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Relation	

The Organizational, Professional and Social Condition Perceived by Novice Teachers

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Abstract

Part of the formation of teacher professional identity is caused by the organizational, professional and social condition perceived by novice teachers. An international collaboration project involving seven countries across African and Asian region was set up under the name of Group C African Asian Dialogue Project in order to survey professional identity among teachers in the respected countries. This article focused on the first dimension of the research collaboration endeavor which is to study the organizational, professional and social condition perceived by novice teachers in Bangladesh, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam. Novice teachers were chosen as the samples of the study as they are in the crucial position in coping with the transition from being considered as preservice teachers to in-service teachers. The challenges arise when they have to accommodate with what they have learnt in the classroom at the university with the challenges and the realities in the school setting to rationalize the significance of professional identities among the novice teachers. The findings of this study are reported based on the percentage response distribution of each items asked in the questionnaire. The results showed that there are some uniformity and variability on how novice teachers perceive their organizational, professional and social condition in the context of their professional identity.

1. Introduction

The experience and ideas of educators about their career, working conditions, prestige, and achievements have tremendous impact on their actions, as well as on the quality and effectiveness of their teaching (Grion & Varisco, 2007). At the same time, the subjective notions of personality

are very difficult to change, being strongly linked to the self (Korthagen, 2004). Therefore, professional identity is a core factor for the development of an effective teacher (Alsup, 2006; Ross & Bruce, 2007).

In this sense, identity is not something teachers have, but something they use in order to make sense of themselves as teachers (Coldron & Smith, 1999). This notion is supported by a number of studies about the role of emotions in teaching, which claim that the feelings of teachers about teaching and students are as important in the case of outcome of teaching as technical competence or curriculum standards (Hargreaves, 1998). Dissatisfied, alienated, stressed identities are proven to create negative emotions that take away creativity and success from one's professional practice (Fineman, 1999). Accordingly, teacher professional identity has a substantial influence on student achievement, rather than being a mere indicator of the well-being of educators.

The theoretical discourse on teacher professional identity is dominated by several different approaches, each of them focusing on a specific dimension of its formation. These dimensions involve (1) the dynamics of the formation of identity, (2) the determining role of the broader social context, and (3) the role of the discourse in its construction and constant negotiation (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005). Formation of professional identity involves many knowledge sources, such as knowledge of affect, teaching, human relations, and subjects (Antonek, McCormick & Donato, 1997).

In the context of the early years of teaching, we accept a dynamic approach to professional identity, teacher professional identity is regarded as an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experience, which reflects the various successive stages of the transformation from student roles and behaviour patterns into professionalism (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). Watson (2006) describes this process as the constant production of narratives about one's own teaching practices. These narratives are developed by both social interaction and cognitive reflection about the position, roles and professional achievements of the self. Ten Dam and Blom (2006) see the construction of a professional identity as equal to the process of becoming teacher, which includes the interpretation of education, the teaching profession, and the self within this educational practice. This process enables the educator "to become a teacher whose activities are relevant to the profession and practice and who is prepared to take responsibility for his or her actions; in other words, a teacher who is competent of acting as a fully-fledged participant in education" (Ten Dam & Blom, 2006: 651).

The first years of teaching are of crucial importance for the formation of professional identity. During this transitory period between pre-service teacher training and experienced teaching, novice teachers are assigned to their own classroom, without direct supervision. In contrary to the idealistic theories and controlled teaching situations which dominated their pre-service training, these conditions facilitate a new phase of learning, based mainly on the practical questions and problems emerging from their own classroom experience (Huling-Austin, 1990; Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Apart from being crucial for the future professional career of novice teachers, the first years of service are also important for the education system as a whole. The

constant intake of novice teachers can serve as a 'natural' improvement potential to education system. At the same time, however, it may also jeopardize the quality and effectiveness of teaching in the long term. During the first years of their professional career, beginning teachers face numerous issues and challenges that may pose serious threats to the entire education system (Table 1).

Table 1: The specific issues, challenges and threats which determine the formation of professional identity during the early years of in-service teaching

Issues	Challenges	Threats
Encountering classroom reality	Struggle for daily survival, Dialectics of direct teaching experiences and the pedagogical theories and practices as learnt during the pre-service training	Frustration, Alienation from progressive teaching methods
Integration with the institutional and social environment	Establishment of professional and social relationship with staff members and principals, Integration to the first workplace, Finding and negotiating a place within the school and its staff, Experience of the hierarchy and inequalities among teachers, Experience of the social status, income status, working conditions and prestige of teachers within the society	Role, prestige and power conflicts, Socio-economic and cultural conflicts, Attrition, 'Too successful' integration: full adoption of the dominant teaching style

Novice teachers, for the first time in their career, encounter everyday teaching and classroom management issues, along with the socio-economical and socio-cultural inequalities present in their classrooms. The first year of in-service teaching is widely claimed to be concerned about survival than reflective teaching or a systematic professional development (Marshall, Fittinghoff & Cheney, 1990; Mandel, 2006). Despite numerous examples of induction and mentorship schemes present in a range of national education system, the daily struggle for survival still tends to be a dominant feature of the life of beginning teachers (Maciejewski, 2007).

Novice teachers are supposed to give a successful response to some immediate practical issues, such as preparation to the upcoming lessons, classroom management, time management, evaluation of student performance and communication with parents (Meister & Melnick, 2003; Mandel, 2006). Naturally, the struggle for survival is an important source of compromises between the teacher's daily practice and the idealistic principles of teaching acquired during the years of pre-service training. These compromises may either facilitate or paralyze the process of identity formation.

The success of novice teachers does not depend solely on their classroom experiences, as it is also facilitated by the institutional context (Goodson & Cole, 1994). Establishment of professional and social relationship with their colleagues and superiors, along with the negotiation

of their place within the school and the staff; form a substantial challenge for novice teachers. Teaching is claimed to be among those professions which provide little or no guidance for novices in the course of their integration to the organizational climate and professional practice of their first place of assignment (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Schein, 1992). Due to the lack of effective induction, novice teachers face substantial challenges and conflicts during the integration to their school and its broader institutional environment. According to McCoy's (2003) findings, the prestige of the teaching profession, the salary and working conditions of novice teachers, and their relationship with students and parents formulate the main issues of these conflicts.

Failed or troubled integration is widely claimed to be a principal reason for leaving the profession in the early years of service (Kelley, 2004; Shakrani, 2008; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). At the same time, a 'too successful' integration may also pose a threat. In this case, the novice teacher fully adopts the predominant local practice of teaching, including its flaws and weaknesses. Beyond the general issues of social structure and educational policy, the role of the local school leadership and staff is also enormous in the facilitation of this transitory period. The lack of integrated professional culture and real collegial assistance may lead to various conflicts and even attrition (Joiner & Edwards, 2008; Worthy, 2005). This study is aimed towards an international comparison of the issues, challenges and conflicts novice teachers face, along with the impact of this transitory period on the formation of their professional identity.

2. Methodology of the Study

The international research collaboration studying about Teacher Professional Identity is formed on the basis of the Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development, a network of higher education institutions from two continents. The cooperation involves researchers from Vietnam National University, Makerere University in Uganda, Chiang Mai University in Thailand, University of Pretoria in South Africa, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Hiroshima University in Japan and University of Dhaka in Bangladesh. A survey methodology was utilized by administering questionnaires to the sample of teachers in the participating countries. Statistical analysis was employed in order to generate the results of a descriptive analysis in order to study the variability and uniformity of organizational, professional and social condition perceived by novice teachers. Subsequently, separate statistical analysis was conducted to distinguish the results between novice and non-novice teachers. In this study, novice teachers are operationalized as teachers which have 5 years of teaching experience and below. This study used questionnaire as a research tool to collect the data about novice teachers' view on Teacher Professional Identity, and the following items are the indicators in the questionnaire that represent the organizational condition perceived by novice teachers: -.

    i)   The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.

    ii)   Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.

    iii)   If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.

iv) Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.

Whereas, following items are the indicators in the questionnaire that characterize the professional condition perceived by novice teachers:

i) Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government

ii) Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.

iii) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.

iv) Teachers are valued by the government.

Finally, items below are the indicators that symbolize the social condition perceived by novice teachers:

i) The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school

ii) Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial)

iii) Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society

iv) I believe that education in my country has continuously improved

It should be noted that those indicators are chosen conceptually based on the synthesis of the literature review that explain the cause of formation of teacher professional identity. Seven countries from Asian and African continents have participated in this project which are Bangladesh, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam. Therefore, the questionnaire was answered by teachers from those countries.
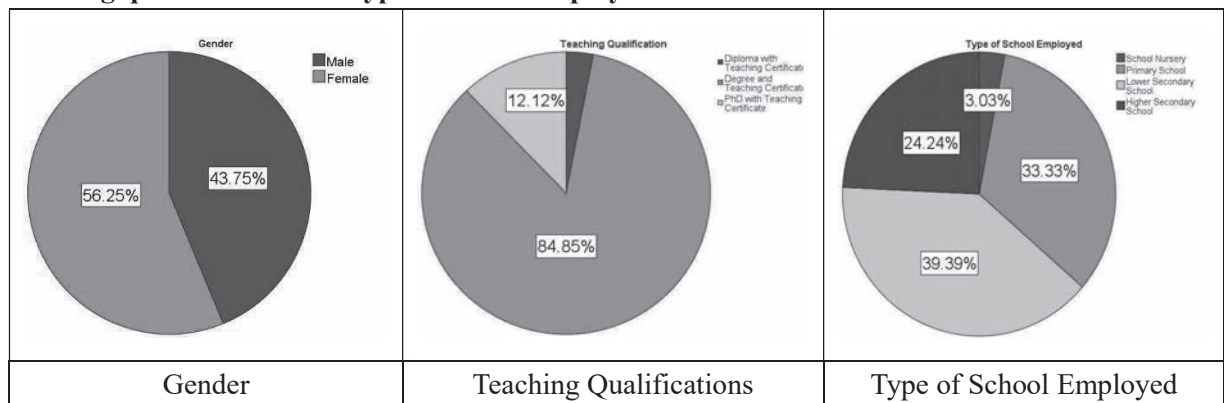
Questionnaires about Teacher Professional Identity was distributed to 329 Bangladesh teachers. From the analysis, it was found that the samples of Bangladesh novice teachers involved in this study are 68 respondents. 32.4% of Bangladesh novice teachers in this study are male teachers whereas 67.6% are female novice teachers (Figure 1). More than half of Bangladesh novice teachers in this study hold postgraduate qualifications (55.9%), and a majority of Bangladesh novice teachers in this study teaching at schools in the rural areas (91.2%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Distribution of Bangladesh novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

| Gender | Teaching Qualifications | Type of School Employed |
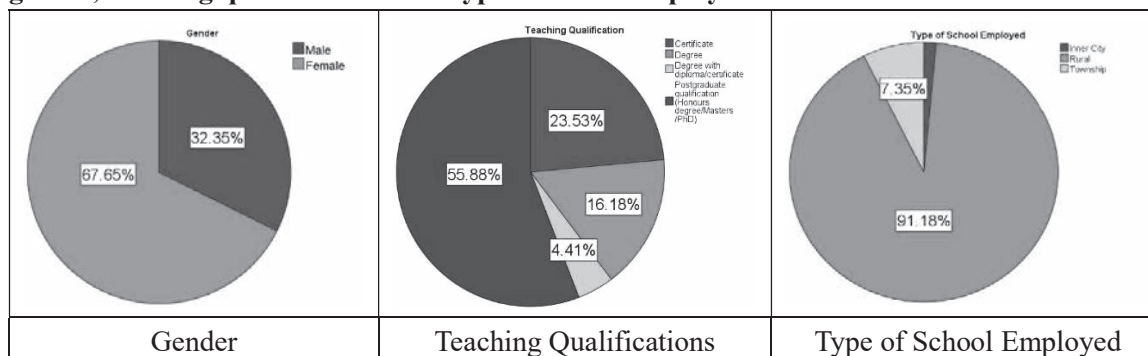
Out of 149 Japanese teachers who answered the questionnaires about Teacher Professional Identity, 33 respondents are novice teachers. More than half of Japanese novice teachers in this study are male novice teachers (56.25%), a majority of them hold a degree with teaching qualification (84.5%) (Figure 2). The percentage Japanese novice teachers in this study distribute evenly across three categories which are a primary school (33.3%), lower secondary (39.4%) and higher secondary school teachers (24.2%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Distribution of Japan novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

| Gender | Teaching Qualifications | Type of School Employed |

A total of 835 Malaysian teachers answered Teacher Professional Identity questionnaires. It was found that the samples of Malaysian novice teachers are 113 respondents. Majority of the Malaysian novice teachers in this study are female (73.7%), with more than half of the Malaysian novice teachers involved in this study have a degree in teaching (59.7%) (Figure 3). Most of the Malaysian novice teachers in this study are primary school teachers (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Distribution of Malaysian novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

| Gender | Teaching Qualifications | Type of School Employed |
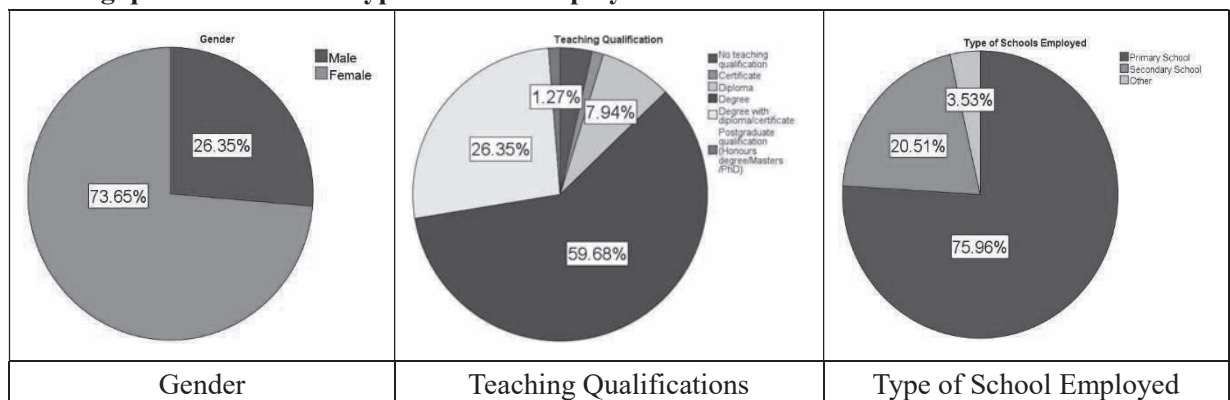
The questionnaires were answered by 143 South African teachers. From the analysis, it was found that the samples of South African novice teachers involved in this study are 22 respondents. A high majority of South African novice teachers in this study are female novice teachers (90.9%)

(Figure 4). Half of the South African novice teachers in this study hold postgraduate qualifications (50.0%). 45.5% of South African novice teachers in this study were teaching at schools in the inner city, followed by township (22.7%) and rural schools (22.7%) and a minority of the novice samples teach at private schools (9.1%) (Figure 4).
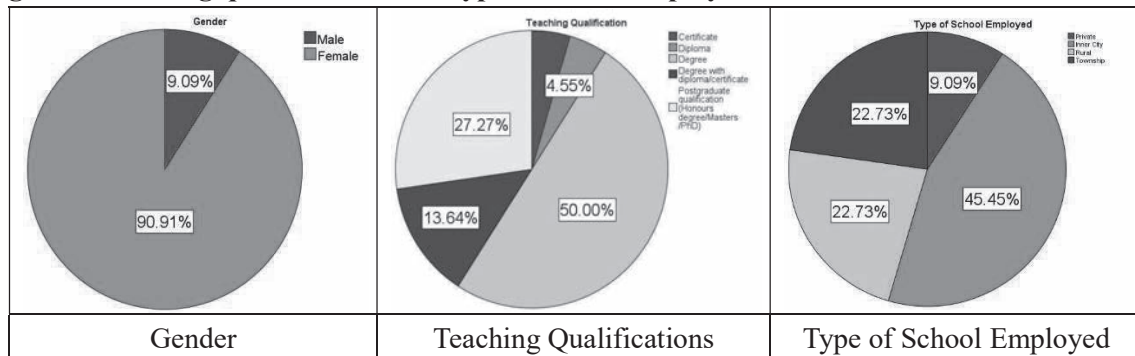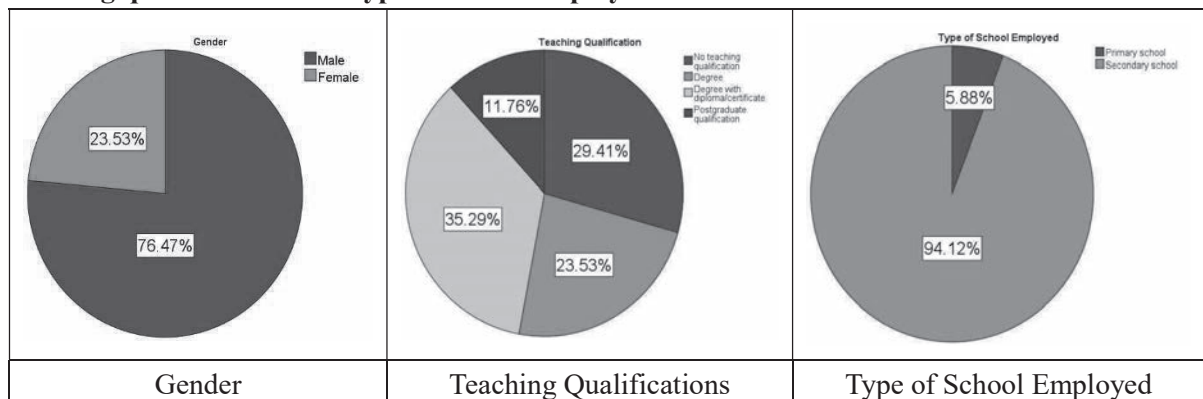
Figure 4: Distribution of South African novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

| Gender | Teaching Qualifications | Type of School Employed |

Out of 250 Thailand teachers who answered the questionnaires, 17 respondents are novice teachers. Majority of Thailand novice teachers in this study are males (76.5%). 29.4% of Thailand novice teachers in this study did not have a teaching qualification, while the remaining respondents hold at least a degree in teaching (Figure 5). The percentage of Thailand novice teachers in this study are distributed unequally in terms of the types of school-employed. 94.1% of secondary teachers dominating the fraction of the samples (Figure 5). Only minority of them are primary school teachers with the percentage values of 5.9% (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Distribution of Thailand novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

| Gender | Teaching Qualifications | Type of School Employed |

127 of Uganda teachers answered the questionnaire. It was found that the samples of Uganda novice teachers consist of 16 respondents. Half of the samples are female (50%), and half are male (50%), with a majority of the samples hold a certificate in teaching. Most of the Uganda novice teachers involved in this study teach at schools in the rural areas (86.7%) (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Distribution of Uganda novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

Gender	Teaching Qualifications	Type of School Employed

From the total of 320 Vietnamese teachers answered the questionnaire, it was found that the samples of Vietnamese novice teachers involved in this study are 307 respondents. Majority of novice teachers in this study are female novice teachers (81.29%) (Figure 7). Half of the Vietnamese novice teachers in this study hold postgraduate qualifications. 8.6% of the Vietnamese novice teachers in this study teach at schools in the inner city, followed by township (28.57%) and rural schools (62.13%) and a minority of the novice samples teach at private schools (0.66%) (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Distribution of Vietnam novice teachers as a sample of the study based on gender, teaching qualifications and type of school employed

Gender	Teaching Qualifications	Type of School Employed
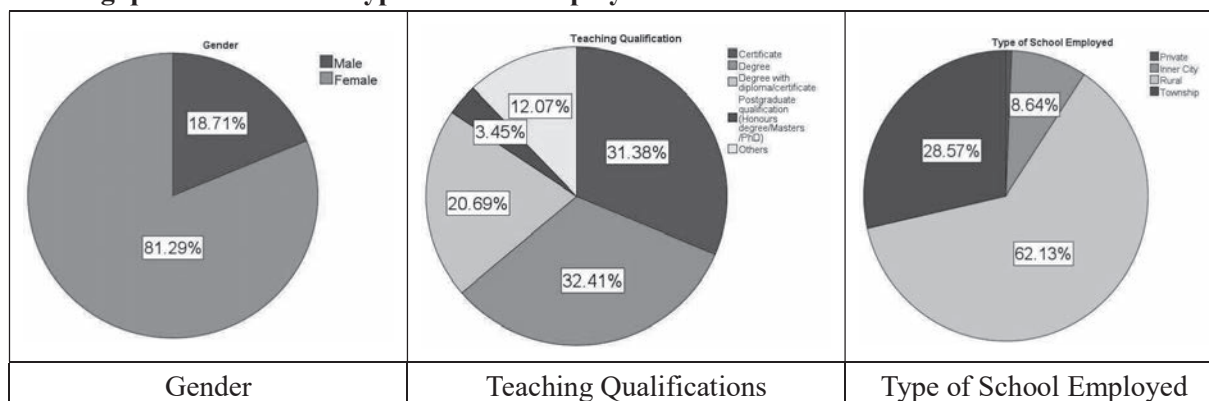
3. Results

Percentage analysis was utilized as a statistical technique to see the pattern of response among the novice teachers from Bangladesh, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam. The analysis was done separately for each country

3.1 Bangladesh

The highest percentage of 'Strongly Agree' response can be observed from item 2 which states that 'Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in a society' which reached 81.5%

response and 'Government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training' (54.0%) (Table 2). Other items are not as high as item 2 and item 12 in terms of choosing 'Strongly Agree', although other items still being chosen by more than half of the respondents as 'Agree'. Following items are chosen by more than half of the Bangladesh respondents as 'Agree': -

 i) I believe that education in my country has continuously improved (56.3%).

 ii) The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body (60.0%).

 iii) Teachers are valued by the government (63.6%).

 iv) The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school (69.4%)

 v) Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government (69.7%).

 vi) Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (57.8%).

There is a mixed opinion among Bangladesh novice teachers about the following statements as the respondents choosing 'Agree' and 'Disagree' are almost equal (Table 2): -

 i) Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (39.7% chooses 'Disagree' and 28.6% chooses 'Agree').

 ii) Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial) (43.3% chooses 'Disagree' and 40.3% chooses 'Agree').

There are two statements which show a pattern of response skewed to 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' (Table 2): -

 i) Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence (20.3% chooses 'Strongly Disagree' and 57.8% chooses 'Disagree').

 ii) If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party (20.0% chooses 'Strongly Disagree' and 46.2% chooses 'Disagree').

Table 2: Percentage response distribution involving Bangladesh novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	0	6.3	56.3	37.5
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	1.5	0	16.9	81.5
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	1.5	16.9	60.0	21.5
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	1.5	9.1	63.6	25.8
5.	Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	20.3	57.8	17.2	4.7
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	20.0	46.2	29.2	4.6
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	6.3	39.7	28.6	25.4

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	1.6	11.3	69.4	17.7
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	6.0	43.3	40.3	10.4
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	1.5	10.6	69.7	18.2
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	0	6.3	57.8	35.9
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0	1.6	44.4	54.0

3.2 Japan

It can be observed that more than half of the Japanese novice teachers involved in this study choose 'Agree' as their response towards the following statements (Table 3):

i) Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (60.6%).

ii) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (54.5%).

81% of Japanese novice teachers 'Strongly Disagree' with the view in the statement mentioning that 'If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party' (Table 3). However, there is a mixed opinion among Japanese novice teachers about the following statements as the number of respondents choosing 'Agree' and 'Disagree' are almost equal (Table 3):

i) Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society (36.4% chooses 'Disagree' and 36.4% chooses 'Agree').

ii) The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school (45.5% chooses 'Disagree' and 48.5% chooses 'Agree').

iii) Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (33.3% chooses 'Disagree' and 48.5% chooses 'Agree').

More than half of the Japanese novice teachers in this study disagree that "I believe that education in my country has continuously improved'. There are three statements which show a pattern of response skewed to 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' (Table 3): -

i) The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body. (63.6% chooses 'Strongly Disagree' and 24.2% chooses 'Disagree').

ii) Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence (45.2% chooses 'Strongly Disagree' and 45.2% chooses 'Disagree').

iii) Teachers are valued by the government (54.5% chooses 'Strongly Disagree' and 42.4% chooses 'Disagree').

Table 3: Percentage response distribution involving Japanese novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	9.1	63.6	24.2	3.0
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0	36.4	36.4	27.3
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	63.6	24.2	12.1	0
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	54.5	42.4	3.0	0
5.	Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	45.2	45.2	6.5	3.2
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	81.8	12.	6.1	0
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	3.0	33.3	48.5	15.2
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	0	45.5	48.5	6.1
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	3.0	66.7	24.2	6.1
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	3.0	54.5	39.4	3.0
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	0	33.3	60.6	6.1
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0	33.3	54.5	12.1

3.3 Malaysia

It was found that Malaysian novice teachers in this study have a tendency to choose a moderately positive response to most of the statements asked in the questionnaire (Table 4). Relatively, a higher percentage of the respondents rating 'Agree' for all the statements. However, none of 'Strongly Agree' response achieved more than 50%.   If the arrangement is made by looking at which item is rated most as 'Agree', it is noted that 'Teachers are valued by the government' has the highest percentage of 'Agree' response (70.5%), closely followed by 'Sufficient measures are provided to protect children at school (68.3%), 'Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government' (67.9%) and 'Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted' (67.8%). The results of the analysis of the other four items also showed more than 60% of the respondents choose 'Agree' (Table 4): -

    i)   Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (67.8%)

    ii)   Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial) (64.4%).

iii) Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (64.8%).

iv) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (64.1%).

Generally, the overall pattern of response indicates that Malaysian novice teachers in this study have an inclination to perceive their professional, social and organizational condition as moderately positive (Table 4).

Table 4: Percentage response distribution involving Malaysian novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	2.2	26.7	59.0	12.1
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0.6	1.6	56.2	41.6
3.	The school's governing body should not determine who is allowed into schools.	3.2	21.3	56.8	18.7
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	0.3	10.5	70.5	18.7
5.	Principals/headmasters are often appointed because of their seniority and not because of their competence.	2.2	26.4	58.0	13.4
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to actively participate in various activities.	1.6	13.0	66.7	18.7
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	0.3	13.1	67.8	18.8
8	Sufficient measures are provided to protect children at school.	0.6	5.4	68.3	25.7
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	1.3	16.2	64.4	18.1
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	1.3	20.3	67.9	10.5
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	1.0	9.8	64.8	24.4
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0.3	6.3	64.1	29.2

3.4 South Africa

Majority of the South African novice teachers in this study strongly agree that 'Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in a society'. This can be observed from the result which showed that 68.2% rate as 'Strongly Agree' and 22.7% rate as 'Agree' which bring to the total of 90.9% of agreement. Other statements which show a majority of respondents choosing 'Agree' as their response towards the following views:

i) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (77.3%)

ii)   Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government (63.6%)

iii) Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (63.6%).

However, the following statements did not obtain as high as other statements as the percentage value of respondents choosing 'Agree' is approximately 50%. Those statements are

i)   Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (54.5%)

ii)   Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial) (50.0%)

iii) The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school (54.5%).

54.5% of the respondents choose to rate 'Disagree' on the view about 'Principals are appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence' and 63.6% confess to 'Disagree' with the statement 'If you want to get promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party' (Table 5).

The respondents showed a tendency to disagree with the view about 'Government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body' as the result of the item analysis showed higher rating towards 'Strongly Disagree' (27.3%) and 'Disagree' (40.9%) compared to 'Agree' (27.3%) and 'Strongly Agree' (0%) (Table 5). However, there are mixed opinions among the respondents on the view about 'I believe that education in my country has continuously improved' due to the result of the analysis (36.4% as rated as 'Disagree' and 40.9% rated as 'Agree') (Table 5).

Table 5: Percentage response distribution involving South African novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	9.1	36.4	40.9	13.6
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0	9.1	22.7	68.2
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	27.3	40.9	27.3	4.5
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	22.7	18.2	59.1	0
5.	Principals are appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	9.1	54.5	31.8	4.5
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	9.1	63.6	13.6	13.6
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	0	22.7	63.6	13.6
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	9.1	27.3	54.5	9.1
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	9.1	22.7	50.0	18.2

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	0	31.8	63.6	4.5
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	0	36.4	54.5	9.1
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0	18.2	77.3	4.5

3.5 Thailand

Among all the items asked in the questionnaire to the Thailand novice teachers, the highest percentage of 'Strongly Agree' choice was exhibited in Item 2 which stated 'Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in a society' (52.9%) (Table 6). In fact, none of the respondents rated 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' for the same item. This indicates that Thailand novice teachers in this study totally agree with the view stated in Item 2. Majority of items did not exhibit a high percentage of 'Strongly Agree', but still indicated some level agreement but in a moderate manner as shown by the high percentage of 'Agree' response such as (Table 6): -

i)   I believe that education in my country has continuously improved (52.9%).

ii)   Teachers are valued by the government (58.8%)

iii)   Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (64.7%).

iv)   The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school (52.9%).

v)   Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial) (52.9%).

vi)   Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government (52.9%).

vii)   Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (58.8%).

viii) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (76.5%).

However, there is a mixed response towards the view about 'Government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body' as the difference of the percentages value between 'Disagree' (35.3%) and 'Agree' (47.1%) is not large (Table 6).

Table 6: Percentage response distribution involving Thai novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	0	29.4	52.9	17.6
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0	0	47.1	52.9
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	11.8	35.3	47.1	5.9
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	0	29.4	58.8	11.8
5.	Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	11.8	52.9	11.8	23.5
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	29.4	52.9	5.9	11.8
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	0	17.6	64.7	17.6
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	11.8	23.5	52.9	11.8
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	11.8	23.5	52.9	11.8
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	5.9	29.4	52.9	11.8
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	11.8	11.8	58.8	17.6
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0	11.8	76.5	11.8

3.6 Uganda

A high level of agreement can be interpreted on Item 2 as a majority of Uganda novice teachers rated 'Strongly Agree' for its statement (87.5%) (Table 7). Item 2 which stated that 'Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in a society' is the only item in the questionnaire which was highly rated as 'Strongly Agree' by the respondents.

Although other items were being agreed by the respondents, the level of agreement is at the moderate level as the higher percentage is accumulated at 'Agree' response compared to 'Strongly Agree' response. Those items that belong to the moderate level of an agreement are (Table 7): -

i)   Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (80.0% rated 'Agree'; and 13.3% rated 'Strongly Agree')

ii) Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government (60.0% rated 'Agree')

iii) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (53.3%% rated 'Agree and 33.3% rated 'Strongly Agree')

iv) I believe that education in my country has continuously improved (50.0% rated Agree and 37.5 % rated 'Strongly Agree').

v) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (50.0% rated Agree and 37.5 % rated 'Strongly Agree').

The distribution of types of response on Item 9 is found to be skewed to 'Disagree' (46.7%) and 'Strongly Agree' (13.3%). Therefore, Item 9 which stated that 'Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial' showed a moderate level of disagreement by the respondents (Table 7).

Table 7: Percentage response distribution involving Ugandan novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	0	12.5	50.0	37.5
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0	0	14.3	85.7
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	0	23.1	38.5	38.5
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	7.7	15.4	46.2	30.8
5.	Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	16.7	41.7	33.3	8.3
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	38.5	38.5	23.1	0
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	7.7	30.8	38.5	23.1
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	0	26.7	53.3	20.0
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	13.3	46.7	40.0	0
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	13.3	26.7	60.0	0
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	0	6.7	80.0	13.3
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	6.7	6.7	53.3	33.3

3.7 Vietnam

Most of the opinions in the item statements are moderately agreed by Vietnamese novice teachers involved in this study (Table 8). This can be interpreted based on a low percentage value of 'Strongly Agree' and high percentage value of 'Agree' response as observed at the following items

i) The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training (76.2% rated 'Agree' and 20.2% rated 'Strongly Agree').

ii) Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status (77.8% rated 'Agree' and 18.9% rated 'Strongly Agree').

iii) Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government (49.5% rated 'Agree' and 4.7% rated 'Strongly Agree').

iv) The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school (66.9% rated 'Agree' and 25.6% rated 'Strongly Agree').

v) Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted (68.9% rated 'Agree' and 16.9% rated 'Strongly Agree').

vi) Teachers are valued by the government (57.8% rated 'Agree' and 14.6% rated 'Strongly Agree').

vii) Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society (58.4% rated 'Agree' and 39.3% rated 'Strongly Agree').

viii) I believe that education in my country has continuously improved (64.6% rated 'Agree' and 32.1% rated 'Strongly Agree').

The pattern of response for the majority of items indicates the moderate level of agreement by the respondents about the positive condition of teachers in term of the professional, organization and social aspects. Moreover, they have a strong tendency to disagree with negative view in the statement which were exhibited in Item No. 5 and 6 as indicated by the total percentage values for 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' (Table 8): -

i) Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence (68.4% rated 'Disagree' and 20.7% rated 'Strongly Disagree').

ii) If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party (59.0% rated 'Disagree' and 30.5% rated 'Strongly Disagree').

Nevertheless, there are two items which can be classified as exceptional cases as indicated by a sign of mixed responses among the respondents. This is due to the reason that the percentage values of those items do not have a large difference between 'Agree' and 'Disagree' (Table 8):

i) The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body (42.7% rated 'Agree' and 40.4% rated 'Disagree')

ii) Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government. (49.5% rated 'Agree' and 43.1% rated 'Disagree')

Table 8: Percentage response distribution involving Vietnamese novice teachers as a sample of the study

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1.	I believe that education in my country has continuously improved.	0	3.3	64.6	32.1
2.	Education is the most suitable tool to achieve transformation in society.	0.3	2.0	58.4	39.3
3.	The government should determine who is allowed into schools and not the school's governing body.	7.6	40.4	42.7	9.3
4.	Teachers are valued by the government.	3.7	23.8	57.8	14.6
5.	Principals are often appointed because they know the right people and not because of their competence.	20.7	68.4	9.9	1.0

	Item Statement	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
6.	If you want to get a promotion, it is important to belong to the right political party.	30.5	59.0	8.2	2.3
7.	Education policies provide equal opportunities for teachers from all phases to be promoted.	1.3	12.9	68.9	16.9
8	The government provides sufficient measures to protect children at school.	0.7	6.9	66.9	25.6
9	Sufficient support structures are available for children who experience challenges (social/emotional/financial).	0	14.3	68.8	16.9
10	Sufficient support is provided for staff's capacity development by the Department of Education/government.	2.7	43.1	49.5	4.7
11	Nationally, teachers have an acknowledged professional status.	0	3.3	77.8	18.9
12	The government provides the opportunity of teachers participating in in-service training.	0	3.6	76.2	20.2

4. Implication and Conclusion

There has been a surge in the scientific research on teachers, as several different studies have highlighted the essential role teachers play in the quality and effectiveness of education systems (Hazri, Nordin, Reena & Abdul Rashid, 2011). A strong relationship is proven between student performance and the professionalism of teachers (Desimone, 2009; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss & Shapley, 2007), also supported by international comparative evidence (Wei, Andree, & Darling-Hammond, 2009).

This study is an extension of research collaboration under the Africa-Asia Dialogue (AAD) organization which is under the research strand of Teacher Professional Development. Relevancy of this study is significant in the context of research networking under AAD activity as there is no comparative study in the area of teacher professional identities; particularly in the context of developing countries in Asia and Africa. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the field of teacher education and professional development of teachers. This study is also in line with the development of the respective country's current education policy that focuses on increasing the professionalism and quality of teachers especially those who belong to the novice teachers' group.

On the other hand, the involvement of teachers in educational reform initiatives is reported to be a core component of real improvement in the quality of schooling, especially in the context of developing regions like South East Asia (Thair & Treagust, 2003), South Asia (Craig, Kraft & du Plessis, 1998) and Latin America (Tatto, 1997). Numerous promising national initiatives are found to have failed due to low commitment of teachers, along with the lack of communication and appreciation between educators and authorities, as documented in South Africa (Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson & Pillay, 2000; Johnson, Hodges & Monk, 2000), Botswana (Tabulawa, 1997), the Philippines (Kerrison, 1992) and the United Kingdom (Jenkins, 1995).

Acknowledgements

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