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Teacher Educators' Vision of an 'Ideal' Teacher

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Abstract

There is no clear definition of what constitutes an ideal teacher educator, particularly from the perspective of Malaysian educators. Developing teacher educators' vision of an ideal teacher ensures that teachers have high levels of professional, personal, and contextual dimensions in teaching practices, including competence in the practice of professional teaching, knowledge, and understanding. Therefore, the objective of this study was to find out the range of visions of what it is to be a good teacher educator in a Malaysian teacher education institution. Seventeen teacher educators from an established university in Malaysia participated in the study. A survey consisting of eight questions was used as the research

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instrument. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed by using descriptive and textual analysis techniques. The findings reveal certain criteria of an ideal teacher such as possessing sound subject matter knowledge, mastery of both generic and content-specific pedagogy, and hands-on teaching skills. The teacher educators shared that they have to adjust their goals to attain their vision, namely the need to adapt to the current policies, new ideas, and the ever-changing educational trends. The findings also show that an ideal teacher is the one who is responsible to nurture and bring about the best learning experience for students. This research has unfolded the teacher educators' vision of the ideal teacher and pedagogical implications reflected in every facet of their educational practices.

Keywords: Ideal teachers, teacher educators, teachers' vision, quality teachers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education has been a key factor in Malaysia's rapid and constant changes since the mid-20th century. The government has been continuously striving successfully in transforming the education system based on industrial needs for quality human capital. Teacher education and teacher educators faced great challenges because the focus of the teacher's profession is no longer on mediating knowledge but facilitating skills required in 21st-century workplaces. Without those required skills, planning on preparing new teachers will rely on guesswork and paradigms less relevant to new and quality teachers in the first half of the twenty-first century.

In planning teacher education, courses must first establish the working and philosophical needs of new teachers, while looking to contemporary and future needs and practices in Malaysian schools. Ideal teachers are the primary force behind improving student achievement in learning, preparing instructional materials, resources and educating students to be able to function in various contexts, locally and internationally. Undeniably refining these critical attributes in the educational system should form the assurance of any education programme. In this paper, the researchers scrutinise the essential features of an ideal teacher, as well as recommend approaches for teachers to nurture these attributes. One of the key assumptions of this paper, and supported by Azer (2005) is that role modelling of teachers within their teacher education is an integral component in developing pre-service teachers into 'ideal teachers'. Azer (2005), writing on medicine teaching, observes that:

...good teachers are enthusiastic, friendly, easy-going, able to develop rapport with learners, committed to the growth of their students, approachable, interested in learners as people, and always conscious of their status as role models. The participants were then asked to list barriers to effective modelling and these included being quiet, being overextended, having difficulty remembering names, and being impatient and impulsive. (Azer, 2005, p. 67)

The authors advocate those approaches such as emphasising the importance of adapting the way that teaching occurs in all university courses, not just explicitly teaching or education courses. In so doing, new teachers are exposed across their education, such as subject specialists, general educational, and ideal teaching approaches and practices on which to model their own future teaching. A survey was conducted to obtain information regarding the understanding of an ideal or quality teacher by university teacher educators at an established teacher education university.

1.1 Teacher Vision

According to [Blumberg and Greenfield \(1980\)](#), an educational vision is a force that makes a teacher see what others do not. Holding such a vision drives teachers to explore and risk things that they have never tried before. The teacher with a vision looks beyond what students are now to what they may become. Thus, student success, to some extent, depends on the teacher's ability to communicate an understanding of that potential, so that the students' learning experience reflects the teacher's vision. In a study conducted by [Evans \(2000\)](#) on Japanese students, on the components that would constitute a good teacher, kindness was one of the most pertinent elements, and a kind teacher is those who:

- care about the students; wants them to succeed
- think about the students' position (workload, level of understanding)
- work hard for the benefit of the students
- give up free time for student benefit (provides extra help)
- think well of students
- make sure students are happy
- are interested in students' opinion

Other studies have reported similar attributes of a good teacher. [Hadley and Yoshioka \(1996, as cited in Ryan & Deci, 2002\)](#) asked Japanese university students to define 'What is a good teacher?' and found the most responses were 'kind', 'friendly', 'impartial', 'understandable', 'cheerful', 'punctual', 'fun', 'enthusiastic', and 'humorous'. Many researchers agree that students' view of noble teachers is those who are engaged in 'pro-social', have responsible behaviour, follow classroom instructions and standards, and are engaged in educational activities ([Osterman, 2000, as cited in Garrett, Kovacevic, et al., 2009](#)).

1.2 An 'Ideal Teacher'

Many definitions exist for the term 'ideal teacher' which have been cited in the literature. Some authors provide descriptions, while others have expressed its meaning in the form of the characteristics that an 'ideal teacher' exhibits. Some authors use the term 'ideal' to mean 'exceptional,' 'expert,' 'outstanding,' 'exemplary,' 'experienced' 'best,' and 'quality'. An understanding of an 'ideal teacher' as a concept is derived by each individual from a variety of sources. Therefore, the vision of an ideal teacher will be different from one source to another or one individual to another. In this article, the personal understanding of the respondents is a constituent of the findings, and so a specific definition will be derived within this context. The sources from which pre-service teachers create their personal notion of the 'ideal teacher' will include their own school (primary and secondary) learning experiences and memories, a university-

based academic and learned understanding of what it is to be a teacher and teaching practice, and, most importantly in this paper, the modelling of teaching styles experienced within the student teacher's own university and teacher training courses.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the essential characteristics of a good teacher educator?
2. What is your vision of the ideal teacher educator?

The purpose of this research is to gain knowledge of the range of visions of what it is to be a good teacher educator and to articulate how the vision has influenced the teaching and educational practice of teacher educators in a Malaysian teacher education institution. This is significant because teacher educators provide a teaching role model for the students who, in their tertiary years of education, are focusing on developing the craft, skill, and art to become excellent teachers. The importance of lecturers' role modelling, which as [Azer \(2005\)](#) pointed out is highly influential in developing and educating pre-service teachers, suggesting that the lecturers in such institutions have a responsibility to ensure that their own teaching practice and classroom (lecture theatres) will be a positive learning environment for their students. To achieve this, teacher educators need to be continually reflecting, adapting, and keeping up to date with new teaching and learning trends.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teacher Educators

Teacher educators have important roles in the ecology of teacher education ([Lunenberg et al., 2007](#)), consequently uplifting the quality of teaching in preparing future teachers who will be responsible for nurturing human capital. Teacher educators have to keep abreast with the current development in education in terms of the evolving pedagogies, knowledge, new environment, learner profile, and learning. Teacher educators are required to exhibit a learner-centred mode of teaching which focuses on students' needs and learning styles. Teacher educators are the experts in pedagogical content knowledge, and they are responsible for transferring the competences to student teachers who will become the future teachers. This is in line with the aspiration to uplift the teaching profession at the highest level stipulated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 ([Ministry of Education, 2012](#)), which highlights every feature of teaching ([Ministry of Education, 2013](#)). The aspirations embedded in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 corresponds with the National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2007-2020 (NHESP) which also emphasised the importance of teaching and considered it as a Critical Agenda Project (CAP) in the document ([Ministry of Higher Education, 2010](#)).

2.2 Past and Current Research

2.2.1 *Four main exemplars for ideal teachers*

Four main exemplars for ideal teachers were depicted by [Lamm \(2000\)](#). They were derived from scholastic philosophies and emphasised different facets, namely acculturation, socialisation, individualisation, and disciplinary expertise. The voice of

students and beginning pupils were considered not significant until 1970; since the 1970s, their opinions have been considered in determining teacher improvement, particularly in institutions, and have become part of educational research (Arnon & Reichel, 2007; Gibbs, 2001). The findings show that there are two fundamental categories of ideal teachers, namely disposition features and teacher professional knowledge. Teachers must exhibit a deep understanding of the subject matter to be taught (Tek et al., 2021). This includes teachers' competency in carrying out suitable instructional strategies. The competency takes into consideration the teacher's understanding of student learning styles and strategies, awareness of student attitude and motivation in learning, disposition toward learning, as well as sociocultural contexts of teaching and learning.

2.2.2 *Ideal teachers and their roles*

A study conducted by Harley et al. (2000) on real and ideal teachers showed the situation faced by the teachers as a comparison to the ideal teachers described in the policy. Findings showed that teachers' roles were unique and divided into six categories: facilitator of learning, countrified character, manager, designer of learning programs, all-time learner, and community creator and citizen. McKnight et al. (2016) studied the qualities of an effective teacher in 23 countries and the results showed that teachers must have a good mastery of subject matter knowledge, create ways to know the learners, show high-level professionalism, exhibit the ability to develop productive relations and trust among students and must empathise with students by being patient, caring and kind.

Çetin (2001) divulged that the ideal teacher behaviour was lightly demarcated as approachable, responsive, empathetic, sympathetic, obliging, always conscious, and mindful of students' individual differences and general student psychology. In addition, they can ensure students' good mastery of subject matter knowledge and use different teaching approaches in the class. Students from international schools in Norway and Wales shared that there were variances in views of ideal teacher personal conduct (Van Oord & den Brok, 2004). Students in Norway deliberated their greatest teachers as sterner than students in Wales, while the latter reflected their greatest teachers as giving more accountability and autonomy. Some studies stated some findings in terms of the culture-related dissimilarities in students' views in this study and also other studies (den Brok et al., 2002; Wubbels & Levy, 1993).

2.2.3 *Primary and secondary school students' beliefs regarding what makes a good teacher*

A study by Szejnberg et al. (2004) showed that the primary school students rated their ideal teacher lesser on leadership, accommodating/supportive, considerate, and student autonomy, while they evaluated them higher on indeterminate, discontented, and reprimanding than higher vocational education students. Other related findings include student's preference for a student-oriented teacher that parades a high amount of both inspiration and closeness. The findings of this study are similar to those of other studies conducted in the Netherlands, Australia, and the USA (Levy et al., 1993; Wubbels & Levy, 1991). Coe et al. (2014) shared the level of leadership engagement that included a culture of high expectations for pupil progress and achievement, time

spent by senior staff on monitoring teaching and learning, the level of formal classroom observation, support for middle leaders in school strategy implementation, and data-based interventions to help students.

2.2.4 Qualities of an ideal teacher

Arnon and Reichel (2007) conducted a study to examine students' and teachers' perceptions of the ideal teacher image. Their findings showed two main elements of the ideal teachers: personal qualities and subject knowledge. Educational philosophers came out with varied images of the ideal teachers. Those images usually revolved around the basic qualities and values. It is the teacher's role to promote student cognitive development (Gopal & Singh, 2020; Yunus et al., 2021). This is also viewed as one of the prime purposes of education and teaching. Ko and Sammons (2013) divulged those other crucial aspects include social, behavioural, and affective present goals and purposes of education. Pozo-Muñoz et al. (2000) shared four major factors that could define an ideal teacher, namely teaching competency, teaching qualities, teacher's appearance, and dedication to teaching. Teacher's pedagogical skills should be assessed and improved to achieve the designated quality and standards for enhancing learning performance (Boonen et al., 2014).

A number of research studies have been carried out to identify the ideal attitudes and behavioural characteristics that a teacher should have. For a student to identify an image of an ideal teacher, various variables, such as the students' age, gender, and political beliefs influence the way each student perceives the ideal teacher (Douna et al., 2015). As for the ideal teachers' teaching strategy, students feel that an ideal teacher should make use of the various practices and technology, and at the same time, the students also highlight the teacher ability to talk with students, to take their opinions into account, and to make them an integral part of the learning procedure. Students also feel that an ideal teacher emphasises critical thinking, non-conventional practices, and innovative activities, has ample knowledge regarding their educational field, and can transform their knowledge into a more practical learning environment.

2.2.5 Ideal teachers and their personality

Teachers' personality refers to the teachers' characteristics and traits. A good teacher should have a balanced personality. A teacher-student relationship also plays a pivotal role as students prefer teachers who manage and treat all the students equally without any biased relationship with them. These three themes will create an ideal teacher that is able to motivate and guide students. Research has shown that students prefer teachers who are able to teach with good content knowledge as well as able to infuse technology in creative teaching. They should also be patient, helpful, kind, funny, and positive (Bullock, 2015). Students prefer teachers who do not yell when they make mistakes but teach them patiently. Students also prefer teachers that make them feel safe by welcoming them to class and making them comfortable to learn.

2.2.6 Effectiveness of teaching practice in the context of 21st century learning

A study by Ke-Du (2019) highlighted the effectiveness of the teaching practice of five teachers in a public secondary school in the context of 21st-century learning.

Ke-Du (2019) shared that teachers must master 21st-century learning to cope with curriculum reformation in facing the globally changing environment. Teachers' efficiency in implementing this educational change will regulate and govern student outcomes. The aspects investigated included appropriate teaching practices, exemplary teachers, meeting the contextual requirements, adapting to the changing context, and criteria of effective teachers. The findings revealed that seven aspects were discussed in relation to the literature review. All the teachers agreed that they have to use different teaching strategies to implement 21st Century Learning in line with curriculum and education reform to improve student learning outcomes.

Analyses carried out by the researchers on related prior research studies revealed that most of these studies were merely concerned with (a) four main exemplars for ideal teachers, (b) ideal teachers and their roles, (c) primary and secondary school students' beliefs regarding what makes a good teacher, (d) qualities of an ideal teacher, (e) students perceived teachers as persons having a complex role, (f) ideal teachers and their personalities and (g) effectiveness of teaching practice in the context of 21st Century Learning. Less attention was given to developing an understanding of teacher educators' visions of what constitutes the ideal teacher, particularly from a Malaysian perspective that can assist teacher educators to understand the range of visions of what it is to be a good teacher educator in a Malaysian teacher education institution.

3. METHODS

This study used a survey questionnaire as the main instrument. The survey consisted of eight open-ended questions that required the participants to share their views on good visions of what it is to be educators of teachers.

3.1 Data Collection

3.1.1 Participants

After seeking ethical authorisation, seventeen teacher educators volunteered and were invited to complete an online survey with eight open-ended questions about essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers, sharing information about lecturers/educators whom they emulate and could relate their teaching experiences, reflection on personal teaching experiences, sharing views on the vision of the ideal teacher educator, giving opinions on the institution's 'vision' of good teaching, and deliberating on how their 'vision' as a good teacher educator aligns with the perceived vision of their institution.

3.1.2 Instrument

The survey requested the research participants to identify specific examples of good visions of what it is to be a good educator of teachers in a Malaysian teacher education institution modelled either in their education courses or on professional experience. They were also required to provide examples of how they have demonstrated their understanding of what it is to be a good teacher educator in

Malaysia in their professional teaching and learning experience. The survey was delivered online survey, and it consists of the questions presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Online survey questions.

Question ID	Questions
Question 1	What do you think are the essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers? Please list
Question 2	Do you imagine or recall a previous teacher/mentor you encountered in your university or early career, whose character you continue to emulate?
Question 3	If Yes - How does this manifest itself in your teaching? If No – go to next question
Question 4	Do you regularly undertake some form of reflection in your own teaching practice? Please indicate and clarify what form this reflection takes.
Question 5	How do you obtain feedback for your teaching – Indicate all that applies, formal/informal/intuitive/other?
Question 6	In a paragraph, please explain your vision of the ideal teacher educator.
Question 7	In a paragraph, what do you understand your institution's 'vision' of good teaching might be?
Question 8	Do you feel that your 'vision' as a good teacher educator aligns with the perceived vision of your institution?

3.2 Data Analysis

The questions are in both open and closed format, which has allowed the respondents to provide their responses without constraint. The responses have been tabulated in several ways. The closed questions (Questions 2 and 5) have been collected into graphs, which provide an indication of the percentage of responses to the question. The open questions (Questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8) were given a textual analysis to identify the number of occurrences of certain words within the various responses. Figure 2 shows the textual analysis of Question 1 (Q1). Of twenty-five invitations to respond, 17 responses were received about a 74% response rate.

4. RESULTS

By conducting this survey, it is possible to obtain a snapshot of the teaching practice of a group of respondents who are lecturing in language, music, and creative technology disciplines. Details of the responses to each question within the survey are given below, with either textual or charted analysis of the responses.

4.1 The Essential Characteristics of a Good Teacher Educator

4.1.1 *The essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers*

To the first question of 'What do you think are the essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers? Please list these qualities', seventeen teacher educators answered the question on the essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers (see Table 2). From the textual analysis shown in Figure 1, it is apparent that 'knowledge' emerged as one of the essential characteristics of a good educator of teachers followed by 'creative' which is the second preference selected by the participants. Participants had selected 'teaching' as the third choice that they believe

is also an important element of a good teacher educator. Among other essential characteristics selected are ‘patience’, ‘flexibility’ and also ‘independent.’ An essential element of a good teacher educator is teacher knowledge. Sound content knowledge is a requirement for deciding and assessing students’ prior understanding. Sound knowledge of good educators of teachers plays a critical role in extending and challenging students’ prior knowledge.

Table 2. Answers to Question 1.

Answer options	Response count
answered question	17
skipped question	0



Figure 1. Textual analysis of Question 1.

These findings on sound professional knowledge are in line with findings obtained by Lamm (2000). Sound subject knowledge enables educators to mediate between the subjects, the discussion, and the engagements surrounding teaching/learning encounters. With sound knowledge, a good educator of teachers must then bring in and blend creative ideas to put forward knowledge for the students. In order to make learning more meaningful, a good teacher educator must know how to match knowledge with creativity. The accurate blend of creativity along with instruction assist students to be innovative and also reassures them to learn new things. In addition, students can be nurtured to be good communicators and to refine their emotional and social skills. In other words, creative teaching with sound knowledge of a good teacher educator plays the main role in nurturing student’s emotional development. Two responses to this question summarise the overall nature of what these lecturers consider the essential characteristics of a ‘good educator of teachers’. Up to date and relevant knowledge of the field/s being taught, including industry knowledge (if relevant), good communication skills, a sense of professionalism and good work ethics, patience, fairness, reliability, good role model (e.g., punctual, well prepared) and inspiring, flexible, nurturing, creative, motivated, encourage learning by doing, and encourage independent learning. The comments overall support the literature on the subject regarding the characteristics of a good teacher educator (Bullock, 2015). While a good teacher is also most likely a good educator, several respondents approached this question by reflecting and recalling good educators whose influence and encouragement motivated them to become good educators.

4.1.2 *Previous teacher/mentor encountered whose teaching qualities continued to be emulated*

Question 2 is ‘Do you imagine or recall a previous teacher/mentor you encountered in your university or early career, whose teaching qualities you continue

to emulate?’ 13 participants (76.5%) answered the question on recalling a previous teacher/mentor they encountered in university or in their early career whose teaching qualities they continued to emulate. Table 3 illustrates their responses.

Table 3. Answers to Question 2.

Answer options	Response percent	Response count
Yes	76.5%	13
No	23.5%	4
answered question		17
skipped question		0

Four participants (23.5%) answered no to the above questions as their previous mentor/teacher had no influence on their current teaching practice. The intent behind this question is to prove/disprove the theory that ‘role modelling’ (Garrett, Barr, et al., 2009), is a significant factor in developing a personal teaching style and of understanding what excellence in teaching means for the pre-service teacher.

4.1.3 Manifestation of previous experiences into teaching

A significant focus in all the responses to Question 3, ‘How do previous teacher/mentor influences your current teaching practice?’ Table 4 shows that younger teacher educator has been encouraged to change the focus from the straight delivery of content to teaching in a more social context. As one respondent wrote “...inspired by some master teachers, my focus was switched from myself as a teacher educator to my students’ needs as learners” or another “encouragement of students, praise, building confidence”. From the textual analysis of all the responses shown in Figure 2, the focus of the responses is significantly directed to the students in the class and the interactions between people and the teaching more than content and place.

Table 4. Answers to Question 3.

Answer options	Response count
	9
answered question	9
skipped question	8



Figure 2. Textual analysis results based on mentors’ recall that influences current teaching practice.

4.1.4 Undertaking some form of reflection in teaching practice

Question 4 inquired, ‘Do you regularly undertake some form of reflection in your own teaching practice? Please indicate and clarify what form this reflection takes’. Although the majority of respondents in this survey use reflection, questionnaires, and other instruments to obtain feedback on teaching and learning (see Table 5 and Figure 3), one respondent replied that they judged their teaching by “just ask the students what their needs are”.

Table 5. Answers to Question 4.

Answer options	Response count
answered question	12
skipped question	5

**Figure 3.** Textual analysis results on teacher reflective practice.

4.1.5 Obtaining feedback on teaching

To Question 5, ‘How do you obtain feedback for your teaching – Indicate all that applies?’, this response is atypical (see Table 6) because most responses focus on improving the teaching and learning process in the classroom through “reflection in action and reflection on action, self-monologue and personal journal writing”. Another typical response was “every lesson, reflective through teaching and learning practices”.

Table 6. Answers to Question 5.

Answer options	Response percent	Response count
formal questionnaire	33.3%	4
informal questioning	91.7%	11
intuitive	75.0%	9
other	41.7%	5
Other (please specify)	41.7%	5
answered question		12
skipped question		5

Of the 12 respondents who completed this section, more than 91% used informal questioning as an instrument to obtain feedback on the teaching, and by implication, the learning of the students, as shown in Figure 6. It is also significant that another instrument used in the feedback process is ‘intuitive’, which is meant self-reflection on the part of the teacher. This is borne out by the comments in the previous question as noted before. Where respondents indicated that they use ‘other’ instruments (there were five responses in this section (41.67%)), two of the respondents relied on feedback from other teacher educators. One took it from a relatively remote source “feedback from other teachers on what are my student’s opinions about my teaching” and the other respondent who used this approach also mentioned the usual assessment instruments and their students’ “...performance in assignments, quizzes, and final examination. Through other colleagues. Students’ evaluation at the end of the course”.

4.2 Vision of the Ideal Teacher Educator

4.2.1 Explaining the vision of the ideal teacher educator

This particular Question 6, ‘In a paragraph, please explain your vision of the ideal teacher educator’, was answered by just 11 of the 17 respondents as shown in Table 7, suggesting that, although the word vision has appeared prominently in the

textual analysis of the final three survey questions, defining what a vision might, either in personal or institutional contexts, present problems for quite a number of teachers.

Table 7. Answers to Question 6.

Answer options	Response count
	11
Answered question	11
Skipped question	6



Figure 4. Textual analysis of responses to vision of what constitutes the ideal teacher.

Direct quotes from a number of the respondents indicate both the commonality of what is required in being judged an 'ideal educator' might be and the range of perspectives within the survey cohort (DQ refers to direct quotes):

- DQ1 An educator who does not stop learning through experience knows what is best for their students/teachers and figured out how to pace teaching content appropriately.
- DQ2 My vision of the ideal teacher: A teacher with high professional values who has gone through a teacher education program and is qualified who is clear about his/her goals of teaching, involves students in the learning process, possess good communicative skills and effort, displays caring attitude towards students.
- DQ3 A person who should be able to mould future teachers according to the needs and characteristics of an ideal teacher.

The findings revealed that teacher educators' visions of the ideal teacher include an educator who always strives to improve teaching through experience to benefit the teachers in terms of their learning. The teacher educators also felt that good mastery of the content taught is crucial in nurturing teachers. Other visions of an ideal teacher comprised teacher educators who have high professional values and who have been trained under teacher education programmes and obtained relevant teaching certificates as teacher educators. Also, good teacher educators must have good communicative skills and a caring attitude toward students.

4.2.2 Understanding institution's 'vision' of good teaching

For Question 7, 'In a paragraph, what do you understand your institution's 'vision' of good teaching might be?', only nine participants responded and the other eight participants opted to skip the questions, as shown in Table 8. Their response is summarized in Figure 5.

Table 8. Answers to Question 7.

Answer options	Response count
	9
Answered question	9
Skipped question	8



Figure 5. Textual analysis of responses for the institutional vision of good teaching.

Contextual analysis revealed that these participants agree on the importance of aligning teaching and learning with the institutional vision as in Figure 5. It is crucial to follow standardisation in the quality of teaching and learning as schools have their own objectives, missions, and visions. Therefore, there is a need to coordinate teaching and learning sources and resources so that the teaching and learning could be more equitably dispensed.

4.2.3 *Feeling whether 'vision' as a good teacher educator aligns with the perceived vision of the institution*

To Question 8, 'Do you feel that your 'vision' as a good teacher educator aligns with the perceived vision of your institution?', only 11 participants responded (for alignment of institutional vision with personal vision as shown in Table 9).

Table 9. Answers to Question 8.

Answer options	Response count
	11
Answered question	11
Skipped question	6



Figure 6. Textual analysis for responses for alignment of the institutional vision with the personal vision.

It is apparent from the textual analysis that a good teacher must have a vision aligned with the institutional vision as shown in Figure 6. Perhaps it is significant that there is a prevalence of respondents in the survey who are from arts/linguistic backgrounds, where student-centred and problem-based learning will tend to occur as a normal form of teaching.

5. DISCUSSION

This study was stimulated by interest in vision as it relates to the classroom teacher. That interest is directed to a focus on literature relating to vision. Most of the literature is concentrated on the vision of a group, a school, an administrator, or a supervisor, but very little is correlated to individual teacher vision. Though the school vision impacts teacher vision, teachers have to articulate their own visions. It is from their individual visions that they function. When the data were analysed in detail, some

suggestions from the respondents in terms of what 'my vision of the ideal teacher' includes a teacher who:

- does not stop learning through experience,
- knows what is best for their students/teachers,
- knows how to pace appropriately in teaching content knowledge,
- has high professional values has gone through teacher education programmes, and is clear about his/her goals of teaching,
- involves students in the learning process,
- possesses good communicative skills and effort,
- displays a caring attitude towards students,
- should be able to mould the future teachers according to the needs and characteristics of an 'ideal teacher'.

One of the qualities that each teacher educator reflects from experiences and practices with a previous teacher educator is to know the reason why students were learning a particular subject or anything that might be thought inappropriate. This is one of the aspects that each teacher educator passes on to their student teachers. One of the qualities that a teacher educator should have is high morality. It is very crucial as they would be the role model for their students in order to be able to inspire them (Rao, 2007). Teacher educators must also be very good at making a high-quality decision which does not only depend on facts or research but also their own experience and reliable resources (Singh & Samad, 2013). In ensuring to prepare teacher educators with this quality, the teacher training centres and university education faculties need appropriate education curriculum, policies for the pre-service teachers (Fathurohman & Cahyaningsih, 2021; Gopal & Singh, 2020), and self-efficacy beliefs to regulate and enhance their level of effective teaching (Saidi, 2020). These findings concur with those obtained by Prasangani (2019) who reported that in order for teachers to make students feel comfortable in learning, the teachers must find strategies to create a good rapport, exhibit good communication skills, create a conducive and pleasant learning environment, generate questions to initiate discussions with the students, exhibit good values and attitudes, make learning more meaningful and enjoyable, and provide positive feedback to the students during evaluation.

The findings from this study reflect on the teacher educators' visions of the ideal teachers, namely essential characteristics of a good teacher educator, i.e. knowledge, teaching, creativity, high professional values, caring attitude towards students, and student involvement in the learning process, and these are supported by the findings obtained by Ahmad and Sahak (2009), Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), and Zamani and Ahangari (2016), Sarwal and Lamb (2018), and Hanafiah and Yaacob (2021). These findings emphasise that being a good teacher educator is very important because it has been identified that good educators will produce good students who will eventually enter the workplace after they finish schooling. Therefore, producing a good student will not only be for the sake of the teacher educators and the students only but also the sake of the whole nation. One economist has acknowledged that teacher educators with good quality will have a great impact on student performance (Guarino et al., 2006; Singh & Kasim, 2019; Singh et al., 2017).

This study has made the researchers further reflect upon thoughts that relate to educational practices. Therefore, some suggestions, which do not necessarily flow directly from the data, can be made for teacher educators, future teachers, student teachers/pre-service, school officers, and researchers. First, teacher educators should

be given the opportunity to express how and why they chose and decided to become teacher educators in the first place. Providing this opportunity for teacher educators will give them a chance to disseminate their vision so that they have a space for sharing their philosophies in the open. Second, teacher educators must also build and create a networking system in which they spread visionary practices. Also, other teacher educators may need the exposure and support in preparing for the future and would be enthusiastic about receiving assistance in illuminating and enlightening the significance of the process. Furthermore, teacher educators must find alternatives to develop the knowledge, skills, and values that prospective teachers can emulate and adopt in their classes every day. Finally, teacher educators have the responsibility to demonstrate that teaching is a noble profession so that some of the best minds will want to stay in the profession rather than pursue other careers.

5. CONCLUSION

This study is expected to assist and inspire future teacher educators to reflect and give careful thought in educating future teachers who can develop skills, knowledge, and values required in the 21st-century classroom. Teacher educators must have a good sense of professionalism and good work ethics, patience, fairness in nurturing students because, through this study, the future teacher educators can see the importance of clearly exploring their visions. Furthermore, teacher educators need exposure to how and why teacher educators with a vision of an ideal teacher have devoted teaching as their profession. This study should inspire teacher educators to model their visions so that future teachers, student teachers, parents, and stakeholders may identify their roles in assisting teachers to realise their vision.

This study has introduced certain criteria to ascertain teacher educators' vision as an 'ideal' teacher such as possessing sound subject matter knowledge, knowledge of both generic and content-specific pedagogy, and also hands-on teaching skills. The teacher educators' vision as ideal teachers revealed that emphasis on adjusting their goals to attain their vision (i.e., the need to adapt with the current policies), new ideas, and also the ever-changing educational trends were important. Future teacher educators can embed and adopt these visions for teaching practice to suit the local policy and existing local teacher education guide. This study is based on a survey research design in which teacher educators' vision as an ideal teacher was gathered based on their teaching experience. The visions were then analysed and checked against past studies. This can be carried out better by triangulating all the themes that emerged by interviewing the teacher educators to get further information on how they view and develop their vision. It will provide more comprehensive data for future studies.

This study was also intended to develop an understanding of teacher educators' vision of what constitutes an ideal teacher, particularly from a Malaysian perspective. However, the generalisability of this research results is subject to certain limitations. One of the limitations is that the survey data were collected from a group of teacher educators who have been teaching in one teacher education university involved in policymaking in the past years. The teacher educators gave their responses based on their experience in teaching as teacher educators. The findings of this study can be used by the teacher educators in teacher education institutions to guide them in

preparing future teachers. The vision of ideal teacher educators can be used by the teacher educators in teacher education universities by adjusting and adapting with the different sets of student teachers. Thus, the outcome of this study might need to be improvised for use on other groups of teacher educators who might not be teaching teachers in higher education institutions in Malaysia. The findings can only be generalised and used by a similar group of teacher educators in Malaysia.

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