.." (p.202). This view was also shared by teachers B and C, as well as the students and parents (p.203).

  Indeed, this is also one of the challenges facing the school and its teachers. Due to the limited financing, there is only a blackboard and some basic set up for microphones.

Teachers have to bring along their own laptops to the classroom and set up themselves while conducting lessons, somehow affecting the flow of the lesson and the 'quality' of teaching and learning.

This is also revealed in the Language Expert's Reports on both Teachers:

> **Teacher A:** "A last and perhaps rather minor point I want to make has to do with the computer and where it was placed… that disrupted the flow of the lesson somewhat." (p.310)

> **Teacher B:** "The way you made use of the computer, the powerpoint slides and the blackboard – this was not easy but you handled the equipment efficiently and did not allow the handling of the different gadgets to interfere with flow of your lesson." (p.311)

The 'class observation' also serves as a triangulation of the previous quantitative data - the poor grades in the quantitative scores in "Adequate Financing" and "Effective Organizational Structure and Support" in the questionnaires by most of the participants in Chapter 4A.

"Inadequate Financing" is the biggest challenge facing the school, as the Principal admitted. This issue was fully discussed in Chapter 4B (pp.194-204).

Furthermore, it serves as a triangulation of the previous qualitative data, (pp. 178-184), Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework, Proposition 3; whereas the issues of "autonomy" and "classroom facilities" were fully discussed and explored. They were regarded by the English language teachers as important elements in motivating and keeping 'quality teachers' at work. On top of the teacher's own passion for teaching and initiative to be good 'role models' for students, 'good working conditions', such as 'well-equipped classroom', 'class size' and 'autonomy' count more than 'salary' in attracting and keeping 'quality teachers'. A poorly-equipped classroom, on the other hand, affects the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning. As a result, quality suffers!

- **Ability range of students**: This is reported in Objective 1 (p.226-227). Teacher B had to use different pedagogies for her 2 diverse classes. The diversity of students were also discussed and explored in the in-depth interviews and were ranked as the top 3 conditions to improve the quality of teaching and learning by Teacher A as well (p.178).

  It was also explored in the discussion of Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework, Proposition 4, on the labelling effect and ability streaming issues (pp.184-193). P4 is highly controversial among the educators' views in the research school. Yet, there was a consensus among them that ***differentiating students according to their abilities is the best way to enhance 'quality teaching***'. Anyhow, labelling effect is unavoidable in society.

The big class size and diverse learning ability of students do pose a lot of challenges to the English language teachers of the school, which was fully discussed in Chapter 4B, pp. 204-211.

- **Teacher's role model:** Teacher B shares the view (p.211) that the best teaching strategy to handle a class of lowly-motivated students is to develop a "Positive Teacher Model". She herself has fully demonstrated it during the video-taped class observation, as the Language Expert comments on her observation report:

> *" You speak beautiful English and therefore a good model for your students…"* (p.311)

The concepts of "Role model" / "Creativity and Drilling" were fully discussed in the in-depth interviews (pp. 161-170). All the interviewees agreed to the importance of Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework, Proposition 2. There was a consensus among all the interviewees.

In fact, it was also because of the good "role model" of the teachers - their professionalism, care and concern for their students that explained the parents' satisfaction with the school as a whole, and the English Panel in particular, as reflected in the questionnaire scores in Chapter 4A (pp.143-144); and further discussed in Chapter 4B on Ho's (2005) "Value-added" Concept, Proposition 1 (p.153).

> The parents fully appreciated the efforts of the research school's teachers in providing "value-added" service to their children (p.153), making a positive change to their children, both academically and behaviorally.
>
> Now, in the 'Class Observation' section, such data is being triangulated.

Having triangulated the previous data in this 'Class Observation' section, we shall then move on to discuss the Final Conclusion in the next Chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5A. Summary & Post-Research Comments:

Summary:

The impacts of 'Globalization' are multi-dimensional. In the realm of education, driving for 'quality' in the delivery of educational service has become a global tide of educational reforms since the past 2 decades. Being a global city, Hong Kong is no exception and therefore not immune from this ***global wave of 'quality education reforms'*** either.

In the Introductory Chapter, we have already outlined the global and local backdrop of the quest for 'quality education' reforms. In Chapter 2, a Literature Review was conducted on various definitions and interpretations of 'quality' and 'quality education'. We also conducted a macroscopic examination of the features of 'quality education reforms', from a global view, then to a regional one in Asia; and finally to the 'quality education reforms movement' in Hong Kong since 1997. It was found out that they all follow the global traits of incorporating the same elements of "Corporate Managerialist" and "Market-oriented" strategies from the private business sector into the academic setting. Tse (2005) suggests that the concern for the quality of education in Hong Kong emerged particularly after the financial turmoil and economic recession in 1997.

Economic considerations are behind these education reforms in Hong Kong since 1997 and business terms such as "economy", "efficiency", "effectiveness", "cost-effectiveness" and "market choice" are found on the formal Reports issued by the Education Commission, Hong Kong (Mok, 2003a; 2003b; Mok & Chan 2002; Mok & Lo, 2002; Mok & Welch, 2002; Tse, 2002, 2005). From language policy to teacher professionalism, from school curriculum to education for children with special needs, from basic education to secondary education and from tertiary education to adults' continuing and life-long education, the Education Commission has outlined a number of proposals and implemented a series of reform measures which were claimed to be 'a comprehensive strategy to promote a quality culture in the school system' since the publication of its Report No. 7, *'Quality School Education'* in 1997.

As a result, a series of reforms have been implemented since 1997 under the banner of 'Quality Education Reforms'. The hasty educational reforms were to be blamed for the teachers' suicide cases and the large scale of Teachers' Protest in 2006. Amongst the participants, ***90% felt they were under stress***:

> *The government came under intense pressure yesterday as thousands of protesters joined the largest demonstration of teachers held in Hong Kong, with more protests expected to follow….The teachers, estimated to number at least 10,000 by the Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) and around 7,500 by police, demanded a review of education reforms and the resignation of Permanent Secretary for Education Fanny Law Fan Chiu-Fun.*
>
> (Source: South China Morning Post, 23 January 2006)

The teachers' suicide cases and the large-scale of Teachers' Protest in 2006 not only served as a wake-up call to the Education Policymakers and the Hong Kong Government to rethink the pace and content of the educational initiatives introduced since 1997, but also inspired the researcher to conduct a survey and/or a case study into the school setting. The main objective for the Case Study is to better understand the stress of the front-line teachers, especially those language teachers and to investigate the challenges facing them as a result of the introduction of the series of 'Quality Education Reforms' in Hong Kong since 1997.

> Although the concept of quality teaching remains elusive, ***teachers*** and their behaviour in the classroom are at times considered convenient indicators of school quality and very frequently are at the centre of attempts at quality improvement.
>
> *(Chapman & Adams, 2002: 17)*

Given the significant role played by "teachers" in serving as "convenient indicators of school quality" and very often being at the centre of attempts at "quality improvement", our focus of the Case Study is on the **TEACHERS**, and in particular, ***the English Language Teachers*** of the Senior Forms (F.6 and F.7 classes) of the research school.

Some primary data collection methods, such as 'Questionnaires', 'In-Depth Interviews' and 'Class Observations' were adopted in the Research.

Chapter 3, “Research Methodology”, outlines all the rationales for choosing and adopting the Conceptual Frameworks and data collection methods for the Case Study.

The research focus is on “English Language Teachers”. On top of conducting ‘questionnaires’ and ‘in-depth interviews’ with the English language teachers, an English Classroom Language Proficiency Test was also conducted. All the research activities took place smoothly in the academic year of 2009-2010, with the full support of the School Management and all the stakeholders of the chosen school, including the Principal, the English Panel Head, the Senior-Form English Language Teachers, some other subject teachers, students and parents.

“Quantitative Findings and Discussions for the questionnaires” were reported in Chapter 4A; while the “Qualitative Findings and Discussions for in-depth interviews” were reported in Chapter 4B; and the “Qualitative Findings and Discussion for Class Observations” as well as the scores and comments on the “Classroom English Language Proficiency Test for Teachers” were reported in Chapter 4C.

Finally, the findings from the ‘6 Class Observations’ also serve as a triangulation of the previous findings from the “Quantitative Findings and Discussions for the questionnaires” in Chapter 4A and “Qualitative Findings and Discussions for in-depth interviews” in Chapter 4B.

Post-Research Updates & Comments:

1. The Research was done in the academic year of 2009-2010 when Hong Kong was preparing for the new academic system of 3-3-4, i.e. 3 years of Junior Secondary School, plus 3 years of Senior Secondary School and 4 years of University studies. It was a super-challenging year for teachers who not only had to teach the old syllabuses of HKCEE and HKALE, but also the New Senior Secondary School (NSS). For language (English and Putonghua) teachers, they also needed to fulfil the various Language Requirements set by the Education Bureau since 2006. As the research school did not opt for teaching in Putonghua, its Chinese language teachers were not under pressure to take the Language Proficiency Test; but only the English Language teachers. Hence, it was a super challenging year for the ***English Language Teachers*** when the research was conducted.

   The researcher was grateful to all the participants for their kind participation and honest answers in the research.

2. A decade has passed, the Education Bureau did not announce another round of Education Reforms since the last one released by the Education Commission in 2000. As a result, Hong Kong is still in the process of the "3rd wave of quality education reforms" (Cheng, 2005).

3. As to the update of the research school: It was a pity that due to the poor health, the Principal changed his strategic plan after being diagnosed with cancer in 2011. He chose to close the school operation until the last cohort of students who completed their HKCEE and HKALE and retired from the Principalship.

4. Yet, prior to the school closing, he had made a deal with an International Kindergarten Group to use the School's campus for the Kindergarten's "through-train" development as the Kindergarten wanted to expand their group's schooling system from Kindergarten to Primary and then Secondary Schooling. From a local band-3 school, the school campus has now turned to a famous international primary school.

5. The Principal also made a deal with the Management of the Kindergarten/Primary School to keep the original teaching and administrative staff of his previous school.

6. At the moment of writing, Teacher A is still working in this international Kindergarten Group. Teacher B and the former English Panel Head are teaching in different Government-aided schools in Hong Kong. Teacher C is working as a Curriculum Officer in Hong Kong's only Academy for Talented Students.

5B. Evaluation and Significance of the Research

Evaluation:

'Case Study' is a common research method involving an in-depth study or examination of a particular case. This method of research allows the researcher to take a complex and broad topic, or phenomenon, and narrow it down into a manageable research question or questions. 'Case Studies' have been gaining popularity in educational evaluation and research (Kushner, 2000; MacDonald & Walker, 2006).

For this particular Thesis Paper, the researcher has also resorted to this common research method. A Case Study of the Challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong was conducted in Chapter 4, against the global and local backdrop of Globalization and the Quest for Quality Education Reforms in Hong Kong, with the following 3 objectives:

1. To investigate the strategic responses of the chosen school (both at the Management and teaching levels) to its outer context of the quest for 'quality education reforms' in the city;
2. To examine the challenges facing the research school, especially its English language teachers, in implementing the school strategies;
3. To understand the stress and views of its English language teachers who were also supposed to pass their English Language Proficiency Test starting from 2006, on top of facing the various educational reforms introduced in the city.

Here below is a summary of the major findings of the Case Study in connection with the 3 main objectives of the Research:

1. ***The strategic responses of the chosen school:***

In response to the Government's quest for quality education reforms in the city, it was found that the School (from the Management to the teaching level) is adopting the following strategies (pp.195-199):

- ❖ Quest for delivering 'quality education' and earning 'word-of-mouth'
- ❖ Hiring 'quality' teachers and granting them 'autonomy'
- ❖ Planning to apply for a Direct Subsidy Scheme from the Government to solve the financing problem and to further raise the quality of the school.

However, as the Principal anticipates, there will be at least 2 hurdles:

1. Obtaining a consensus from the Top Management (Supervisor and all the Shareholders of the School);
2. Gaining approval from the Government for the School's application for the Direct Subsidy Scheme - "It is always 10 times easier to switch from an Aided School than from a Private one to DSS" (p.199).

Prior to the successful application for the Direct Subsidy Scheme to solve the current financial problem of the School, the "***Not One Less*****" Admission Policy** rules.

2. Challenges facing the School and its English language teachers in implementing the school strategies

In implementing the "*Not One Less*" Admission Policy, it poses further challenges to the School, especially its English Language Teachers, mainly on the issues of class size and diversity of students (pp.204-211):

- **'***Quality' suffers as a result of 'Quantity'*
- Further stress and intensification of the English language teachers' workloads

Strategies adopted by the English Panel:

- **Ability Streaming:**

  Starting from the academic year of 2009-2010, the Panel Head is planning to streamline the English ability of students so that the English teachers can prepare tailor-made learning materials for their students, according to their abilities. A Pilot Scheme will be arranged for all the F.6 Classes.

- **Role-Models:**

  English language teachers share the view that they should do even better themselves and serve as good 'role-models' for the students.

This is the best teaching strategy as students can tell the performance and passion of teachers. If teachers have a passion for teaching and are well-prepared for classes, no matter how naughty and bad the students are; or how big and diverse the class size is, the students will ultimately respect teachers whole-heartedly.

3. Stress and Views of the English Language Teachers on the Benchmark Test and the series of Educational Reforms introduced by the Government

The stress, views and challenges of the English Language Teachers are fully examined in the Case Study (pp.212-221).

Similar to their counterparts in the Government and Aided Schools, the English Language teachers of the Senior-Form Private Secondary School in Hong Kong also need to pass the Benchmark Test on top of implementing the series of quality educational reforms introduced by the Government since 1997 (p.8).

In the Case Study, all the teachers are suffering from the stress as a result of the Government's Quest for Quality Education Reforms since 1997:

The English Panel Head needs to be busy preparing for the new curriculum (NSS) starting from the academic year of 2009-2010, though he is already a qualified and experienced teacher. All the Senior-Form English Language Teachers need

to simultaneously teach the new curriculum (NSS) to their Form 4 students and the old curricula of Hong Kong Certificate Exams and Hong Kong Advanced Level Exams to the last few cohorts of F.5 to F.7 students.

The academic year of 2009-2010 is, indeed, a super challenging year for them.

In addition, Teacher A shares her experience that her previous school had been closed down due to the under-enrolment educational initiative and thus she had once lost her job before joining the research school. She was, therefore, a victim of the 'quality education reforms' introduced in the city.

Being a new graduate teacher, Teacher B shares her worries about fulfilling all the English Language Teaching Qualifications requirements (i.e. completing the post-graduate studies in Education and passing the forthcoming English Benchmark Test) within the time frame. She is afraid of losing her passion for teaching after satisfying all the requirements set by the Education Bureau in a few years.

Teacher C has to switch to teaching Liberal Studies because she does not fulfil the English Language teacher's requirements set by the Education Bureau as she did not major in English Language Studies in her undergraduate degree. To pave the way for her future, she is now studying another post-graduate certificate in Liberal Studies Education to satisfy the qualification requirements set by the Education Bureau.

As we can see, the English Language teachers of the research school are facing double challenges than their counterparts in the Government and Aided Schools. On one hand, they have to cope with those challenges brought along by the Government's education reforms. On the other hand, they keep striving for excellence in their workplace since it is also the School's strategy to strive for 'quality' teaching and earn the word-of-mouth to order to attract more students to enrol, leading to an increase of students and income. At the end of the day, the English language teachers have to struggle with the big class size of diverse English ability. Since the "***Not One Less*****"** Admission Policy rules, student 'quantity' counts. ***'Quality' suffers***!

In order to strive for **excellence** and act as "**role models**" for their students, the English Language teachers choose to sacrifice their private time to help those less able students after school, spend extra time and effort to prepare diverse teaching materials to cater for different learning needs, on top of marking assignments of a big class size and conducting routine speaking practices with their students in small groups after school, etc… This is the real life of the English Language Teachers of the research school.

Yet, they do NOT quit nor do they give up their students!

On the contrary, they are determined to do even better in their job - to be good "role-models" for their students and to embrace all the challenges ahead,

including taking on the Benchmark Test challenges and pursuing the relevant post-graduate studies in Education in order to fulfil the qualifications requirements set by the Education Bureau, on top of handling a big and diverse class size and sacrificing all their private time for their students after work. Their teaching attitude is very positive and amazing!

As to the overall comments from the English language teachers, we find that all of them top their "***working conditions***" on the list over the "***material incentives":*** mainly "***class size***" and "***ability streaming of students***"; followed by (ii) "school facilities and equipment" and/or "Management support"; and then followed by (iii) "autonomy". When we compare the focus group of the Case Study, i.e. the Senior-Form English Language teachers of the research school, with those 800 teachers interviewed by the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers between November and December 2005 (p.7), we can see that both parties are in fact demanding more or less the same thing: ***Small Class sizes*** *and hiring more teachers to* ***improve their working conditions and to reduce their workloads.***

Teacher's workload: (Source: Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers)

Feel under stress	**90%**
Work more than 71 hours a week	25%
Work more than 61 hours a week	56%
Say stress affects their teaching	70%
Say more teachers need to be hired	***90%***
Want smaller classes	***89%***

Due to the ‘limited financing’ of the research school, a big and diverse class size is understandable and perhaps unavoidable, unless and until it can be switched to a Direct Subsidized School with the Government’s funding.

How about the Government and Aided Schools?

The survey results do have some implications for the Government and Educational Policymakers.

It is hoped that the voices of the front-line teachers can be heard.

Significance of the Case Study:

The Case Study has the following significance:

1. ***Uniqueness of the Case Study***

   This is the first time a research took place in the chosen school. All the stakeholders involved were the first-time participants, including the Principal, English Language Panel Head, 3 English Language teachers, students and parents. It was also the first time for the School to have opened its classrooms to a researcher for video-taping their classes and then to conduct an English Language Proficiency Test. Besides, it was the first time to open the School to a researcher to conduct interviews with Parents on the School's Parents' Day.

   The School was closed a few years ago. The case study has also become a **unique** one.

2. ***Satisfaction from Parents***

   It is interesting to note that there is a total satisfaction of parents with the School and the English Panel, with some impressive total scores of **70%, 72% and 74%.** It is **amazing** to see such a high score in the eyes of the parents, especially in such

kind of Band-3 school in Hong Kong, where there is a strong presence of "labelling effect" in society.

3. Validity, Feasibility and Applicability of Ho's (2005) and Chapman & Adam's (2002) Conceptual Frameworks on 'Quality Education' in the Research school.

The design of the questionnaires was based on the 10 parameters of Chapman & Adam's (2002) for a 'Quality School' while the in-depth interview questions were based on Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework on 'quality education'. As reported in Chapter 4, these questions did manage to generate a lot of useful discussions and inputs from the interviewees. A lot of useful data was collected during the research process. All the major and relevant findings were reported in Chapter 4 and triangulated in the Class Observation Reports.

4. Transparency of the nexus of Teaching & Learning

This is clearly revealed in Chapter 4C, the 6 Video-Taped Class Observations. A full picture of the nexus of teaching and learning at a band-3 school is revealed. Amazingly, we can really see '*quality teachers'* in such a school setting. Therefore, it is no joke to relate the concept of 'quality education' to such a band-3 school setting. This finding is also echoed by the English Language Expert's Observation Reports.

5. Quality Teacher & Qualified Teacher

Chapter 4C ends with the Classroom English Language Proficiency Test for Teachers. Both Teacher A and Teacher B passed the test. Teacher B's score is even slightly higher than the experienced and qualified Teacher A. Once again, the findings are encouraging and very positive in such a 'band-3' school setting. It is again a bold attempt of the researcher to invite the English Language Teachers for the Classroom English Language Proficiency Test challenge.

6. Challenges facing the English Language Teachers were fully explored

Chapter 4B fully reports those challenges facing the English Language Teachers, mainly the struggle between the ***quest for 'quality' against 'quantity'*** (a big diverse class size due to the limited financing of the School) at the microscopic level.

As the "*Not One Less"* admission policy rules, '*quantity' counts while* ***'quality' suffers.*** Yet, the English language teachers do not quit and continue to sacrifice their private time after school to cope with the diverse and big class sizes of their students. They keep striving for excellence and act as "***Role-Models***" for their students. Their positive attitude towards the challenges ahead and their passion for teaching deserve to be commended!

5C. Limitation of the Research

Nevertheless, the Research has its own limitations:

1. The findings are only valid in this particular school setting and at that particular time. The Research took place in the academic year of 2009-2010 which was the first year of New Senior Secondary Education (NSS) for F.4 students leading to the first new public examination system (DSE) in 2012. The teachers were at the same time teaching the old curricula to F.5, F.6 and F.7 students for the last 3 cohorts of students taking the HK Certificate Exams and HK A-Level Exams. Hence, it is a super challenging year. The Research Findings will be different if it takes place today.

2. Due to the restraint of the length of the thesis paper, the researcher has to limit her report of findings to those major issues relevant to the focus of the Case Study. As the Research Title is "Globalization and the Quest for Quality Education Reforms" and the research focus party is on 'English Language teachers' of the research school, she tried her best to focus on the discussions relevant to this dimension. During the Research activities, a lot of inputs were generated but unfortunately they need to be left out or to be kept for future research or study.

3. Due to the family and personal issues of the researcher over the past 5 years, old research data of 2009-2010 was used. This is also the limitation of this Thesis Paper.

5D. Scope for Future Researches and Studies

1. As we have discussed in Chapter 5B, "Evaluation and Significance of the Findings" (p. 253), the various concepts on 'quality education' were explored and applied in a band-3 school setting. The design of the questionnaires was based on the 10 parameters of Chapman & Adam's (2002) for a 'Quality School' while the in-depth interview questions were based on Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework on 'quality education'. A lot of useful data was collected during the research process. It, therefore, provides scopes for future researchers to apply similar concepts in a band-3, or in a different banding school setting as well.

2. In this particular Case Study, Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework was adopted and his 4 propositions at the institutional level were explored by the interviewer and interviewees. Yet, his 3 other propositions at the Social Level (p.39-40) were not explored. It therefore provides scopes for future researchers to further explore his propositions at the social level as well.

3. In the Case Study, the only alternative to solve the 'Financing' problem seems to be the Application for Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS). Will the School finally be able to be switched to a DSS school? Or, will it be closed down as a result of the new curriculum 3-3-4? What other alternative can the school have? All these

could be further explored and investigated. Hence, it does provide scopes for future study.

4. The 6 Classroom Observations were all video-taped and the nexus of teaching-learning process in a band-3 school setting is fully unveiled. They do provide good learning and study materials for educators and future researchers.

5. Finally, both Teacher A and Teacher B took on the English Benchmark Test Challenge and passed the Test. Their 'quality' of English Language Proficiency has been tested. It provides scopes for future researchers to do a similar test on the 'quality' of English language teacher in a similar or a different school setting; or maybe in a prestigious band-1 school setting and then compare the results. Given the fact that the English Language Teachers from a band-3 School can take on the challenge of the "Classroom English Language Proficiency Test", why not invite those English Language Teachers from a similar or even higher banding school to do the same 'Classroom English Language Proficiency Test'?

All these recommendations are made for the future researches and studies.

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Annexes

Annex I

- A Sample of Questionnaires for all the stakeholders

Part I: Short Questionnaires

(a) Evaluate **your school as a whole** in the following aspects:

	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Average	4 Good	5 V.Gd
1. Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. A valid, reliable examination system;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ample direct instructional time;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Adequate financing; and	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Effective organizational structure and support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The above 10 components are regarded as the "***10 characteristics of a Quality School***" by many international educational researchers (Adams & Chapman, 2002).

Now, in your own opinion, and based on your past teaching experience in this private Secondary School, what do you think is/are the most important characteristic(s) in making it a "Quality School"? Is/Are there any element(s) missing from the above list? If yes, please state it/them:

_____

If not, please simply rank the importance of the above 10 items in your own opinion and state why:

Part I: Short Questionnaires (…..continued)

(b) Evaluate **your own English class or your English Panel as a whole** (should your English curriculum and teaching materials be standardized) in the following aspects:

	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Average	4 Good	5 V Gd
1. Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking in English;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained English teacher(s);	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Appropriate, well-designed English curriculum;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, English textbooks;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. A safe, well-maintained English learning environmen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision for the English Panel members;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ample direct instructional time for the subject;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Adequate financing for the English Department;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Effective organizational structure and support for the English Panel members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Now, in your own opinion, and based on your past English teaching experience in this private Secondary School, what do you think is/are the most important characteristic(s) in making it a "Quality School" for English learning? Is/Are there any element(s) missing from the above list? If yes, please state it/them:

If not, please simply rank the importance of the above 10 items in your own opinion and state why:

Annex II

- A Sample of Questionnaires & In-Depth Interview Questions for the School Management and Teachers

Questionnaires and Interview Questions for Senior Form English Teachers

***Topic*: "Globalization and the quest for Quality Education Reforms" - A Case Study of the challenges facing the Senior-Form English Language Teachers of a Private Secondary School in Hong Kong**

***Researcher*: Portia Yuet-Ping YEUNG**

Name of the Research Participant: _____

Signature of the Research Participant: _____

Contact Details: (E-mail address) _____

(Telephone) _____

Date of the interview: _____

Thank you very much for your participation in my EdD Research Project!

Part I: Short Questionnaires

(a) Evaluate **your school as a whole** in the following aspects:

	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Average	4 Good	5 V Gd
1. Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. A valid, reliable examination system;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ample direct instructional time;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Adequate financing; and	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Effective organizational structure and support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The above 10 components are regarded as the "***10 characteristics of a Quality School***" by many international educational researchers (Adams & Chapman, 2002).

Now, in your own opinion, and based on your past teaching experience in this private Secondary School, what do you think is/are the most important characteristic(s) in making it a "Quality School"? Is/Are there any element(s) missing from the above list? If yes, please state it/them:

_____

If not, please simply rank the importance of the above 10 items in your own opinion and state why:

_____

Part I: Short Questionnaires (…..continued)

(b) Evaluate **your own English class or your English Panel as a whole** (should your English curriculum and teaching materials be standardized) in the following aspects:

	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Average	4 Good	5 V.Gd.
1. Teaching methodologies designed to encourage independent thinking in English;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained English teacher(s);	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Appropriate, well-designed English curriculum;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Effective learning materials including, but not limited to, English textbooks;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. A safe, well-maintained English learning environment;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision for the English Panel members;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Ample direct instructional time for the subject;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Adequate financing for the English Department;	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Effective organizational structure and support for the English Panel members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Now, in your own opinion, and based on your past English teaching experience in this private Secondary School, what do you think is/are the most important characteristic(s) in making it a "Quality School" for English learning? Is/Are there any element(s) missing from the above list? If yes, please state it/them:

_____

If not, please simply rank the importance of the above 10 items in your own opinion and state why:

Part II: Interview Questions

1. What do you understand by or define the term 'quality education'?

2. To what extent do you agree with Prof. L.S. Ho's (2005) interpretations of "value-added" concept as 'quality education'?

Ho's (2005) Conceptual Framework of "value-added": viewing education as a process of production and that 'quality education' should produce value-added in a cost-effective fashion.

As Chapman & Adams (2002) point out, it is always difficult to explain the precise meaning of education quality and the path to improvement of quality. Nevertheless, examined by context, education quality apparently refers to inputs (number of teachers, amount of teacher training, number of textbooks), processes (amount of direct instructional time, extent of active learning), outputs (test scores, graduation rates), and outcomes (performance in subsequent employment). Hence, quality education can simply be defined as the attaining of specified targets and objectives, though the interpretation of quality may also be based on an institution's or program's reputation, the extent to which ***schooling has influenced change in student knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviour***. In Ho's (2005) term, this particular influence or change brought about by education on an individual is called "***value-added***". According to Ho (2005: 20), at least, the following six aspects of value-added can be derived from an effective education process:

- Self-control skill
- Reflective Skills
- Social Skills
- Communication and Reasoning
- Knowledge about the world and society
- Vocational or Professional Knowledge and Skills (Job-Related)

- According to Ho (2005), "The **education experience** potentially equips students with concentration skills, analytical skills, self-reflection skills, emotion control, discipline, organizational skills, social skills, and communication skills, over and above the knowledge transmitted."

3. Do you agree with Ho's (2005) above statement? Why / Why not? (Whenever possible, please use some real examples to support your answer.)

4. Please rank the order of importance of the above skills mentioned by Ho (2005)? Does your school emphasize the teaching of these skills to your students? // Do you emphasize these skills in your own classes?

5. What do you think are the most important elements in 'quality' education? (Please also compare with the scores that you have previously given to your School on the whole and your own English class in the previous short questionnaires).

6. Do you agree that your school is delivering 'quality education' to your students?

7. If yes for Q.6, in what way is the school delivering 'quality education'? If not, in what ways can it be further improved to enhance the **effectiveness** and **efficiency** of the schooling? (You may wish to refer to the elements as mentioned in your previous Questionnaires or other core and facilitating elements in the Annex I.)

8. How do you see the role played by 'drilling' and 'imitation' through giving assignments, mock tests and feedback to students in the process of English language learning?

9. How often do you give assignments and feedback to your students?

10. Do you think that 'drilling' is good or bad for students?

11. Do you agree that 'excessive drilling' is no good for students in learning? 'Creativity' should also play a key role in the learning process? How do you balance the two things: "creativity" and "drilling"?

12. What attracts you to join the teaching profession, and in particular, teaching in this particular Private School?

13. Do you think that a teacher should be a good 'role model' for students? Do you think you are a good 'role model' for your own students? In what ways?

14. What do you think are the most important incentives in attracting and retaining 'quality teachers' at your own school? Please select the most important 3 incentives and rank their importance. (You may refer to the Annex II for a complete list of Teacher Incentives.)

Answer: 1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____

15. To what extent do you agree that "a high degree of autonomy" is the most crucial support for you than the other material incentives?

16. Do you think that a chance of advancement or ‘upward mobility’ is also important in attracting and retaining ‘quality teachers’ at your school?

17. How do you define ‘quality teachers’? Does it equate with or differentiate from ‘qualified teachers’ as set out by the Education Bureau?

18. Do you think that the current examination and school-banding has a “labeling” effect on your own students? What and how are you dealing with the problem to avoid such labeling effect on them?

19. Explore how far the School/ (you as a teacher) has/ (have been) affected by the Education Initiatives introduced in the past decade in Hong Kong? What challenges has the School been facing, especially in terms of the language policies, the Benchmark requirements and the plan to go semi-private, DSS, etc…?

20. How are you tackling these problems? What are your comments / lessons learnt from the quality education reforms introduced in the past decade? (You may refer to Annex III for some of the highlights of the ‘quality education reforms’ introduced in the territory in the past decade.)

21. What are your expectations, plans, strategies and pedagogy for the future in such backdrop of the quest for ‘quality education reforms’ in the city?

Annex I:

Leadership Dimensions:

Core Elements:

- Positive climate and overall atmosphere
- School and classroom-site management and decision making
- Goal-focused activities towards clear, attainable and relevant objectives
- Planned and coordinated curriculum
- School-wide staff development
- Consistency of school values

Facilitating elements:

- Shared consensus on values and goals
- Long-range planning and coordination
- Stability and continuity of key staff
- District-level support for school improvement

Efficacy Dimensions:

Core Elements:

- High and positive achievement expectations with a constant press for excellence
- Visible rewards for academic excellence and growth
- Cooperative activity and group interaction in the classroom
- Total staff involvement with school improvement
- Autonomy and flexibility to implement adaptive practices
- Appropriate levels of difficulty for learning tasks
- Teacher empathy, rapport and personal interaction with students.

Facilitating Elements:

- Emphasis on homework and study
- Positive accountability; acceptance of responsibility for learning outcomes;
- Strategies to avoid non-promotion of students.
- De-emphasis on strict ability grouping; interaction with more accomplished peers.
- Sense of school community.
- Parental involvement and support

Annex I: (….. continued)

Efficiency Dimensions:

Core Elements:

- Effective use of instructional time: amount and intensity of engagement in school learning.
- Orderly and disciplined school and classroom environment
- Continuous diagnosis, evaluation, and feedback.
- Intellectually challenging teaching
- Well-structured classroom activities
- Instruction guided by content coverage
- School-wide emphasis on basic and higher-order skills
- Pupil acceptance of school norms.

Facilitating Elements:

- Positive teacher models
- Opportunities for individualized work
- Number and variety of opportunity to learn
- School-wide recognition of academic success

(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002: 13)

Annex II:

Incentives for Teachers

1. Remuneration:
   e.g. salary, hardship allowance, travel allowance.

2. In-kind supplements:
   e.g. free or subsidized housing, free or subsidized food, low interest loans,
   scholarships for children, free books.

3. Benefits:
   e.g. Paid leave, sick leave, medical leave, health insurance, pension.

4. Bonuses:
   e.g. Bonus for regular attendance, bonus for student achievement, grants for classroom project.

5. Instructional Support:
   e.g. Teaching guides and materials, supervision with feedback and coaching, teacher training, career advancement opportunities.

6. Working Conditions:
   e.g. School and classroom facilities, number of students, age range of students, ability range of students.

(Source: Kemmerer, 1990)

Annex III:

Education Reforms in Hong Kong since 1997:

Year	Introduced/Forthcoming Education Reforms and Policies in HK
*2012	Formal launch of the first Hong Kong Secondary School Diploma Exam.
*2010	Deadline of the 'mother-tongue' (Chinese-Medium Instruction) Mechanism for all schools not reaching the required English standards.// Fine-tuning of the English language policy in Secondary Schools
*2009	New academic structure of Senior Secondary Education in H.K. (3+3+4); New system of Secondary School place allocations; voluntary drug-tests.
*2007	New Syllabus & Requirements for 'Chinese' and English' Public Exams;
*2006	Deadline for English and Chinese Language Teachers Benchmark tests.
*2005	Implementing 'specialist teaching' for Chinese, English and Maths.
*2004	Continuous Professional Development requirement of not less than 150 hours for each teacher per year.// SCOLAR's Language Proficiency Benchmark Requirements for the language teachers in H.K.
*2003	Introduction of Native English Teachers (NET) scheme in schools; Introduction of 'school appraisal' and 'external appraisal' schemes; Forced closure of under-enrolled schools; Hire temporary teaching staff.
*2001	Encouragement of 'Private' and 'Semi-Private (DSS)' Schools in HK
2000	Cancellation of primary 6 public exam; introduction of extra-curricular school activities development
*1998	Introduction of 'mother-tongue' (Chinese language) teaching mechanism Highlight of 'Information Technology' Education; Introduction of 'Integrative Education Project';
1997	Incremental implementation of 'whole-day school' system in Primary Schools in HK

(Source: Education and Manpower Bureau)

Annex III

- A Full Set of Quantitative Scores

for 16 Students & 4 Parents

of the research school

1. Quantitative Findings from Student 1

Student characteristics: Female, 1st quarter academic results

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*2*	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*1*	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	*2*
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*2*	*2*
Total Scores:	25/50 **50%**	26/50 **52%**

2. Quantitative Findings from Student 2

Student characteristics: (Female, 3rd Quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	**4**	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*2*	*2*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	**4**	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*1*	*1*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	2	3
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*1*	*2*
Total Scores:	25/50 **50%**	25/50 **50%**

3. Quantitative Findings from Student 3

Student characteristics: (Male, 4th quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 - Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	*2*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**4**	2
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*1*
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*3*	3
Total Scores:	29/50 **58%**	*23/50* ***46%***

4. Quantitative Findings from Student 4

Student characteristics: (Male, 2nd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	*2*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	**4**	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	3
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	29/50 **58%**	28/50 **56%**

5. Quantitative Findings from Student 5

Student characteristics: (Male, 2nd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 - Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	*2*	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*2*	*1*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*1*	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	*2*
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional *supervision*;	*1*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*1*
9. Adequate financing; and	**5**	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*2*	*2*
Total Scores:	*22/50* ***44%***	*21/50* ***42%***

6. ***Quantitative Findings from Student 6***

Student characteristics: (Female, 3rd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5– Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	*2*	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*2*	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	*2*
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional *supervision*;	*2*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	**4**	3
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	28/50 **56%**	30/50 **60%**

7. Quantitative Findings from Student 7

Student characteristics: (Female, 3rd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5– Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	**4**	**4**
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	*2*
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional *supervision*;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	3
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	29/50 **58%**	29/50 **58%**

8. Quantitative Findings from Student 8

Student characteristics: (Male, 4th quarter academic results, but with excellent and positive learning attitude)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	**4**	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	**5**	**4**
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	**4**	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**4**	*1*
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*2*
9. Adequate financing; and	3	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	*2*
Total Scores:	34/50 **68%**	27/50 **54%**

9. ***Quantitative Findings from Student 9***

Student characteristics: (Male, 2nd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	**4**
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	**4**
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	2	3
Total Scores:	28/50 **56%**	34/50 **68%**

10. <u>Quantitative Findings from Student 10</u>

Student characteristics: (Male, 2nd quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**<u>School as a whole</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**<u>English Panel</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;		
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3 *2*	3 3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**4**	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;		
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	**4** 3	3 3
Total Scores:	30/50 **60%**	29/50 **58%**

11. Quantitative Findings from Student 11

Student characteristics: (Male, 1st quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	**4**	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	**4**	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	3	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	30/50 **60%**	31/50 **62%**

12. Quantitative Findings from Student 12

Student characteristics: (Male, 4th quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **4 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	**4**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	**4**
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*2*	**4**
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*2*	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*1*	***2***
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	**4**
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*1*	*2*
Total Scores:	*22/50* ***44%***	31/50 **62%**

13. Quantitative Findings from Student 13

Student characteristics: (Female, 1st quarter academic results)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 - Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	**4**	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	2
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3 2	3 3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	2	2
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	2	2
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	2
8. Ample direct instructional time;	3	
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	2
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	2	3
Total Scores:	29/50 **58%**	25/50 **50%**

14. Quantitative Findings from Student 14

Student characteristics: (Male, 4th quarter academic results; repeater)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 - Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	2	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	2	2
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	2	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	2	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	2	2
9. Adequate financing; and	**4**	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	2	3
Total Scores:	25/50 **50%**	28/50 **56%**

15. Quantitative Findings from Student 15

Student characteristics: (Female, 1st quarter academic results; *No. 1 in the form*)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 - Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*1*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	*2*	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*2*	*2*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*1*	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	*1*
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*1*	*1*
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*2*
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*1*	*2*
Total Scores:	*17/50* ***34%***	*18/50* ***36%***

16. Quantitative Findings from Student 16

Student characteristics: (Female, 1st quarter academic results; *No. 2 in the form*)

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 - Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	*2*	*2*
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	*2*	*2*
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*1*	*1*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	*1*	*2*
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	*2*	*2*
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	*1*	*1*
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	*2*	*2*
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*2*
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	*1*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	*1*	*1*
Total Scores:	*16/50* ***32%***	*16/50* ***32%***

17. <u>Quantitative Findings from Parent 1</u>

Parent: Mother. Student characteristics: (Female, 1st quarter academic results).

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**<u>School as a whole</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**<u>English Panel</u>** **1 - Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3– Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	**5**
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	**4**	**5**
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	**4**	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	2	2
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	32/50 **64%**	35/50 **70%**

18. <u>Quantitative Findings from Parent 2</u>

Parent: Mother. Student characteristics: (Female, 2nd quarter academic results).

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**<u>School as a whole</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**<u>English Panel</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	3	3
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**4**	**4**
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	**4**	**4**
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	**4**	**4**
9. Adequate financing; and	3	3
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	33/50 **66%**	33/50 **66%**

19. <u>Quantitative Findings from Parent 3</u>

Parent: Mother. Student characteristics: (Female, 3rd quarter academic results).

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**<u>School as a whole</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**<u>English Panel</u>** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1. Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	3	3
2. Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	3	3
3. Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	*2*	*2*
4. Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5. A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	3	3
6. A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	3
7. Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8. Ample direct instructional time;	*2*	*2*
9. Adequate financing; and	*2*	*2*
10. Effective organizational structure and support.	3	3
Total Scores:	27/50 **54%**	27/50 **54%**

20. Quantitative Findings from Parent 4

Guardian: Eldest Brother. Student characteristics: (Female, 4th quarter results).

10 Characteristics of a Quality School **(Source: Chapman & Adams, 2002)**	**School as a whole** **1 – Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3 – Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**	**English Panel** **1 - Very Poor;** **2 – Poor;** **3– Average;** **4 – Good;** **5 – Very Good.**
1 Teaching methodologies to encourage independent thinking.	**5**	**5**
2 Capable, motivated, well-trained teachers;	**4**	**4**
3 Appropriate, well-designed curriculum;	**4**	**4**
4 Effective Learning materials including, but not limited to, textbooks;	3	3
5 A safe, well-maintained learning environment;	**5**	**5**
6 A valid, reliable examination system for the subject;	3	**4**
7 Effective school leadership, including instructional supervision;	3	3
8 Ample direct instructional time;	3	*1*
9 Adequate financing; and	3	3
10 Effective organizational structure and support.	**4**	**4**
Total Scores:	37/50 **74%**	36/50 **72%**

ANNEX IV - BENCHMARK TEST REPORTS (For Teacher A and Teacher B)

Classroom Language Proficiency Test Scores & Observation Reports

Classroom English Language Proficiency Test for Teacher A and Teacher B:

SCORES:

	Teacher A	***Teacher B***
Grammar:	4	3.5
Pronunciation:	3.5	4
Interaction:	2.5	3.5
Instruction:	3.5	4
Overall:	**3.5**	**4**
	(Pass)	**(Pass)**

5- Excellent

4-Good

3-Satisfactory (Pass)

2-Fail

1-Poor

Classroom English Language Proficiency Test for Teachers

Class Observation Report

Comments on Teacher A:

"It is obvious to me that you are competent and experienced teacher. You were well-prepared for your lesson, and made interesting powerpoint slides that attracted the attention of the students. You also tried to make the class more interesting by including a mixture of instruction and pair work.

I thought, however, that there could be more interaction between you and the students and your instructions on what to you with the jumbled sentences could be more explicit.

A last and perhaps rather minor point I want to make has to do with the computer and where it was placed. You had to turn around to use the computer every time you pressed a button and that disrupted the flow of the lesson somewhat. Thank you very much."

Classroom English Language Proficiency Test for Teachers

Class Observation Report

Comments on Teacher B:

"I think you are a good teacher who explains things clearly and systematically. You are calm, gentle and composed. You speak beautiful English and therefore a good model for your students. You relate well to your students, and I'm sure they feel that you are not only in the classroom to impart knowledge, but that you really care for them.

In this particular class, I watched (F.6 Arts), I am impressed with:

- Your lesson plan and way you delivered it – your presentation was very clear and systematic.
- The way you made use of the computer, the powerpoint slides and the blackboard – this was not easy but you handled the equipment efficiently and did not allow the handling of the different gadgets to interfere with flow of your lesson.
- The calmness and peace you exuded – this had a positive effect on the students, and so, although not everyone was paying attention, they were quiet and did not cause disturbance.

I personally think that you are a gifted teacher, and hope very much that you will consider teaching as your long-term career."