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**EXPLORING CONSTRAINTS ON AND SUPPORT FOR
QUALITY TEACHING AT A HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTION IN MALAYSIA**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education

at Massey University, Palmerston North,
New Zealand

Thaharah Hilaluddin
2013

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research, except where due acknowledgement is made, and it contains as its main content, work that has not previously been submitted for a degree of any tertiary education institution.

Thaharah Hilaluddin

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an exploratory case study of one institution of higher learning in Malaysia. Teachers' active involvement in a wide variety of quality activities raised concerns about their teaching quality. The literature review suggested that there was no universally accepted definition of quality teaching. There was also lack of a definition in Malaysian research studies and government reports. The aim of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of quality teaching at the case institution in order to better support the institution's quality assurance efforts. The research questions investigated the teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, the kinds of existing support they found helpful or needed enhancement, and the kinds of existing constraints that needed rectifying.

A mixed methods approach was employed comprising teacher and manager interviews, document analysis and a teacher survey to elicit themes relevant to the research questions. The key findings were that many teachers held transmission-based teaching perceptions although some student-centred perceptions were also evident. A major constraint on quality teaching was quality assurance activities that were drawing teachers' focus away from teaching. Other impediments included class size, poor student quality and inadequate resources. A major support for quality teaching was teaching-related courses that needed to be made more relevant for teachers of various levels of experience and provided in a more structured manner. Other kinds of support that needed enhancement included mechanisms to evaluate teaching, outcomes based education (OBE) curriculum transformation and a quality assurance framework related to OBE.

Recommendations were made for institution managers and professional developers including developing and promoting a systems framework that promotes and values quality teaching as of equal importance to quality research, developing a clear articulation of the institution's teaching philosophy, improving material resources, aligning all systems to support the shift to OBE, and providing professional development support that could expand teachers' conceptions of teaching. Findings from the case study were discussed against the backdrop of Malaysia's efforts to cope with global trends in higher education. Critical adaptation of Western concepts and the need to develop the nation's own idea of quality teaching were also discussed.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UGG	Universiti Gading Gemilang
DQA	Department of Quality Assurance
DPT	Department of Pedagogical Training
DHR	Department of Human Resource
DOP	Department of Organisational Planning
DVC	Department of Vice Chancellor
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
MOE	Ministry of Education, Malaysia
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
MAGNETIC	The Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council
AKEPT	<i>Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi</i> (Academy for Leadership in Higher Education)
OBE	Outcome-Based Education
NHESP	National Higher Education Strategic Plan
THES-QS	Times Higher Education Supplement-Quacquarelli Symonds
CUAP (NZ)	Committee on University Academic Programmes, New Zealand
AUQA (Australia)	Australian University Quality Agency
QAA (UK)	The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

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Chapter 1 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.0 Introduction to the study

This study began with the researcher's concern about teachers' opportunity to teach to their best ability at one institute of higher education in Malaysia. When the study commenced, the institution was undergoing rapid changes within a quality assurance environment. The researcher observed that the teachers were actively involved in a variety of quality-related activities to the point that teaching was not very much talked about in the general university setting. Comments about physical and mental exhaustion were often heard from the teachers. Also a cause for concern was students' complaints about teachers who did not turn up for class, were late, were teaching for less than the stipulated time, or were 'not teaching well'.

Amidst extensive institutional changes and quality campaigns, keywords often mentioned – more than teaching - were “services”, “customers”, “stakeholders” and “excellence”. Nonetheless, the academic staff played a major role in operationalising the quality-led changes. It left the researcher wondering how the teachers were coping with teaching amidst the changes and how serious the institution was about improving teaching within its quality framework.

This study sets out to explore one institution as a case study. It aims to find out teachers' perceptions of quality teaching and elements within the institutional context that helped or hindered quality teaching. The objective of this study is to find out ways to enhance the quality of teaching at the case institution, in the effort to support the overall institutional quality goals. In this chapter, the contextual background of the study is established. The sequence of the chapter is as follows: the contemporary global setting of higher education, an illustration of the Malaysian higher education context, the case study institution and the thesis focus – exploring quality teaching at the case institution.

1.1 Globalisation and the changing role of higher education

Globalisation has brought rapid changes in the world economy, political and social structures propelled by advancement in information and communication technology in the early 21st century. Sophisticated forms of communication and access to information have brought individuals, communities, institutions and nations closer together and increased the capacity to communicate, collaborate and integrate. The world has become virtually borderless with constant movement of capital, goods, labour and ideas amidst accelerated economic expansion (Bloom, 2005; Duderstadt, 2005; Salmi, 2002).

Duderstadt (2005) observe that the world industry has moved from being material- and labour-intensive to knowledge-intensive, with knowledge the key strategic resource for economic prosperity. Unlike in the past where a country's economy depended on natural resources, in the modern age of "soft revolution" knowledge is now the engine of economic growth (A. R. Ahmad et al., 2011, p. 13). It is a "valuable commodity" and an inexhaustible resource – the more it is used, the more it expands and multiplies (Duderstadt, 2005, p. 81). There is an increasing need to update knowledge and skills on a regular basis due to their short "shelf life" (Salmi, 2002, p. 27). There is the need to learn new things and unlearn what we used to know. Knowledge is constantly shaped and reshaped to suit the changing needs of the global community, constantly facing controversies and contestations (Scott, 2005). The university as an institution for generating and advancing knowledge, as well as for the preparation of skilled workforce, plays a key role in globalisation. Due to its direct contribution to a nation's economic prosperity, higher education today is considered as a "major national resource" (Skolnik, 2005, p. 111), a "centrepiece of the knowledge society" (Scott, 2005, p. 43) and the "centre for economic well-being" (Findlay & Tierney, 2010, p. 1). It is also the "knowledge centre" for research, science and critical debate (Van Damme, 2002, p. 23). It plays a central role in facilitating economic growth and sustainable human development.

Driven by the global changes discussed above, the role of university education itself has undergone massive transformations. In the past, the Humboldtian concept of universities as a scientifically research-led institution and the "traditional guardian of knowledge" is now no longer as rigid (Bloom, 2005, p. 28; Van Damme, 2002). The university today serves more of a utilitarian purpose as opposed to its age old idealistic tradition. Alongside knowledge- and market-driven economic expansion, the world is also becoming increasingly industrialised. As a result, employees from different training areas are forced to integrate and combine skills to overcome new challenges. They no longer work within the bounds of their specialist subjects but are valued for their ability to acquire new proficiencies and to adapt and be adept at coping with new challenges. People are now entering higher education at various stages of their lives for various reasons, including for personal enrichment and professional enhancement. Current university courses comprise new forms of knowledge and some programmes of study at present are promoting subject mix and inter-disciplinary integrations. According to Jones, McCarney and Skolnik (2005), the university today is no longer an institution that preserves knowledge, but is one that generates it. It is a place for developing innovative thinkers and problem solvers, able to respond to the ever-changing pace of globalisation. As higher education providers, universities have to strategise to respond to these global demands or be left behind.

In order to survive competition in the world market, developing nations are also quickly turning themselves into industrial nations, as well as improving their standards of higher education provision to match international standards. These countries now depend less on developed countries for higher education and skills training. On the contrary, knowledge and expertise, as well as higher education provision are exchanged across the globe, turning the old adage of “brain drain” - where local skills and talents are drawn away from their countries by the developed countries – to “brain exchange” (Bloom, 2005, p. 22; Findlay & Tierney, 2010). Van Damme (2002) observe the global situation of higher education,

...higher education will become one of the booming markets in the years to come. This expansion and massification will not be matched by a proportional rise in public expenditure, leading to an increase in private and commercial provision and creating huge problems of access and equity (p. 23).

Indeed, it is an industry in itself today (Skolnik, 2005) and one that is proliferating particularly for newly formed industrial nations. Various countries, including developing ones, are internationalising their higher education by expanding, privatising and diversifying their higher education provisions. The world today sees the emergence of virtual, for-profit and corporate universities. Internationalising higher education also includes adopting corporate models of quality assurance systems and developing transnational education systems (Findlay & Tierney, 2010; Gnanam, 2002). Corporate models involve establishing quality assurance frameworks within an institution and keeping close monitoring of the institution’s position in international ranking. Quality assurance is an issue of interest to this thesis as it is directly relevant to the thesis focus – quality teaching.

1.2 A brief historical overview of Malaysia’s strategic plans for higher education

In a brief history of the economic development of Malaysia three key national frameworks (Economic Planning Unit, 2006) are highlighted. The first national framework was the National Economic Policy (1971-1990), the second, the National Development Policy (1991-2000), and the third, the National Vision Policy (2001-2010). All these policies carry the objective of national unity, growth and equity. They culminate in the ultimate national vision called Vision 2020. It is a collective aspiration of the Malaysian nation to achieve the status of a fully-industrialised country by the year 2020. In 2006, fifteen years since the inception of Vision 2020 and half-way through the journey, the government of Malaysia introduced “The National Mission”. It is a 15-year plan that aims to strengthen the implementation of activities leading to Vision 2020. The strengthening plan is divided into three phases: the 9th Malaysia Plan (2006-

2010), the 10th Malaysia Plan (2011-2015) and the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020). There are five key thrusts which are (Economic Planning Unit, 2006):

- i) to move the economy up the value chain;
- ii) **to raise the capacity for knowledge and innovation and nurture first class mentality** [bold added];
- iii) to address socio-economic inequalities constructively;
- iv) to improve the standard and sustainability of the quality of life; and
- v) to strengthen the institutional and implementation capacity.

The second key thrust (in bold) is one that has direct implications for higher education. In the effort to raise the capacity for knowledge and innovation and nurture first class mentality, the ultimate goal for higher education institutions as stipulated in the plan, is to provide education of international standard. This marks a revolutionary transformation in the Malaysian higher education scene. Following this, under the *Ninth Malaysia Plan*, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP) was launched on August the 27th, 2007. A documented report on NHESP is contained in the *National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010*. NHESP has four distinct phases (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2007a, p. 6):

- Phase 1 : Laying the Foundation (2007-2010)
- Phase 2 : Strengthening and Enhancement (2011-2015)
- Phase 3 : Excellence (2016-2020)
- Phase 4 : Glory and Sustainability (beyond 2020)

Malaysia had only recently passed the first phase - “laying the foundation”. During this period, the country was aggressively establishing the base for a strong higher education system. Like many other developing countries that were responding to globalisation, Malaysia began by reviewing the positions of its best national universities in world rankings.

Following the call for international benchmarking, there was a period of alarm for Malaysia in the year 2007 when most of its major public universities were found to have less than impressive international standing. The THES-QS World University Rankings 2007 showed that the highest position for Malaysia was at the 246th position occupied by Universiti Malaya, while the other positions in descending order were the 307th , the 309th and the 364th positions occupied by Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, and Universiti Putra Malaysia respectively (University rankings: Measuring mortarboards, 2007). The most alarming news was that all these universities dropped to lower positions than the ranking in the previous year. The alarm intensified especially when Universiti Malaya - Malaysia’s oldest and top public university – was found to have continued to drop by 167 positions between the years 2004 and 2007. Table 1.1 illustrates the performance of major public universities in Malaysia in THES-QS World University Ranking 2007 between the years 2004 and 2007:

Table 1.1: The positions of Malaysian public universities in THES-QS World University Ranking 2007

Name of university	Years of ranking			
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Universiti Malaya	89	169	192	246
Universiti Sains Malaysia	111	326	277	307
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	*	288	185	309
Universiti Putra Malaysia	*	393	292	364

Note: * indicates that these universities were not included in THES-QS ranking 2004.

Adapted from (University rankings: Measuring mortarboards, 2007)

Though THES ranking is debated to be heavily weighted on research (Nata, 2005; University rankings: Measuring mortarboards, 2007), it was nevertheless, evidence of the status of Malaysian higher education universities against world standards.

In order to guide the monumental task of achieving the top 100 status, the Malaysian government consulted the World Bank and commissioned a joint report with the Economic Planning Unit at the Prime Minister’s department (Economic Planning Unit & The World Bank, 2007). The report, called *Malaysia and the Knowledge Economy: Building a World-Class Higher Education System*, was released in March 2007. The World Bank-Economic Planning Unit Report 2007 highlighted the scale of the task in providing world class education. Unlike quality education that implies meeting internationally accepted criteria and standards for academic programmes and educational experiences, “world class” education implies “achieving a much higher threshold of quality where academic programmes and outputs are measured relative to a league of very elite institutions” (Economic Planning Unit & The World Bank, 2007, p. 137). Although setting local standards against ‘ivy league’ institutions may seem far-reaching, it was felt necessary for international benchmarking. The report further highlighted some limitations for Malaysian higher education to overcome, all of which pointed to the direction of stepping up the quality of its higher education systems and the preparation of its human capital. The limitations to overcome were (Economic Planning Unit & The World Bank, 2007, p. xiv):

- i) needed improvements in governance and financing, to achieve greater autonomy, stronger accountability mechanisms, and a unified higher education system,
- ii) quality concerns; including sufficient number of faculty with high credentials and a disjointed quality assurance system,
- iii) relevance and graduate unemployment problems, and
- iv) a disjointed research and innovation system, with weak private sector demand for R&D and weak university-industry linkages.

It was suggested that the Malaysian government began with a mutually agreed upon definition of quality and to determine the indicators that would be used to measure quality and academic performance at world class level. It was also suggested that the Malaysian government develop a capacity to compile and analyse data on all aspects of higher education. For this reason, like most other developing countries, Malaysia began its first steps in improving its higher education system by establishing its national quality assurance system frameworks.

1.3 The Malaysian higher education quality assurance systems

Williams (1993) suggests that quality assurance came into higher education when the world faced economic crisis in the mid-1980s. It was a corporate culture borrowed from the total quality management movements in business organisations (Houston, 2002; Rao Tummala & Tang, 1996; Sallis, 2002). In the midst of stringent budget cuts, the higher education authorities in the United Kingdom and the United States took measures to allocate funds to universities that could best prove their nations to be providing quality education in a cost-efficient manner. In the early 1990s, quality assurance became the dominant management ideology for other OECD countries in their attempt to respond to globalisation pressures that, among many other effects, resulted in mass education. As agents of globalisation, these OECD countries established a global model of quality that entails internal and external modes of assessment (Henry, Lingard, Rizvi, & Taylor, 2001). Due to the interconnectedness of social, political and economic networking in the globalised world, non-OECD member countries namely India, South Africa, Singapore, Indonesia as well as Malaysia has to conform to international practices and adopt, as well as adapt, international quality assurance frameworks in order to remain competitive in the world market. This need is made even more necessary with efforts in internationalising higher education discussed previously. The rise of private institutions and joint partnerships with foreign higher education institutions constitute the need for streamlining higher education quality.

At the start of this study, there were in Malaysia a total of 20 public universities and 32 private universities and university colleges, not to mention branch campuses abroad, and community colleges (Economic Planning Unit, 2006). At the time of writing, the number of public universities remains at 20, while the number of private universities that are recognised has reduced to 26. There are also 405 public skills training institutes, as well as 584 private skills training institutions (Economic Planning Unit, 2010). In addition, the forms of private postsecondary providers today are more diversified (Tierney, 2010). With such diverse types of provisions, quality monitoring and streamlining is crucial. Prior to the *Ninth Malaysia Plan*, the activities and regulations of higher education institutions in Malaysia were monitored by two

separate bodies - The National Accreditation Board, which was established in 1996, was responsible for quality monitoring at private institutions, and Quality Assurance Division at Ministry of Education which was established later in 2001 and was in charge of overseeing the public universities (Ministry of Education, 2007). With separate authorities undertaking the same task, measures of quality standards were not unified. The gap between the public and private universities also resulted in lack of both collaboration and competitiveness. Following the *World Bank-EPU Report 2007*, both the quality monitoring bodies were officially merged on the 1st of November 2007 to create the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2008). MQA emulates the function of the Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) in New Zealand, the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA) in Australia and The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in the United Kingdom. It is now recognised as the sole responsible body that is entrusted with carrying out the Malaysian Quality Framework (MQF) under the *Ninth Malaysia Plan*. All higher education institutions in Malaysia are now answerable to MQA audit as the quality assurance agent external to the institution.

The following discussion proceeds with Malaysian perspective on workforce quality and how it influences the choice of curriculum at higher education. This in turn has direct implications for classroom teaching and learning and perceptions of quality teaching.

1.4 Malaysia's perspectives on workforce quality and higher education curriculum support

Malaysia's Philosophy of National Education contains an expression of goals of producing citizens who are

intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. para. 4).

This philosophy, which was introduced in 1989, remains the basis for Malaysia's education transformation efforts. Its central core is the Malaysian values and ethics which are thought to be "critical building blocks" towards achieving Vision 2020 (Economic Planning Unit, 2010, p. 196).

The *Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006-2010* extended the national education philosophy by stressing the importance of developing holistic human capital with high ethics, moral and spiritual values

under the umbrella slogan of “*Islam Hadhari*”. It was a progressive outlook for a multi-cultural society focusing on the concept of tolerance, moderation and sense of belonging to the nation. Programmes to nurture the values were integrated into various education levels. The effort was extended into classroom teaching and learning with expected modes of presentation that utilised an “affective rather than a cognitive approach” (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2007a, p. 26), with team discussions and active student participation in order to foster the development of leadership, team work and inter-personal qualities. Alongside it, with a relatively smaller focus was the plan to develop knowledge workers who are “competitive, flexible, dynamic and performance-oriented” (Economic Planning Unit, 2006, p. 259).

In the current *Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015*, the concept of *Islam Hadhari* and holistic human capital is replaced with strategies projected at developing a high-income nation and keywords like “productivity-led growth”, “innovation-led growth”, “partnerships” and “skills training”. This focus is further emphasised in the latest description of the country’s desired workforce which stresses the production of

a critical mass of knowledge workers such as scientists, engineer, patent agents and ‘technopreneurs’...who are able to create, innovate and exploit new ideas as well as apply and develop technologies (Economic Planning Unit, 2010, p. 223)

With regards to education, the strategic thrust that is directly related in the *Tenth Malaysia Plan* is theme five – “developing and retaining a first-world talent base”. Under this theme, a wider focus is given to revamping the education system and improving student outcome at primary school level, including revising teacher recruitment programmes. As for tertiary education, focus for improvement is on technical and vocational training (TVET), upgrading soft skills curricula and strengthening the performance culture in universities. This marked change in thematic focus and higher education strategies demonstrates a more determined plan towards realising the goal of becoming a fully-industrialised nation as the year 2020 draws closer. The emphasis on TVET for tertiary education is due to the findings that at the end of the last economic plan, 77% of the workforce received only 11 years of basic education at the Malaysian Certificate of Education (MCE) level while only 28% of Malaysian jobs were in the higher skilled bracket (Economic Planning Unit, 2010, p. 193).

A framework for strengthening or enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the overall education system is not found in the *Tenth Malaysia Plan*. However, there exists a national body that is devoted to resolving teaching and learning issues at higher education called the Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council (MAGNETIC). One function is to propose a formation of teaching and learning standard and policy and to provide advice to the

Ministry of Higher Education on teaching and learning matters (The Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council (MAGNETIC), 2011).

Information related to quality teaching and learning and the perception of Malaysian higher education institutions was sought. Research revealed that studies on outcome-based education (OBE) were emerging (Mansor et al., 2008; Mohammad, Tapsir Ahmad Kamal Idris, Kamsah, Abu, & Abu Hassan, 2008). Paper presentations at MAGNETIC meetings also illustrated this emphasis (Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council & Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi, 2011). It was also found that the OBE approach to teaching and learning was currently being implemented in at least five universities in Malaysia, mostly at Engineering faculties as a starting point (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Mohammad et al., 2008; Noor et al., 2009; Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2010; Universiti Teknologi MARA, 2012).

The adoption of OBE in Malaysian universities follows the requirement by the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM) which registers graduates and professional engineers under the Registration of Engineers Act 1967 (revised in 2002) and is thus responsible for ensuring that their registered engineers meet global standards. The Engineering Accreditation Council is a body entrusted to accredit engineering programmes in institutes of higher learning in Malaysia (Board of Engineers Malaysia, 2010). With its focus on learning outcomes, graduate attributes, and stakeholder-driven curriculum, OBE is seen as having the potential to support the aspirations of developing an industrialised nation. Not surprisingly, with regards to teaching and learning, professional development units of these universities revealed perceptions of quality teaching that were OBE-based (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Mohammad et al., 2008; Noor et al., 2009; Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2010; Universiti Teknologi MARA, 2012).

As a final thought to this section, the lack of concrete strategies for improving teaching at higher education in both the *Ninth* and the *Tenth Malaysia Plans* is concerning to the researcher. A contrasting example is Australia as a country with strong quality teaching system framework at higher education. Its framework comprises nationally standardised quality and codes of teaching and learning practices, as well as national level research projects that investigate, assess, evaluate, and monitor teaching practices and learning outcomes. These projects serve to further develop and enhance teaching and learning practices across the country (Chalmers, 2008; Chalmers & Thomson, 2009). In relation to OBE and Malaysia's market-driven education goals, Malaysia could benefit from national-level interests in investigating, evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness of OBE teaching/learning practices and curriculum

implementations starting from some existing small scale studies (Aziz, Megat Mohd Noor, Abang Ali, & Jaafar, 2005; Zaharim, Yuzainee, Mohd Zaidi, Azah, & Norhamidi, 2006). Since OBE appears to be the current teaching and learning tertiary setting, concrete strategies to develop and enhance quality teaching of mutually agreed national standards within this setting might be actively sought.

The following section introduces the case study institution and its quality assurance setting leading into the thesis focus on quality teaching.

1.5 Universiti Gading Gemilang (UGG): Quality assurance contexts and the concern for quality teaching

To protect the identity of the institution, a pseudonym is used for this research project. Universiti Gading Gemilang (UGG) began as a training institute for a corporate company. It became a full-fledged university in the later 1990s under the Private Higher Educational Institutions Act, 1996 (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2007b; Universiti Gading Gemilang, 2010b). Focusing on three major disciplinary areas, UGG falls into the category of private specialised university in the 2009 Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education Institutions, better known as “SETARA ’09”. More than a decade since its establishment, UGG is now currently placed at the fourth of six tiers or “very good” with the sixth tier being “outstanding” (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2010).

UGG began to formally embark on quality assurance efforts when it set up the Department of Academic Quality Assurance in 2005. It was later given a broader scope of responsibilities and was re-named the Department of Quality Assurance (DQA) in 2006 (Universiti Gading Gemilang, 2010b). DQA in close partnership with the Department of Organisational Planning (DOP) is responsible for the drafting and delivering of rigorous quality assurance activities that was carried out between the years 2006 to 2007, and is still continuing up to the moment of writing. Most of the quality assurance efforts were corporate-driven namely *Anugerah Kualiti Presiden* (Presidential Quality Award) and *Anugerah Kualiti Industri Perdana Menteri* (Prime Minister’s Industrial Quality Award). One institutional quality initiative that is in motion with the *National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP)* and the most current *Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015* is *UGG10*. It was UGG’s aspiration to become an excellent service provider by the year 2010.

The pressures of NHESP and UGG10, coupled with the case study institution’s for-profit nature and the need for it to stand out in the national and the global market creates a tension in the institution’s quality assurance efforts. The tensions are between (i) providing service

functions and academic functions, (ii) expanding the system and improving quality, and (iii) achieving the corporate goal and the national goal. In the midst of rigorous activities to achieve total quality, it is easy to lose sight of the primary function of the university - teaching and learning. It is easy for the senior management to forget those at the “coal-face” of higher education teaching and research (R. N. Johnson & Deem, 2003).

Developed countries in the Western sphere have undergone two decades of establishing and implementing quality assurance efforts at higher education. Experiences from these countries have revealed that implementing quality assurance frameworks has more often than not, ended up focusing on performance-based standards, quality audit procedures and practices, international ranking standards and a heavy bias towards research rather than teaching (Blackmore, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Harvey & Newton, 2007; Newton, 2000). The lack of real impact on teaching is noted by Harvey (2005) and Biggs (2001). Some studies have reported how the academics’ concerns for quality teaching were not taken into consideration and their values in preserving it were compromised (Anderson, 2006; Watty, 2003). Indeed, it was observed that rigorous quality enhancement activities were putting teaching in the backseat. The teachers were found to be struggling with managing teaching in between quality activities that demand their time and energy at work. This observation led to the researcher’s concern for the quality of teaching at the institution as a whole.

Watty (2003) claims that the fundamental question in quality-led change initiative in higher education is: “How do academics conceive quality in higher education?” (p. 215). Investigating how teachers in an institution perceive quality teaching will reveal whether the teachers’ perceptions of quality are in line with the institution’s perceptions (Hodson & Thomas, 2003; Watty, 2003). The researcher believes that establishing the teachers’ current perceptions on quality teaching paves the way to more immediate and relevant teaching enhancement initiatives in order to provide better support for the overall institutional quality contexts.

Further, writers like Skelton (2005, 2007) and Filippakou and Tapper (2008) stress the need for academic-led changes with the teachers being the active driving force behind institutional quality assurance. Also, part of the discourse on quality teaching is the focus on encouraging teachers to articulate their teaching philosophies as the first step towards improving not only the quality of teaching but also, the quality of learning (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Norton, Richardson, Hartley, Newstead, & Mayes, 2005; Pratt, 1998; Ramsden, 2003; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). Based on all these justifications and the concern for the quality of teaching within UGG’s quality assurance context, the primary aim of this research investigation is to explore UGG teachers’ perceptions of quality teaching.

1.6 Research objectives, research questions and significance of the study

The objectives of the study are premised on Biggs's (2001) idea of prospective quality assurance and a reflective institution – one that constantly reflects on its own espoused theory in teaching, establishes a strong system that supports the delivery of the espoused theory, and removes impediments that hinder its delivery of espoused theory. With this comprehensive idea of an institution's quality context, the researcher believes that beyond investigating the institution's espoused theory in teaching (starting from the teachers), investigating its support systems for teaching provides a more complete picture of the case study setting.

The objectives of the study are:

- i) to explore teachers' perceptions of quality teaching at UGG;
- ii) to explore institutional perceptions of quality teaching at UGG;
- iii) to find out if the teachers' perceptions are aligned with the institution's perceptions;
- iv) to investigate contextual influences in the teachers' teaching contexts that might help shape these perceptions; and
- v) to explore how these contextual influences might affect quality teaching practices.

To begin investigating the institution's espoused theory, and to find out if the teachers' ideas of quality teaching are in line with the institution's ideas, the first research question is:

1. How do teachers in the case study institution perceive quality teaching?

Once the perceptions of quality teaching at the institution are identified, the next step is to find out elements in the teachers' teaching context that affect quality teaching. It is important to find out issues the teachers are facing so that constraints to quality teaching can be reduced or removed. The kinds of helpful support or those that need enhancement also require exploring. The research questions are:

2. What kinds of existing support for teaching do the teachers find helpful in delivering quality teaching?
3. What kinds of existing constraints are there which impede the teachers' delivery of quality teaching?
4. What kinds of support for teaching do the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided?

The significance of this study is follows:

i) institutional mission

In this study, the researcher hopes to explore perceptions and identify issues in quality teaching at a Malaysian university through the teachers' first-hand experiences and based on opinions of the institutional management. Information gathered will potentially contribute to improvement and enhancement efforts of UGG's strategies in achieving its mission, amidst quality assurance efforts.

ii) national mission

The researcher also situates this study in the Malaysian higher education context. Identifying issues in quality teaching within quality assurance systems at a higher education institution might reveal potential problems in classroom teaching and learning, as well as within the institutional context. Information gathered in this study may provide illumination into the current issue of graduate lack of competence and achieving the national mission (Economic Planning Unit, 2010).

iii) research on higher education in the globalised world

The researcher also aims to position this study against a more global backdrop. Information gained from this study may add to the existing literature on developing nations coping with issues and challenges of globalisation in the higher education sector.

iv) discourse on quality teaching

Finally, the Malaysian perspectives on quality teaching may add an Asian dimension to the existing literature that is predominantly Western.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has set the contextual background to this study, both international and national. At the international level, the impact of globalisation and market changes on transforming higher education have been introduced. These changes have affected developing countries, forced to respond to global challenges in keeping with international market. One major outcome is the interest in world class rankings and quality-led initiatives at Malaysian higher education

institutions. Such interests in international benchmarking standards can have adverse effects on teachers and quality teaching. Exploring the notion of quality teaching amidst these quality-led changes is the main focus of this research investigation. Research objectives and research questions have been outlined. The following chapter explores quality teaching in the international literature.

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter establishes the theoretical grounding for and the conceptualisation of quality teaching in the contemporary higher education setting. Literature on institutional and system support for quality teaching is also reviewed. It is to be noted that most of the literature reviewed in this chapter are Western literature due to material accessibility and availability. Some ideas may not fit into the Malaysian context.

2.1 Conceptualising quality teaching

This section reviews the conceptualisations of quality teaching found in current literature. It discusses elements involved when thinking about and discussing quality teaching in contemporary higher education contexts.

2.1.1 Studies of quality teaching

There is an immense amount of literature written on quality teaching, which is a large part of a discourse on the quality of education. Due to the subjective and relative nature of quality (Harvey & Green, 1993) and the complex nature of teaching (Ramsden, 2003), quality teaching cannot be defined in a few sentences. There is an endless list of what characterises quality teaching. Numerous studies have sought to build on this list in order to find out what constitutes the concept. Quality teaching has been constituted in terms of *principles* (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kember, Ma, & McNaught, 2006), *dimensions* (Allan, Clarke, & Jopling, 2009; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Hativa, Barak, & Simhi, 2001; Wimberly, Faulkner, & Moxley, 1978), *themes* (Ng, 2004; Pratt, Kelly, & Wong, 1999), *characteristics* (Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004; Onwuegbuzie, Witcher, Collins, Filer, & Moore, 2007; Siraj & Ishak, 2006), *attributes* (Hattie, 2002; Voss & Gruber, 2006), *qualities* (Axelrod, 2007), and *guidelines* (AVCC, 2006). These research writers have taken quality teaching to be synonymous with *good teaching*, *effective teaching* and *excellent teaching*.

Among the above studies, ten specifically investigated students' and teachers' perceptions of quality teaching. They revealed six dimensions that make up quality teaching. The following table summarises the dimensions and their characteristics.

Table 2.1: Six dimensions of quality teaching

	Dimensions	Characteristics	Literature
1	Preparation for teaching	Has strong command of foundation knowledge, has passion for subject, is up-to-date with literature in the discipline, plans and structures teaching well.	(Dunkin, 2002; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Kane et al., 2004; Kember et al., 2006; Ng, 2004; Pratt et al., 1999; Siraj & Ishak, 2006; Wimberly et al., 1978)
2	Execution of teaching	Possesses strong communication skills, clear and organised content presentation, is well-prepared to teach, has the ability to improve students' understanding, raises students' interest in the subject, gives new viewpoints, helps students to evaluate new information, promotes class discussion, exposes students to conflicting theories, develops sophisticated beliefs, conducts collaborative learning.	(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Hativa et al., 2001; Kane et al., 2004; Kember et al., 2006; Ng, 2004; Wimberly et al., 1978)
3	Teacher-student relationships	Respects students' points of view, has sense of empathy for their learning difficulties, strikes a balance between being authoritative and showing care, has good listening skills, respects student diversities in learning approaches, abilities, and talents, helps students appreciate their own values.	(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Hativa et al., 2001; Kane et al., 2004; Ng, 2004; Pratt et al., 1999; Siraj & Ishak, 2006; Wimberly et al., 1978)
4	Student motivation	Makes lessons enjoyable, encourages students to participate in class, encourages students to go beyond their expectations, compliments them when expectations are met.	(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Kember et al., 2006; Ng, 2004; Pratt et al., 1999; Wimberly et al., 1978)
5	Student assessment	Uses a variety of assessment methods, clarifies assessment expectations, provides immediate and meaningful feedback, suggests ways to improve, points out students' errors.	(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kember et al., 2006; Ng, 2004; Pratt et al., 1999; Wimberly et al., 1978)
6	Evaluation of teaching	Researches one's own teaching, engages in the scholarship of teaching.	(Kane et al., 2004)

The dimensions of quality teaching identified from these ten studies create an almost complete idea of what constitutes good teaching starting from the act of planning teaching, executing it, ensuring learning in the process, assessing learning and finally, assessing one's own teaching. The characteristics described under each dimension are not all mentioned due to limited space. They also do not exclusively belong to the assigned categories since some overlapped with, or were also mentioned under different headings. This shows that there are endless ways to conceptualise the idea of quality teaching, as there is an endless list of what constitutes it. It stresses the fact that teaching is a very complex and multi-layered activity. Although these studies are a selected few out of a wealth of studies on quality teaching, they have a wide time range and comprise both students' and teachers' perspectives, as well as both Asian and Western studies. This further suggests that despite being an elusive concept, there are common denominators for quality teaching that transcend time and place. As noted by Axelrod (2007)

from his review of the history of good teaching in universities and colleges, “I contend that common elements of good teaching do transcend time, place, discipline and institutional type” (p. 1).

Quality teaching has also been explored at deeper and broader conceptual levels. Underlying the list of what constitutes quality teaching is a complex web of inter-related studies that draw together theories in teaching and learning, the higher education environment and education in general. Added to the contemporary discussion are ongoing studies on teacher thinking (for example, Hativa & Goodyear, 2002), teaching approaches in relation to learning approaches (for example, Ramsden, 2003) the nexus between teaching and research (for example, Healey, 2005a), curriculum and systems reform (for example, Harden, 2007), as well as the wider global phenomenon of quality assurance at higher education which has dramatically transformed the ways people perceive quality teaching (for example, Skelton, 2005, 2007). Such discussions acknowledge the complex conceptualisation of quality teaching. Quality teaching is suggested to be related to a wide range of factors within the environment and the systems (for example, D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005). It is also related to human factors, mainly the learners and ultimately the teachers themselves (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Ramsden, 2003). As noted by a prominent figure in the literature of teaching and learning, “teaching in the real world is always messy, unpredictable and sensitive to context” (Ramsden, 2003, p. 162).

Quality teaching is also suggested to be a value-laden and contested concept rather than a foreclosed debate, always critically examined in view of available discourses, goals and purposes of education, as well as assumed positions (Skelton, 2005; Tennant, McMullen, & Kazcynski, 2010). As such, the concept of quality teaching is one that is dynamic and is constantly evolving over time as its discourse continues to advance.

The following sections explore the complex web that underlies the concept of quality teaching in the contemporary higher education setting. The complexity includes the consideration of theories related to multiple perspectives on teaching, qualitative variations in teaching, teacher thinking, research and teaching nexus, as well as effective support a learning institution could provide.

2.1.2 Broadening perspectives on quality teaching

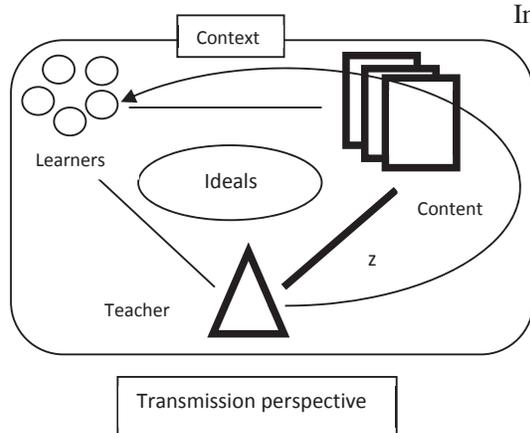
One very important assumption about quality teaching is that there is no one best way to teach. Psacharapoulos (1995) stated that there is no one single standard to go by, while Pratt (1998) stressed that there is no one universal and best perspective on teaching. Ramsden (2003)

posited that teaching is “too complicated and personal a business for a single strategy to be right for everybody and every discipline” (p. 85). Kember, Ma and McNaught (2006) added that in coming up with one single standard of quality teaching, the concept will be reduced to a “factory model” that is value-free, which does not do justice to teaching given its context-dependent nature.

In his notable book entitled *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education*, Pratt (1998) wrote,

adult and higher education are pluralistic in purpose and procedure, in context and in content, and in regard for what is considered effective teaching. Such diversity compels us to think broadly when considering what teaching means (p. 4).

The five perspectives in teaching in higher education offered by Pratt are: (i) transmission perspective, (ii) developmental perspective, (iii) nurturing perspective, (iv) apprenticeship perspective and (v) social reform perspective. These perspectives stem from a “General Model of Teaching” that contains five elements: the teacher, the learner, the subject content, the teaching-learning context and the teacher’s ideals. The teacher’s ideals are central to every perspective. They comprise a set of beliefs about and intentions in teaching that guide a teacher’s actions or personal judgments about what is right and wrong, or effective and ineffective in teaching. The following figures show the five perspective types and how a teacher’s ideals in each influence what elements are emphasised.



In the Transmission perspective, the dominant elements are the teacher and the content; the dominant relationship is represented by line z. A teacher with this perspective places emphasis on content delivery. The teacher’s primary responsibility is to deliver accurate content for the learners to receive and reproduce.

Figure 2.1: Transmission perspective

Adapted from Pratt, D.D. (1998). *Five perspectives in adult and higher education*. Malabar, FL: Kreiger, p.40

In the Developmental perspective, the focus is on the learner and the dominant relationship is between the learner and the content, represented by line x . From this perspective, the teacher's primary concern is to cultivate in the learners, desired ways of thinking within a discipline. The teacher aims to challenge learners' prior knowledge and encourage them to reconstruct their current understanding in order to develop new ways of understanding the discipline.

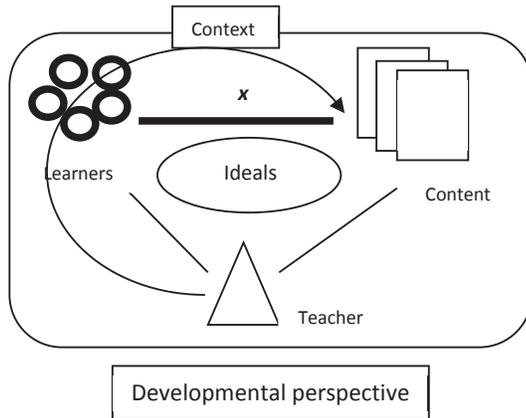


Figure 2.2: Developmental perspective

Adapted from Pratt, D.D. (1998). Five perspectives in adult and higher education. Malabar, FL: Kreiger, p. 46

In the Nurturing perspective, the dominant elements are the teacher and the learner and the emphasised relationship is particularly between the two, represented by line y . Teaching from this perspective takes on the belief that learning is affected by learners' confidence in themselves. A nurturing type of teacher aims to strike a balance between empathy and challenge; providing encouragement and support to develop high learners' self-concept and at the same time, place achievable and meaningful expectations for them.

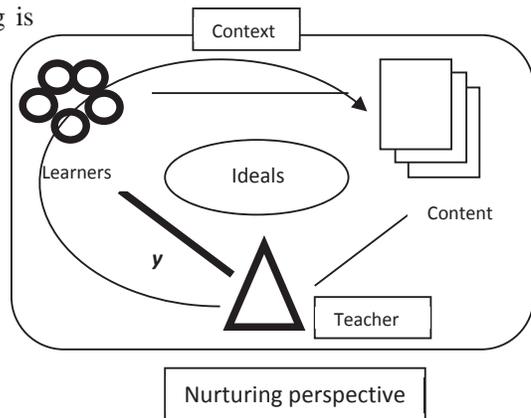


Figure 2.3: Nurturing perspective

Adapted from Pratt, D.D. (1998). Five perspectives in adult and higher education. Malabar, FL: Kreiger, p. 49

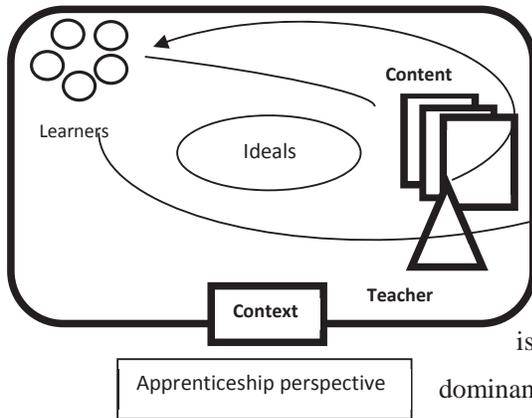


Figure 2.4: Apprenticeship perspective

Adapted from Pratt, D.D. (1998). *Five perspectives in adult and higher education*. Malabar, FL: Kreiger, p. 43

The focus of the Apprenticeship perspective is primarily on modelling ways of being. The dominant elements are the teacher, the content and the context. Most important in this perspective is the fact that the teacher and the content are fused into one, suggesting inseparability. The apprenticeship teacher embodies the knowledge and values of the community of the disciplinary practice embedded within its context. In other words, the teacher aims to provide learning experience that is as close as possible to situations in the learners' future career, including modelling ways of thinking and problem-solving unique to the discipline. The primary aim is transferability of learned skills.

Finally, the Social Reform perspective rests on the belief that teaching is ideological, thus the dominating element is the teacher's ideals or beliefs. Instead of assuming neutral personal and epistemic positions, the social reform teacher brings into teaching their social, cultural, political or moral stance, promoting learning that changes the society. The focus of teaching is at a macro level rather than micro, encouraging learners to take on active roles in the community beyond the learning environment rather than focusing on the development of the individual learner. Teaching is considered successful when the learner is able to make an impact in the society.

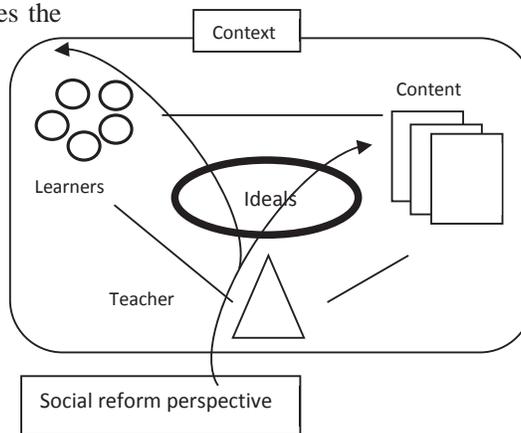


Figure 2.5: Social Reform perspective

Adapted from Pratt, D.D. (1998). *Five perspectives in adult and higher education*. Malabar, FL: Kreiger, p. 51

These varieties of teaching perspectives prevent us from limiting our perception about the best way to teach. They encourage us to broaden our view when we consider the meaning of effective teaching; there is no one best way to teach. Pratt's multiple perspectives in teaching can be compared with several other frameworks for looking at teaching. This is because the way a teacher looks at teaching has a lot to do with the way they conceptualise the elements

involved in their teaching contexts such as how students learn and how knowledge is constructed.

2.1.3 Levels of teaching and relationships with learning quality

Two other prominent frameworks for looking at teaching are Ramsden’s (2003) ‘University Teachers’ Theories of Teaching’ and Biggs and Tang’s (2007) ‘Levels of Thinking about Teaching’. These two frameworks are hierarchical levels of teaching from the least desirable to the most desirable rather than multiple perspectives in teaching. They are very similar and can thus be discussed together. Table 2.2 provides a summary of the theories.

Table 2.2: Levels of teaching

University teachers’ theories of teaching (Ramsden, 2003, pp. 108-112)	Levels of thinking about teaching (Biggs & Tang, 2007, pp. 16-19)
<p>Teaching as telling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher is the source of undistorted information. - Teacher transmits authoritative content usually through lecture. - Teacher communicates knowledge smoothly; students are passive recipients. 	<p>What the student is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher must know the content well and transmit information clearly. - If students do not learn well, it is due to learner differences such as the ability to learn, motivation level, background experiences, ethnic origin and learning culture and so on. - As long as teaching has been done well, the burden of absorbing information is on students.
<p>Teaching as organising student activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching is more of a ‘supervision process’ of learning; the focus is more on helping learners develop independence and critical thinking. - Believes that learners learn better by doing (active learning). - Stresses learning activities that link theories and students’ experiences (experiential learning). 	<p>What the teacher does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher transmits concepts and understanding, not just knowledge. - Open to possibilities that there are more effective ways of teaching. - Stresses variation of teaching technique, what the teachers are doing, not yet on what the students are learning.
<p>Teaching as making learning possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching is to work cooperatively with learners. - Teaching is to find out learners’ misunderstandings and intervene to change them. - Rests on the belief that knowledge of the content is constituted by the learner. - Stresses students’ imaginative interpretation of knowledge; teaching method is secondary. 	<p>What the student does</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching supports learning. - Unless learning takes place, teaching is irrelevant. - Rests on the importance of achieving the desired level of understanding. - Stresses the appropriate teaching/learning activities to achieve stipulated level of understanding.

At the first level, “teaching as telling/what the student is”, both the theories see the teacher as the knowledge transmitter and is thus seen as the content expert or the “sage on stage” (Biggs

& Tang, 2007, p. 17). The teacher aims to transmit information smoothly. If learning fails to occur, the fault lies in student differences such as their motivation level or their learning background, giving rise to the “blame-the-student” theory (Biggs & Tang, 2007, p. 17). In this respect, the relationship between what is taught and what is learned is “non-problematic” – if information has been transferred smoothly, students would have learned well (Ramsden, 2003, p. 109). At this level, teaching typically takes the form of standard lecture while the students are passive recipients.

At the second level, “teaching as organising student activity/what the teacher does”, there is a slight shift in what the teachers and students do. In Ramsden’s (2003) theory, teaching is no longer seen as a transmission of authoritative content but is more of a “supervision process” because the aim of teaching is to develop learner independence. Learners are believed to learn better by doing. Therefore, the teacher stresses learning activities, preferably those that are “tested, tried and true for all terrains” (p. 110). In comparison, Biggs and Tang’s (2007) second theory sees teaching as transmitting concepts rather than just transmitting knowledge. In this theory, the teacher is open to the possibility that there are more effective ways of teaching, thus seeks to vary teaching techniques. Unlike Ramsden’s theory that stresses what the student does to learn, Biggs’ and Tang’s still focuses on what the teacher does to help students learn. The similarity between them is that both theories at level two stress teaching and learning techniques.

Finally, at the third level, “teaching as making learning possible/what the student does”, both stress working with students to ensure that learning takes place. At this level, Ramsden (2003) describes teaching that aims to help learners construct their own learning. It involves identifying students’ misunderstandings in learning and rectifying them. Students’ needs in learning determine the teaching method, thus the method becomes a secondary concern in teaching. Biggs and Tang (2007) see the third level of thinking about teaching as a student-centred model. Essentially, at this level, teaching aims to address two issues: i) the levels of understanding students are expected to achieve and ii) the kinds of teaching and learning activities required to achieve these stipulated levels of understanding. In brief, both level three theories emphasise intended learning outcomes.

Unlike Pratt’s multiple perspectives of teaching that promote alternative frames for understanding teaching, Ramsden’s (2003) and Biggs and Tang’s (2007) frameworks are hierarchical and developmental with the second level suggesting more effective teaching than the first, and the third level being more effective than the second and the first. These hierarchical levels of teaching imply that there are discernible qualities of good and poor

teaching. Indeed, Ramsden (2003) stresses that although there is no one best or correct way to teach, “it is a folly to carry this truism beyond its proper territory” (p. 85) because there are general attributes that distinguish between good and bad teaching.

In order to understand good and bad teaching, we need to first understand how students learn. The inseparable link between teaching and learning is stressed by Ramsden (2003): “Good teaching and good learning are linked through the students’ experiences of what we do. It follows that we cannot teach better unless we are able to see what we are doing from their point of view” (p. 84). Therefore, improving teaching and learning involves “identical principles” (Ramsden, 2003, p. 252) and are “two sides of the same coin” (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983, p. 212). Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) argue that a student’s choice of learning approaches is strongly influenced by their learning context. A large part of it is the kind of teaching they received. If the learning tasks require reproduction of facts and details, then the learners will strive to memorise and repeat what is learned. On the other hand, if the learning tasks focus on the internal structure of the discipline and making meaningful connections, then learners will strive to understand and most likely to be interested in what they have learned. This takes us to the theories of surface and deep learning approaches that lie beneath the theories of university teaching.

In their ground breaking works, Marton and Saljo (1976a, 1976b) investigated qualitative differences in students’ learning processes and the outcomes. They discovered that surface-approach type of learners have a “reproductive” conception of learning (Marton & Saljo, 1976a, p. 7). They focus on signs contained in the information they read, and memorise them in order to reproduce them in tests. On the other hand, when learners take a deep approach, they focus on what is signified, that is the intentional content of the learning material. Instead of memorising, they set out to find the “principal ideas” or “the point of the article” thus engage themselves in meaningful learning (Marton & Saljo, 1976a, p. 9). They were also discovered to have longer retention span compared to the surface-approach learners. There is a third approach to learning which is the strategic, or the achieving approach. It is to do with learner strategies in effectively managing their time and study methods to achieve the highest possible grades in assessments (Entwistle, 2000; Spencer, 2003).

Although there are three approaches to learning recognised by writers of teaching and learning, Ramsden (2003) and Biggs and Tang (2007) focused on surface and deep approaches only to illuminate their theories of teaching discussed previously. These authors’ interpretation of surface/deep learning approaches is summarised in Table 2.3. The table illustrates the way knowledge is perceived and negotiated in different learning approaches.

Table 2.3: Comparison of Ramsden's (2003) and Biggs and Tang's (2007) surface and deep approach type of learners

Surface approach type of learner	Deep approach type of learner
(Ramsden, 2003)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focuses on unrelated parts of the task. - Learns by memorising. - Has external emphasis: completes tasks for examination purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes relationships between parts of the task, between previous and new knowledge and between knowledge of the discipline at hand and other disciplines. - Learns by organising the structure of what is learned into a coherent whole. - Has internal emphasis: completes task for a more intelligible understanding of the world.
(Biggs & Tang, 2007)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does rote learning of selected content or factual recall. - Tends to 'cut corners' as the purpose of learning is to do well in assessments rather than for genuine learning purposes. - Learning is assessed for independent facts; requires memorisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understands the big picture; focuses on underlying meanings, main ideas, principals, themes and their successful applications. - Has the felt need to know and tries to get to the bottom of the subject. - Learning is assessed for structural understanding.

Table 2.3 shows how a surface learning approach is associated with learning content that is 'unfelt' by the learner. This is because learning is in segmented parts and mostly involves memorisation. Meaningful connections between the parts are not emphasised and tested. On the other hand, a deep learning approach is associated with the learner being interested in and engaged with the learning content. This is because learning involves an understanding of the material as a meaningful whole. The students' structural understanding of the course is tested. In brief, in order to bring about quality or meaningful learning, the most desirable kind of teaching is one that can turn surface approach learners into deep approach learners.

Biggs and Tang (2007) further illustrate the relationship between students' level of learning engagement with teaching methods in a graph called "Student Orientation, Teaching Method and Level of Engagement". The graph provides a backdrop for discussing Ramsden's (2003) and Biggs and Tang's (2007) levels of teaching in relation to the cognitive activities required of the students and their levels of learning engagement. Figure 2.6 illustrates the teaching and learning processes involved along the continuum of surface to deep approaches.

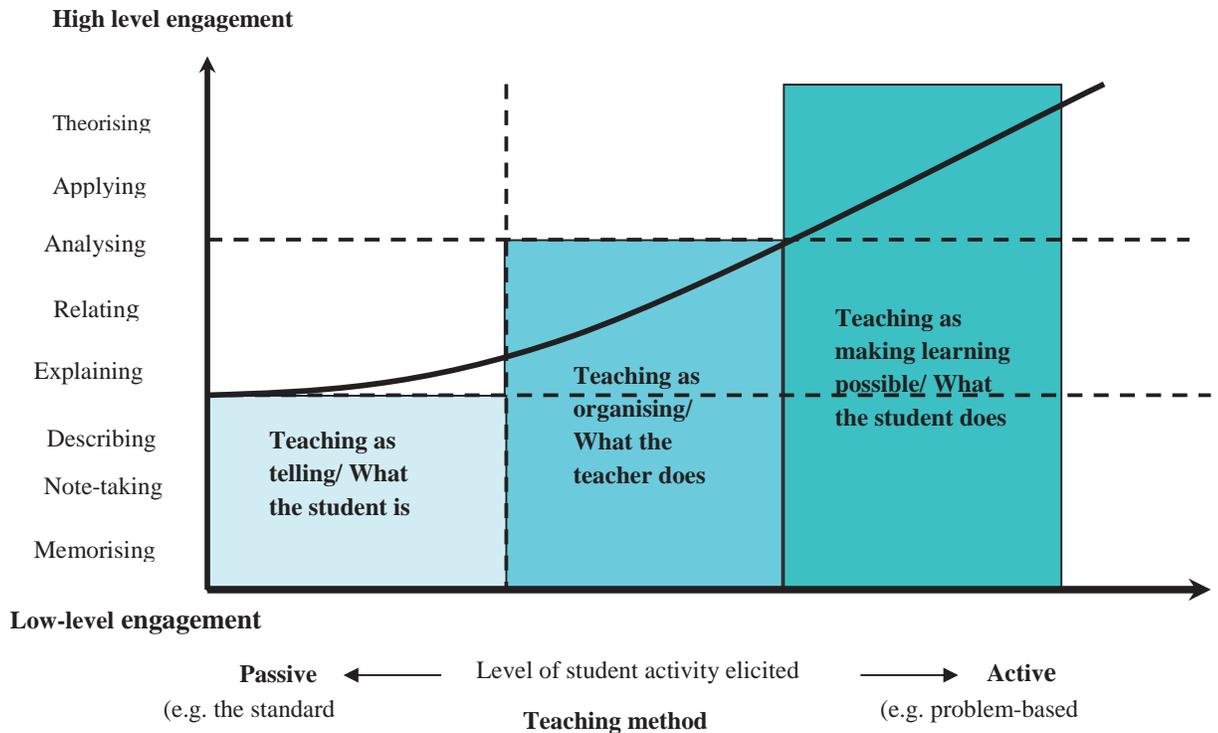


Figure 2.6: Levels of teaching and levels of students' engagement.

Adapted from "Theories of University Teaching" by Ramsden, P. (2003). Learning to teach in higher education (2nd ed.) London: Routledge, p. 115 and "Levels of Thinking about Teaching" and "Student Orientation, Teaching Method and Level of Engagement" by Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2007). Teaching for quality learning at university (3rd ed.). Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

The rising line graph shows how teaching methods correlate with students' orientation in learning and their levels of engagement. The more the teaching method demands of students' active participation in teaching and learning, the higher the level of student engagement, or the deeper the learning approaches are. The line graph rises with both Ramsden and Biggs and Tang's levels of teaching theories suggesting that at the extreme ends of the continuums where the teaching method requires students to be active and their level of engagement is at the highest level, the level of teaching reaches the most desirable stage, thus the quality of teaching and learning is suggested to be at its peak. Figure 2.6 stresses the fact that surface/deep teaching and learning approaches are better seen as a qualitative continuum rather than absolute

opposites. In view of this, the levels of teaching and levels of student engagement in learning should be seen so too, rather than three exclusive levels of teaching.

Adding to levels of teaching and student learning engagement, Trigwell, Prosser and Taylor (1994) and Trigwell and Prosser (1996, 2004) provide finer distinctions between levels of teaching and learning through five qualitatively different approaches to teaching. Also using Marton and Saljo's (1976a, 1976b) distinction of surface/ deep approaches to learning, Trigwell and his colleagues investigated teachers' approaches to teaching in relation to their conceptions of teaching and learning. The approaches they found were:

- i) Approach A: A teacher-focused strategy with the intention of transmitting information to students;
- ii) Approach B: A teacher-focused strategy with the intention that students acquire the concepts of the discipline;
- iii) Approach C: A teacher/student interaction strategy with the intention that students acquire the concepts of the discipline;
- iv) Approach D: A student-focused strategy aimed at students developing their conception; and
- v) Approach E: A student-focused strategy aimed at students changing their conception (Trigwell et al., 1994, p. 78).

In comparison to Ramden's (2003) and Biggs and Tang's (2007) theories of teaching, Trigwell's approaches A and E are similar in the sense that they range from teacher- to student-focused strategies and from the intentions of transmitting information to helping students' make conceptual changes. The finer variations between approaches A and E further stress the idea that differences in teaching and learning at various levels are qualitative. Emphasising the hierarchical structure of these qualitative variations, Trigwell and his colleagues highlighted that the structure is inclusive rather than developmental. This means that approach B comprises approach A and more, approach C comprises approaches A and B and more. Ultimately, approach E is the most "complete" or "inclusive" of the teaching range (Trigwell & Prosser, 2003, p. 190). They also note that a teacher does not necessarily develop their approaches from point A to E in a linear fashion.

The implication of Trigwell and colleagues' (2003) qualitative variations in teaching on the concept of quality teaching is the suggestion that there is such a thing a highly desirable kind of teaching or teaching of a high quality which is to aim at changing the quality of students' thinking rather than merely adding on knowledge. It involves what other researchers refer to as "highly-developed" or "sophisticated" teaching conceptions (Eley, 2006; Entwistle, 2000, 2009). The same deduction can be made with the theories of university teaching, and the comparison of levels of teaching, students' learning approaches and students' learning engagement. While this appears to go against the idea that there is no one best way to teach, we

need to remember that teaching and learning are closely inter-related. It has been discussed that a highly desirable kind of learning is one that employs deep approaches. It thus follows that a highly desirable kind of teaching is one that aims (but is not always appropriate and possible) to bring about deep learning approaches. To borrow words from Entwistle (1983), a highly desirable kind of teaching is one that provides “fertile conditions” for the growth of learning approaches that are aimed at understanding (p. 206).

At this point, it is stressed that providing fertile conditions for deep learning approaches does not entail teaching by one correct technique, strategy or method. The use of a wide selection of teaching methods is necessary and encouraged (Entwistle, 1988; Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Entwistle & Walker, 2000; Phillips, 2000; Ramsden, 2003). Even the use of lecture, despite its notorious reputation for promoting passive listening and surface learning approach, is recognised as a legitimate approach to teaching providing it is done well (Pratt, 1998, 2002). Entwistle’s (2009) “3E’s of teaching” is cited. He revealed that the three most influential aspects of teaching on students’ learning are a teacher’s explanation, enthusiasm, and empathy. Therefore, lecture-type teaching that comprise these three aspects can be done just as well as student-centred learning activities.

As noted by Pratt (1998), techniques are only the “visible ‘tip’ of teaching” while the “invisible” part of the iceberg comprises beliefs and intentions (p. 204). It is these beliefs and intentions that need to be developed into sophisticated teaching conceptions which include the understanding of learner differences, how students learn and how to maximise the opportunity for learner understanding, as well as developing sensitivity to other contextual factors that affect teaching and learning. With these well-developed teaching conceptions, a teacher would have a fair understanding of how teaching/learning works.

It is only when we have a fair understanding of what learners are expected to learn, what they actually learn in those situations, and why they learn something in one situation but not in another, that pedagogy becomes a reasonably rational set of human activities (Marton, 2007 in Entwistle, 2009, p. 74)

2.1.4 Effective, expert and excellent teaching: The researcher’s stance on quality teaching

Having looked at various perspectives and levels of teaching, it is appropriate at this point to juxtapose the notions of effective, expert and excellent teaching. This is to frame the idea of quality teaching held by the author.

The notion of effective teaching has been associated by many authors with effective learning. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines 'effective' as "producing the result that is wanted or intended" (Hornby, 2000, p. 402). In this thesis context, the result that is wanted out of teaching is effective learning, thus effective teaching is when learning takes effect as intended. Teaching and learning are "inextricably and elaborately linked" (Ramsden, 2003, p. 8). Students' experiences of learning are a result of what teachers do in teaching. Such interlocked teaching/learning relationships have been illustrated in Figure 2.6 in which levels of teaching approaches are related to students' level of engagement.

Ramsden (2003) further outlined six principles of effective teaching which included teachers' interest in and explanation of the material, concern and respect for student learning, appropriate assessment and feedback, clear goals and intellectual challenge, independence, control and engagement, as well as learning from students. The thread that runs through these principles is that teachers need to be constantly open to students' reactions in learning and be ready to make changes to teaching accordingly. Being sensitive to students' reactions is reiterated by Allan, Clarke and Jopling (2009) who stressed that teachers should be sympathetic to the challenges students face in learning, in order to create a conducive learning environment. Close teacher-student interaction is encouraged (Allan et al., 2009; Bartram & Bailey, 2009). Students should be treated as "partners in learning, and not passive recipients of knowledge" (Allan et al., 2009, p. 369).

Another key point of effective teaching is the effective use of teaching methods and strategies. Ramsden (2003) writes, "any teaching method – from an expensive ICT-support simulation to a one-hour lecture - is only as good as the person who interprets it." (p. 156) The use of teaching mediums should be interesting and unpredictable. The use of teaching aids and textbooks, for instance, should challenge learners by inviting them to confront and integrate ideas, and foster interaction, excitement, engagement and independence in learning. This is as opposed to the typical use of expensive teaching mediums (e.g. IT) that tends to take students for granted as passive recipients of information presentation. In brief, effective teaching should bring about meaningful learning in various and creative ways. To reiterate the point made in earlier sections, there is no one best way to teach.

The notion of expert teaching discussed by writers of quality teaching mainly relates to having breadth and depth of teaching proficiency and having the ability to make instant teaching/learning decisions. Eley (2006) defines teaching expertise as, "the existence of a rich repertoire of highly context-specific teaching practices, which enable proficient, rapid and adaptive responses to a wide variety of teaching situations (p. 212)". A rich repertoire of

context-specific teaching practices relates to having a wide variety of skills and techniques that can be used at will appropriate to a given situation. Meanwhile, rapid and adaptive responses to teaching situations as mentioned by Eley (2006) are similar to what Entwistle and Walker (2000) termed *strategic alertness* – “capitalising on chance events in the classroom to create springboards to significant learning” (p. 357). It is usually a change of plan or a shift of teaching approach made at the spur of the moment when one sees the opportunity for better teaching/learning experiences. It is unplanned and is triggered by *expanded awareness* – “seeing additional goals for teaching and learning which were originally not perceived explicitly at all” (p. 352). Such strategic change in teaching is what Hattie (2002) refers to as being adept and automatic in teaching. Expert teachers are more adept at dealing with learning difficulties as they have a “multi-dimensionally complex perception of classroom situations” (Hattie, 2002, p. 7) and a more extensive and deeper repertoire of thought about teaching effectiveness (Dunkin, 2002), thus are better able to make quick teaching decisions.

It is worth noting studies that investigate the link between effective and/or expert teaching and teaching experience. There is little evidence to show that experienced teachers are more effective and/or are expert teachers. In a 13-year longitudinal study on teaching effectiveness and teaching experience, Marsh (2007) found that the participants’ level of teaching effectiveness was relatively stable, that they did not necessarily gain from experience and that systematic change over the course of study was minimal. In a study that looked at teachers’ excellent teaching attributes scores, Hattie (2002) found that expert teachers had far higher scores in all attributes compared to experienced teachers. However, the number of years in teaching is found to be related to teachers’ sense of efficacy, if not their teaching practices. Wolters and Daugherty (2007) found a correlation between teaching experience and teachers’ beliefs in their own ability to accomplish critical instructional tasks. All in all, these studies suggest that years of teaching experience may not necessarily make teachers more effective or expert in practice, but at the very least, may improve confidence in teaching.

Compared to effective and expert teaching, the notion of excellent teaching is used less by writers of quality teaching. Hattie (2002) associates excellent teaching with expert teaching, categorising 16 qualities of the expert teacher into five dimensions that include: (i) identifying essential representations of subject; (ii) guiding learning through classroom interactions; (iii) monitoring learning and providing feedback; (iv) attending to affective attributes, and finally, (v) influencing student outcomes. There are overlaps between Hattie’s qualities of excellent/expert teacher with Ramsden’s (2003) principles of effective teaching such as focus on teacher-student two-way communication for successful learning outcomes. The overlapping qualities suggest that it is difficult to separate the notion of effective and excellent teaching.

Further, Kreber (2002) defines excellent teaching as teaching performance that is perceived to be successful by the students. This raises two points: one, students' credibility in judging teaching (Douglas & Douglas, 2006; Heilman & Matsuzaki, 2009; MacFarlane, 2007; Pounder, 2007), and two, the idea that teaching excellence is a judgmental exercise. Teaching excellence is a controversial concept argued to undermine the very complex nature of teaching (Skelton, 2005) and can be counter-productive to teaching improvement efforts due to set standards (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005).

The researcher takes the stance that quality teaching is related to being (i) an *effective* teacher who brings about meaningful and extensive learning through the use of deep learning approaches; and (ii) an *expert* teacher who has a wide repertoire of knowledge, skills and experience in teaching and is sensitive to contextual needs. The researcher argues that excellent teaching carries the notion of teaching of exceptional standard. It does not only imply that teaching can be judged by set standards, but also suggests that there is one best way to teach. These ideas of excellent teaching are not what the researcher advocates in this thesis.

2.1.5 A contemporary view of teaching: Constructivist approaches

Theories on the levels of teaching and the idea that teaching should aim to bring about meaningful learning point to the direction of constructivist teaching/learning approaches. It is the contemporary ideal of quality teaching in the Western world.

The constructivist view in teaching and learning came into being around the 1970s. It came after an evolutionary period of views on learning that moved from the emphasis on learning as acquiring behaviour responses, to learning as acquiring knowledge, to finally learning as constructing knowledge or what is known today as the constructivist approach in education (St. George & Bourke, 2008). There is a wide variation in the constructivist school of thought namely radical constructivism, cognitive constructivism, social constructivism, educational constructivism, philosophical constructivism and sociological constructivism (Killen, 2007; Phillips, 2000). Phillips (2000) adds that under the educational constructivism category alone, there are at least seventeen varieties such as contextual, dialectical, methodological, humanistic, radical, idealist, realist, and the list goes on. Since each draws out and plays down certain principles at varying degrees, it is quite hard to draw the line between the principles.

Diversities and finer differences aside, the essence of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning is that students are active learners who learn best by doing; teachers are learning facilitators rather than information givers (Killen, 2007; Phillips, 2000; Pratt, 1998; Slavin, 2012; St. George & Bourke, 2008). It is imperative that knowledge is constructed by the

learners. It is an exploratory and interpretive process as they make sense of their learning experiences using their own interpretations and background knowledge. A constructivist teaching approach embraces the idea of learning where learners are given challenging tasks - often in the form of problem-solving - and are required to accomplish the tasks by drawing out some basic skills they already have. This is contrary to the traditional approach of giving knowledge in incremental steps to create a whole. In the process of finding solutions, learners use their prior knowledge about how the world functions and build on it. When confronted with new information, they are forced to reconceptualise their thinking and reformulate ideas when old rules no longer work. They may engage in exploratory experiments of trial and error.

A social rather than solo constructivist view of learning is highlighted in this study. Slavin (2012) describes four main Vygotskian principles contained in modern constructivism: (i) social learning, (ii) zone of proximal development, (iii) cognitive apprenticeship and (iv) mediated learning. Firstly, it is believed that learners learn better with peers as they think aloud. It enables them to listen to their own thought processes, being exposed to others' and co-create ideas. Therefore, collaborative/co-operative learning is emphasised and problem-based tasks are often employed. Secondly, there is an area of students' potential in learning between what they are able to do by themselves and what they can achieve when guided. Known as the "zone of proximal development", learners are believed to have the potential to achieve beyond their current cognitive level of thinking when they are assisted – highlighting the socio-cultural aspect of constructivism (St. George & Bourke, 2008).

Learners' potential to achieve beyond their current level is enhanced further when they work with more advanced peers or with experts since they are exposed to models of thinking and behaving, referred to as *cognitive apprenticeship* (Slavin, 2012). The pedagogic implication of these principles is *mediated learning*. It is believed that learners should be given complex, difficult but realistic tasks, and then given enough help to accomplish the task. The role of the teacher in *scaffolding learning* should be noted. It means providing clear and sufficient teacher-guidance in the learning process which is gradually reduced as learners become more competent. Although learner independence and self-discovery are encouraged, their conceptual understanding should be monitored in order to ensure that constructive development goes in the desired direction (Killen, 2007; Phillips, 2000; Slavin, 2012).

Phillips (2000) argues that the way material is taught does not necessarily determine the way it is learned. He thus warned against taking a constructivist view in education as the "One Best Way of teaching", calling it "the most detrimental legacy".

The only intelligent approach to teaching is one that recognizes that skilled teachers need many resources in their bags of tricks, and that different situations, different students, and different subject matters require the ability to adopt and adapt multiple approaches if they are going to be able to succeed as teachers in the face of many learning styles and degrees of motivation found among students (p. 327)

Likewise, other writers advocate the use of a combination of theories or views on teaching and learning: between constructivist and traditional teaching, as well as across the various types of constructivist views (Killen, 2007; Phillips, 2000). This is necessary to complement different types of learners and contextual settings, and the nature of the subject-matter at hand. There are times when a traditional didactic lecture can work just as well. Therefore, it is wise to be aware of the different approaches and use them fittingly.

Nevertheless, the constructivist hegemony remains “powerful” (Phillips, 2000, p. 328). It is evident in studies on quality teaching and learning post year 2000 (cf. Arenas, 2009; Eley, 2006; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). These studies associate high-level conceptions of teaching with student-centred teaching, and teaching that encourages knowledge creation and conceptual change. They acknowledge the idea that quality teaching entails making qualitative changes in students’ thinking rather than quantitative addition of knowledge.

2.1.6 Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) has been associated with the constructivist teaching and learning approach for example in South Africa and Malaysia (CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Killen, 2007; McGhie, 2008; Mohammad et al., 2008; The Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council (MAGNETIC), 2011; Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2010). To understand how this is so, it helps to first understand how OBE came into higher education setting.

OBE state- or nation-wide implementation began in Western schools in the 1980s as a result of political undercurrents (Lee, 2003). Concern about school effectiveness resulted in interest in quantifiable educational results, accountability and international benchmarking. Besides being known as performance-based and competency-based performance, what is known as OBE today was declared to have failed in Australia and South Africa as well as being “dead” (Donnelly, 2007, p. 6) or “stalled” (Brady, 1996, p. 7) in the United States of America by the 1990s. The two major factors were unclear reference points for assessment practices and the lack of clear evidence of better learning compared to the conventional syllabus (Berlach, 2004; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Berlach & O’Neill, 2008; Engelbrecht & Harding, 2008).

At the start of the second millennium, globalization and rapid changes in the international scene placed new demands for graduates who are able to evolve with constantly renewed market pressures and challenges as established in Chapter One. Apart from knowledge and technical skills, characteristics of an adaptable and innovative graduate include having person skills like problem-solving, communication and lifelong learning skills (Chak, 2011; Collins, 2008; Donnelly, 2007; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007). The engineering field responded to this international trend by reviving faith in OBE. OBE's design-down method became relevant again. The principle of designing curriculum practices based on end-outcomes is utilized to satisfy market needs rather than for evidence of educational effectiveness. Signatories of the Washington Accord (Malaysia included) were required to implement OBE curriculum instructions in order to gain international accreditation of its programmes (Aziz et al., 2005; Collins, 2008). After a decade of implementation and critical research inquiries, history appears to repeat itself. As was experienced in school system implementations, OBE researchers in higher education revealed two major issues: problematic implementation in assessment practices (Berlach & O'Neill, 2008; Hughes & Barrie, 2010; Kennedy, 2011; Rompelman, 2000), and inadequate graduate outcomes (Chan & Chan, 2009; Collins, 2008; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007; Zaharim et al., 2006).

The root cause of the repeated mistakes is the nature of OBE - that it is "theoretically weak" (Lee, 2003, p. 92). It is located at an intersection between constructivism and behaviourism. These two learning traditions are irreconcilable due to contrasting principles (Brady, 1996; Kennedy, 2011). Jervis (2005) in Kennedy (2011, p. 212) pointed out that OBE is a "constructivist epistemology, which is embedded in behaviourist pedagogy". Students are confined in learning activities but are free to construct knowledge in their own way. OBE's emphasis on outcomes as learned behaviour is said to be based on mastery learning and behaviourist psychology but, on the other hand, also contains some characteristics of constructivist principles as it promotes students' active knowledge construction, teacher's facilitation, collaborative and contextual learning believed to equip graduates for the professional world (Killen, 2007; McGhie, 2008). It leads to the "mile-wide and inch-deep" issue where desirable behaviours or graduate attributes to be developed are too broad, risking shallow development of knowledge (Donnelly, 2007, p. 13). The emphasis on broad competencies results in failure to deal with essential learning; to promote deep understanding of subject content, as well as to promote knowledge exploration (Berlach, 2004; Berlach & O'Neill, 2008; Donnelly, 2007; McKernan, 1993). It leads to what Berlach (2004) calls, "the death of knowledge" where, in a market-driven economy, the onus of deciding what is to be taught and learned is given to stakeholders, rather than the teachers. Further, critics also argued

that behavior cannot be micro-managed or broken down into discrete items due to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of behavior.

Proponents of OBE have suggested ways to make OBE work to better effect such as by aligning teaching, learning and assessments (Biggs & Tang, 2007), by developing graduate attributes implicitly in thoughtfully-designed learning tasks (Walther & Radcliffe, 2007) or by being innovative with assessment reforms that move with the curriculum reforms (Hughes & Barrie, 2010; Kennedy, 2011). These practical and thoughtful solutions need to be considered alongside the curriculum reforms.

2.1.7 The 3P model of teaching and constructive alignment theory

It has been argued that contextual considerations in teaching are necessary for (i) effective and expert teaching, (ii) deciding when and how to combine constructivist and traditional teaching and (iii) OBE teaching contexts that require teaching/learning activities and assessment alignment. Thus, it is necessary to discuss two more theories: the “3P Model of Teaching” and the “Constructive Alignment Theory” as they contribute to a deeper understanding of contextual factors that influence the quality of teaching.

Biggs’s (2003) 3P Model of Teaching comprises three typical teaching/learning stages: Presage, Process and Product. Within each stage, there are factors that interact with one another to form what called an ecosystem – a specific teaching/learning climate. Figure 2.7 illustrates Biggs’s 3P Model of Teaching.

The thick arrows in the Figure 2.7 show cause-effect relationships between factors that affect teaching and learning in each stage. All the other arrows show the interconnectedness of the ecosystem. The idea of such an ecosystem in teaching is that each component supports one another and the influence is reciprocal. At the presage stage of teaching and learning, specific student and contextual factors influence learning-focused activities at the presage stage in specific ways, which ultimately brings about specific learning outcomes in the product stage. If one of these factors falls out of the alignment the result can be poor teaching, poor learning and unmet objectives.

Factors from the presage and the product stages are likely to have strong effects on what goes on in the classroom at the process stage. For instance, if the institution demands learning of a variety of segmented and incremental topics in a course, assessment tasks may focus on testing students’ grasp of every topic. In turn, teachers will be pressured to complete the prescribed syllabus. They may end up giving lectures to speed up teaching and in the process, demand low-level cognitive processing from students such as note-taking or memorising. As a result,

surface approaches to teaching and learning could occur due to unnecessary compromise in teaching/learning (Ramsden, 2003).

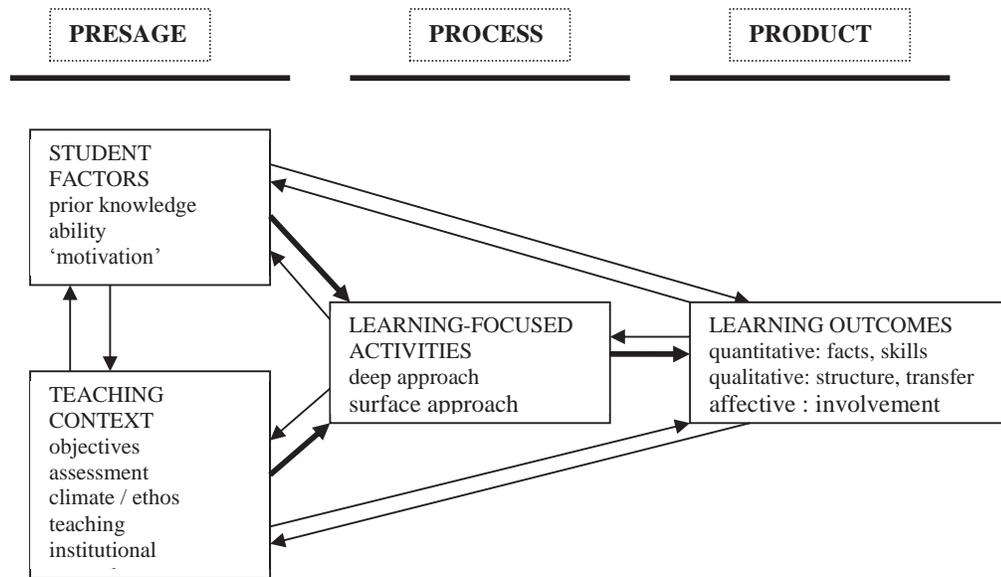


Figure 2.7: "3P Model of Teaching"

Adapted from Biggs, J. (2003). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (2nd ed.) Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press, p. 19

An extension to the idea of a teaching/learning ecosystem is constructive alignment theory (Biggs & Tang, 2007). This theory focuses on the alignment at the process and the product stages of teaching/learning activities and assessments at the process and product stages of the 3P model. Figure 2.8 illustrates the constructive alignment theory. The core of this theory is the intended learning outcomes - at the centre of the figure – which are supported by teaching learning activities and assessment tasks. The essence of constructive alignment is that the teaching/learning activities and the assessment tasks should reflect the intended learning outcomes. Only then will there be alignment.

In the figure, both the teaching/learning activities and the assessment tasks contribute towards the theory's core – the intended learning outcomes. The descriptions of the intended learning outcomes reflect what the students are expected do in teaching learning activities, and what they should be able to do in the assessment tasks – involving cognitive activities, some already mentioned in Figure 2.6: Levels of teaching and levels of student engagement. From the bottom of the box, the level of cognitive skills gradually increases as it reaches the top. In essence, these intended learning outcomes mirror qualitative development of learners' thinking and understanding as described in the levels of teaching theory.

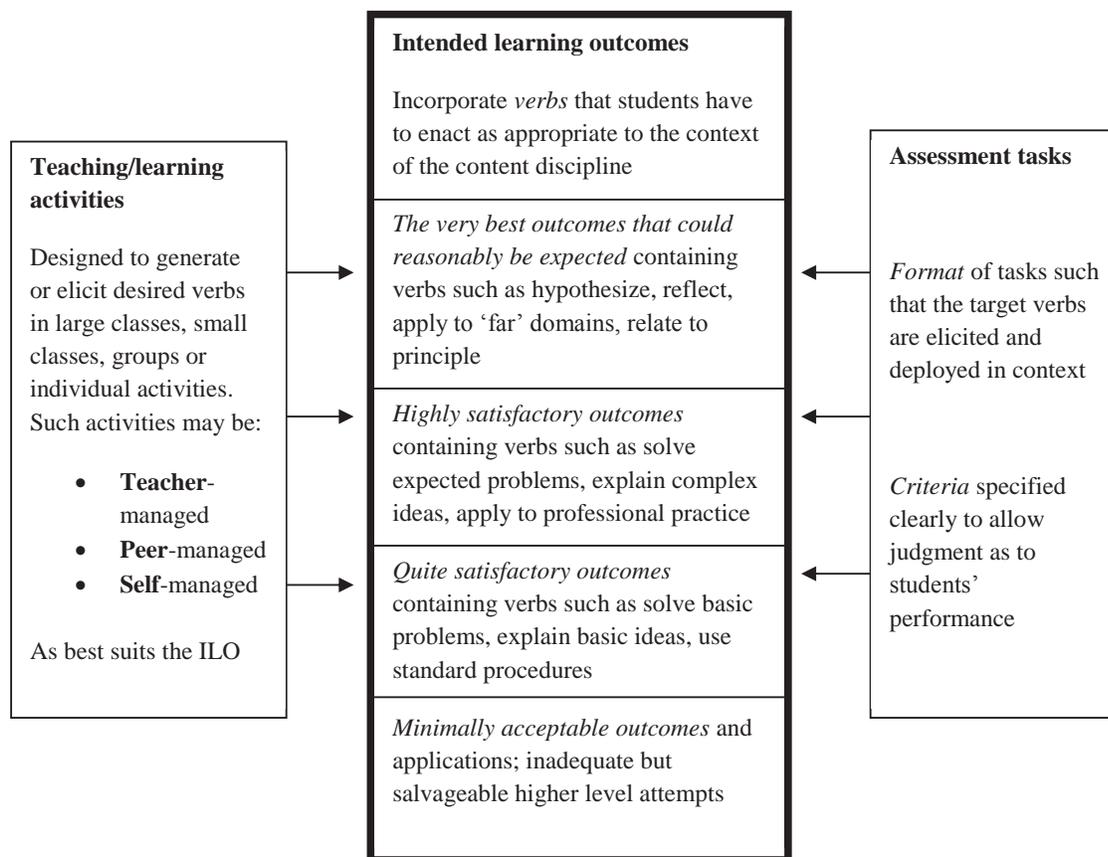


Figure 2.8: Aligning intended learning outcomes, teaching and assessment tasks

Adapted from Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2007). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (3rd ed.) Maidenhead, Berkshire: SRHE & Open University Press, p. 59

Taking the constructivist view that effective learning occurs through students’ own activities, Biggs and Tang (2007) stressed that when the three components in the figure are aligned, there will be maximum consistency in the delivery system. It can better enable the design of a teaching/learning climate that engages students in activities that promote meaningful learning. The teacher only acts as a broker between the student and his or her learning environment. The teacher creates a conducive environment – one that is well-aligned with the intended learning outcomes – so that the development of the desired cognitive qualities is carried through in all the stages of teaching and learning processes.

Having looked at factors in teaching and learning contexts, the discussion proceeds with teacher thinking.

2.1.8 Teachers' conceptualisation of teaching and quality teaching

Studies on teacher thinking have revealed what lies beneath the physical and observable teaching and learning phenomena. Beyond a teacher's conceptualisation of teaching and learning, there is a complex web of inter-related theories that help explain the psychological factors that influence decision-making in teaching, as well as the affective side of the teaching and learning processes.

i) Teacher beliefs and intentions

This section discusses the complex and often problematic relationship between teacher thinking, teachers' actions and learning approaches. The phenomenographic study undertaken by Trigwell et al. (1994) did not only find qualitative variations in teaching approaches but also found logical relations between teacher intentions when thinking about or planning teaching, and teaching strategies when selecting classroom teaching/learning approaches. This gave rise to the concepts of *Information-Transfer/Teacher-Focused approach (ITTF)* and *Conceptual-Change/Student-Focused approach (CCSF)* (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996). These concepts formed the basis of their "Approaches to Teaching Inventory" (ATI) which has been widely-used in studies that investigate the relations between teacher thinking, teaching approaches and learning approaches (cf. Arenas, 2009; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004).

Although ITTF and CCSF concepts assume congruence between a teacher's intention and actions, the relationship between the two is seen as complex when *teaching intention* is distinguished from *teaching beliefs*. In their study, Norton, Richardson, Hartley, Newstead and Mayes (2005) revised some of the statements in ATI to suggest intention as statements of what teachers claim to do in teaching (e.g. I use..., I try..., I am concerned with...), but not necessarily what they act out in class. Belief is further suggested as statements that represent a teachers' perception of good teaching in general (e.g. A good lecturer should..., a good lecturer is one who...) (pp. 565-567). The distinction is also found in McAlpine, Weston, Berthiaume and Fairbank-Roch's (2006) study which referred to intentions as *goal statements* or statements of instructor's expected or intended actions to be accomplished at the end of a class or a course. On the other hand, belief is referred to as *knowledge statements* or rationales that inform a teacher's teaching and learning decisions.

Findings from Norton and his team's (2005) study show that intention and beliefs are not always aligned. Across four different institutions, all the teacher participants held the same student-focused belief about teaching, but differed in teaching intentions. The difference was attributed to different levels of teaching experience and the institution's subject mix. This study

suggests that what teachers claim to do in teaching is more flexible than what they generally believe is good teaching. This is in line with Pratt's idea that belief is the "most stable" and the "least flexible" aspect of a teacher's perspective (p. 21). These studies also suggest that teaching intentions can change in relation to different teaching contexts. Further, McAlpine et al. (2006) found affirmative statements of intentions and beliefs in pre-class and pre-course stages, but more tentative statements in post-class and post-course stages. They attributed tentative statements in the post stages to opening possibilities for changes in future lesson planning. These findings highlight the contextual nature of planning of teaching where a teacher's thoughts about teaching are surer when they are framed by known conditions (e.g. course type, physical classroom setting, and levels of students). In short, a teacher's teaching intention is bound to a given space and time while a teacher's belief about teaching is more of the general principles a teacher holds about teaching.

Studies in teacher thinking are numerous and the aspects of focus vary. Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) explored dimensions of teacher beliefs comprising beliefs about learning, knowledge and teacher/student roles, as well as the nature of teacher-student interaction. Hativa and colleagues (2001) focused on investigating teachers' general pedagogical knowledge comprising their beliefs about the use of effective teaching methods and strategies. Several studies looked at teaching approaches and what is considered to be effective teaching with regards to enhancing learning (for example, Dunkin, 2002; Kember & Kwan, 2000). Some studies investigated what is termed as *self efficacy* - the teachers' belief in their power to influence learning (Dunkin, 2002; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007) and *self-concept* - the teachers' sense of self-competence/self-confidence in teaching (Roche & Marsh, 2000). Martin and Lueckenhausen (2005) focused on teachers' subject knowledge and how their transformed understanding of the discipline influence what they believe to be effective in teaching. Finally, Arenas (2009) investigated what is termed as *teacher attitude* comprising the teachers' perceptions of contextual factors that affect their teaching, as well as the teachers' beliefs about teaching approaches appropriate to contextual demands.

Collectively, all these studies suggest that what comprises teacher beliefs are their perceptions of (i) the nature of knowledge and who controls it; (ii) the nature of learning and of learner role; (iii) the nature of teaching and teacher roles; (iv) the nature of teacher-student interaction; (v) teaching strategies; (vi) teaching approaches; (vii) teacher attitudes; (viii) teachers' self-confidence, and (ix) consideration for contextual influences in teaching. However, none of these studies highlighted or even mentioned the distinctions between beliefs and intentions. In some cases, teaching intention was mentioned as part of the findings, closely related to teaching approaches or strategies (Dunkin, 2002; Kember & Kwan, 2000; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007).

It can be concluded from these studies that what is commonly and currently explored in teacher thinking is their general beliefs about teaching or conceptions of teaching. However, the idea that teaching intention is a context-specific goal statement (McAlpine et al., 2006; Norton et al., 2005) helps illuminate the intermediary processes between the translation of teaching beliefs into teaching practice. This is not to say that teaching intention serves as a bridging link between beliefs and actual teaching practice. A student-focused intention, and a student-focused belief for that matter, does not guarantee a student-focused teaching approach. The congruence between teacher beliefs and actual practices has not been concretely proven, only suggested.

ii) Teacher beliefs and classroom practice

Several studies have identified ways that teachers' conceptions of teaching influence their teaching approaches (Dunkin, 2002; Kember & Kwan, 2000; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). However, a critical review of studies on teaching beliefs and practices, including some of the above, revealed that there is little concrete evidence of a close relationship between teacher beliefs (espoused theories) and actual teaching practices (theories in use) (Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2002). Some concerns raised lie in unsupported claims, data gathering methods and analysis methods. Kane, et al. criticised the inappropriate use of proxies for teaching practice such as participants' recall of teaching activities and teaching techniques and descriptions of concrete teaching situations. They highlighted the lack of explicit statement of the researchers' own beliefs, theories and assumptions as opposed to research participants'. At best, the relationship between teacher beliefs and knowledge regarding effective teaching strategies and classroom practice can only be described as "good, but far from perfect fit" (Hativa et al., 2001, p. 725). Hativa et al.'s (2001) study is the only one endorsed as thorough by Kane and her team's critical review.

Further, congruence between teaching intentions and teaching practice, as opposed to beliefs and teaching practice was reported in Martin, Prosser, Trigwell, Ramsden and Benjamin's (2000) study, "[there is] no observed inconsistency between the teachers' intentions and their practices" (p. 409). This suggests that in given situations, teachers' thoughts about intended teaching goals may be closer to actual practice than are beliefs.

The importance of studies on teacher beliefs, intentions and overall conceptions of teaching is that, to a certain extent, they represent a teacher's underlying values about how teaching should be conducted, what roles the teacher assumes, what positions of knowledge the teacher takes, as well as what is accepted as evidence of effective teaching. They help us understand how teachers make teaching decisions before teaching is enacted. This researcher takes the view that

exploring teachers' teaching conceptions helps us understand their thought processes when thinking about teaching, and if they hold conceptions relevant to and in line with the institutional contextual demands.

2.1.9 Teacher identity and quality teaching

A teacher's sense of personal self could also be a contributing factor in determining the quality of teaching. In his book entitled *The Courage to Teach*, Parker Palmer invited us to think about "who is the self that teaches?" (2007, p. 10). The answer lies, he claimed, beyond teaching techniques; it is in one's *identity* and *integrity*. As a teacher progresses in teaching, the ability to connect with students depends less on teaching methods but more on selfhood – how much the teacher is willing to make himself or herself vulnerable in the "service of learning" (Palmer, 2007, p. 11). Teaching is both a public and a personal act. When we teach, we expose ourselves to indifference, judgment, and ridicule as we struggle to make connections between ourselves, the subject we teach and the student. As this exposure becomes a daily exercise, many lose heart in teaching and begin to build a barrier of defence. As a result, the act of teaching is 'unfeelingly' played out. Therefore, Palmer believes that bad teachers distance themselves from the subject they are teaching and the students while, good teachers join them.

Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness... The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts - ... the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self (Palmer, 2007, p. 11).

Palmer sees genuine teaching as driven by passion when one embraces the connection between the subject and the students, as something he or she cares about. To this, teaching methods and techniques are useful but secondary. They are not something prescribed as what works best but instead, what works best for "I" – the teacher.

The ability to bring ourselves into the classroom and to be critical about what is right for individual teachers, as opposed to what is prescribed for teachers in general, is referred to by Cranton and Carusetta (2004) as "authenticity in teaching". They argue for teachers to critically reflect on social norms about teaching and separate themselves from what is not fitting to them. This helps teachers develop their own personal style and be more genuine in teaching as they learn to disengage their thoughts and values from the collective of teachers. Like Palmer (2007), Cranton and Carusetta believe that good understanding of oneself as both a teacher and a person encourages one to be more genuine and open, to be passionate about teaching, and to know his or her preferred teaching style. They "affect the choices made among the wide variety of possible pedagogical methods... and may lead to strong convictions about what is considered

appropriate” (Entwistle & Walker, 2000, p. 344). Other studies have also found that teachers’ personal qualities are important in quality teaching (Axelrod, 2007; Bartram & Bailey, 2009; Vieira, 2002).

Affective attributes are also associated with effective teaching (AVCC, 2006), and expert teaching (Hattie, 2002). The Australian Vice Chancellor Committee Guidelines for effective teaching included emphasis on enthusiasm in teaching and student advice. Hattie highlighted high respect for students and strong passion for teaching in terms of caring about students’ learning and showing more emotions in teaching. Vieira (2002) suggested that students expect more from a teacher-student relationship than teachers realise. All these studies imply that teachers’ affective attributes also contribute to good teaching.

Finally, a teacher’s academic identity in relation to quality teaching should also be noted. Academic identity comprises identity of the discipline, the profession and universal academic identity such as a teacher and a researcher (D’Andrea & Gosling, 2005). Teachers in higher education are claimed to have a strong sense of loyalty to their discipline, and to a certain extent the profession, rather than to their universal teacher identity (Healey, 2000, 2005b). This is because every discipline has its own unique values and ways of thinking and working which affect approaches to teaching and learning (Hannan & Silver, 2000; Healey & Jenkins, 2003; Lueddeke, 2003). Consequently, the forms of teaching in each discipline can be different, for example, laboratory work in the sciences or fieldwork in geography and earth sciences (Healey & Jenkins, 2003). Due to these unique teaching/learning contexts and needs, it is important that these teachers are assisted with developing good teaching practices specific to the needs of the discipline. In thinking about teacher identity and quality teaching, taking a disciplinary stance may be just as important as, if not more important, than cultivating good personality.

2.1.10 Critical reflection, learning community and quality teaching

This section discusses the importance of placing teachers in their disciplinary communities of practice. This is to encourage critical reflections and discussions with colleagues of similar identities which are believed to enhance the development of quality teaching.

With regards to verbalising teaching conceptions, Eley (2006) suggested that high level teaching conceptions are only evoked in reflective processes. Conversely, Entwistle and Walker (2000) suggested that teachers may have *craft* or *tacit knowledge* acquired through the years but the reason they do not use precise conceptual language to talk about teaching is because they do not have the language for it; not because they are not reflective. These findings point to the fact that teachers need to be (a) encouraged to critically reflect and (b) have the language to

articulate their critical reflections. The lack of language to talk about teaching and learning limits the opportunity for open conversations about teaching practices between teachers (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005), conversations which could provide an opportunity to “engage with and critique the competing discourses on what it means to be a good teacher” (Tennant et al., 2010, p. 47). This takes us to the idea of teachers doing critical reflections within their community of practice.

It is believed that placing teachers among their *teaching commons* (Walker, Baepler, & Cohen, 2008) or *academic tribe* (Becher & Trowler, 2001) enable them to share common teaching and learning problems with colleagues of a similar disciplinary area. It can also provide them with the opportunity to talk about their conceptual understanding of the subject-matter, as well as challenge, re-think and revise previously taken-for-granted assumptions in the discipline (Martin & Lueckenhausen, 2005; Martin et al., 2000). In one respect, a community of practice is seen as a special interest group in which teachers share and discuss teaching and learning concerns in specific disciplines (Brown, 2000; Hutchings, 2000). Alternatively, it is also seen as the affiliation to a group that confronts issues in learning about, developing skills and experiencing the scholarship of teaching (MacKenzie et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2008). It promotes social practices and participation in discipline-specific teaching and learning (Zukas & Malcolm, 2007).

Critical reflections and discussions of discipline-specific teaching/learning practices affirm teacher identity. As social beings, we tend to prefer to be with people whom we share common goals and language as it helps us “reaffirm the avowed identity” (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005, p. 61). The formation of teacher identity is also associated with the construction of teaching expertise (Tennant et al., 2010). Tennant et al. (2010) wrote, “the self is not a passive entity” (p. 41). Like teaching expertise, identity is always under construction and emerges through relations with others. Identity formation is a reflexive process where teachers critically examine their own teaching/learning stances. When they relate with other teachers they will be able to see how other teachers attempt to position them. This social network is known as a teacher *learning community* where teachers help each other develop academic identities through critical reflections in the form of oral discourse and in writing.

A specific investigation of a “Learning Community” project was conducted in Scotland by MacKenzie and his team of researchers (2010). They found that through a sharing of innovative ideas and peer feedback in groups of mixed disciplines, the participants of the project developed (a) confidence in trying out teaching ideas and (b) trust and sense of belonging to their own groups even after the programme ended. This study acknowledges the value of a

formal learning community in providing a platform for critical reflections on teaching. Along with developing teaching, a learning community can also enhance a teacher's sense of identity. As pointed out earlier, a strong sense of identity enables teachers to bring their personal selves into the classroom and teach with genuine care and passion.

2.1.11 The scholarship of teaching

This section discusses the importance of formalising and systematically recognising teachers' reflective practices – researching one's own teaching. Given that teachers who verbalise their thinking and reflections are able to share their thoughts with their community of practice, it follows that writing could capture these reflective processes. When informed by educational theories this reflection can be developed into research papers for publication, leading us to the scholarship of teaching.

The scholarship of teaching concept took root when Ernest Boyer, the President of Carnegie Foundation published his work called *Scholarship Reconsidered*. Stemming from his concern in three major demands of faculty work: teaching, services and research, Boyer (1990) reconceptualised and broadened the meaning of scholarship beyond the scope of traditional research. He proposed four types of scholarship: the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching. Relevant to this study on quality teaching is the *scholarship of teaching* aspect of SoTL. As this concept is explored and the relationship with quality teaching is discussed, references will be made to SoTL issues.

The scholarship of teaching, as described by Boyer, refers to teaching being the “highest form of understanding”, comprising “hard work” and “serious study” as university professors are meant to be “widely read” and “intellectually challenged”. Teachers as scholars, in Boyer's view, continuously “transform” and “extend” knowledge in creative ways, making the teaching function in scholarship one that ensures continuity of knowledge (Boyer, 1990, pp. 23-24). Since Boyer, the scholarship of teaching has taken on various conceptualisations and definitions.

Several conceptualisations of SoTL are cited. Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin and Prosser (2000) outline five categories of approaches to SoTL:

- A. *knowing the literature* on teaching by collecting and reading the literature;
- B. *improving teaching* by reading and collecting the literature;
- C. *improving student learning* by investigating the learning of one's own students and of one's own teaching;

- D. *improving one's own students' learning* by knowing and relating the literature on teaching and learning to one's own discipline-specific literature and knowledge; and
- E. *improving student learning within the discipline generally*, by collecting and *communicating results of one's own work* on teaching and learning within the discipline (Trigwell et al., 2000, p.159).

Category E being the most sophisticated view of scholarship (Prosser, 2008) comprise three important elements: (i) conducting teaching that is informed by perspectives and literature of teaching and learning in the discipline; (ii) collecting and presenting rigorous evidence of teaching effectiveness in the discipline; and (iii) disseminating the research findings to the disciplinary community of practice. Other definitions of SoTL are suggested by Dewar (2008): “the intellectual work that faculty do when they use their disciplinary knowledge to investigate a question about their students’ learning, submit their findings to peer review, and make them public for others in the academy to build upon” (p. 18) and Haigh et al. (2011): “teachers [engaging] in some form of systematic inquiry into, and critical reflection on, aspects of students’ learning and/ or teaching with the intention of improving learning” (p. 10). Both stress on SoTL being a systematic investigation into teaching for the purpose of improving student learning. Basically, SoTL aims to “make transparent how we have made learning possible” (p. 156).

Another aspect of the scholarship of teaching to note is its discipline-based approach (Barnett, 2005; Budge, Clarke, & de la Harpe, 2007; Healey, 2000, 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Healey, Jordan, Pell, & Short, 2010; Huber & Morreale, 2002; Hutchings, 2000). Prosser (2008) argues for generic descriptions and ways of thinking in education research to be “contextualised and situated within individual disciplines and classes” (p. 4).

The final feature of the scholarship of teaching to be highlighted in this study is the extent of sharing and disseminating information, with many studies recognising peer-reviewed publications as a prominent element (Boshier, 2009; Dewar, 2008; Kreber, 2003). Alternatively, Kreber (2002) suggests a broader view of disseminating scholarly research findings that includes the sharing of teaching ideas in various modes and platforms like internet forums and faculty development programmes. Critical reflections within teachers’ learning communities, discussed previously, can be seen as a softer option of the SoTL.

The contribution of scholarly teaching towards the enhancement of the quality of teaching is debated. It is often assumed that research-active teachers are well-informed in teaching and that inquisitive teachers are research-active. However, Hattie and Marsh (1996) and Marsh and Hattie (2002) found no relationship between teaching and research across disciplines, in measures of research output, teaching quality and university categories. Research productivity

and teaching effectiveness were also found to be unrelated. Likewise, Halse, Deane, Hobson and Jones (2007) investigated the recipients of Australian Award for University Teaching 2005 and found that despite high publication rate, it was not common practice for these excellent teachers to research their own teaching, and to disseminate their teaching expertise to the wider community. Barnett (2005) notes that there is no “empirically proven, mutually beneficial relationship” between teaching and research (p. 24) As pointed out by Hattie and Marsh (1996), the relation is “very loosely coupled” (p. 529).

On the contrary, there is a widespread acceptance of the unique symbiosis between teaching and research. Barnett (2005) argued that the issue is not whether there is a link but the quality of the link; whether it is strong or weak, direct or indirect, positive or negative, or neutral in the case of either research- or teaching-intensive universities. Ways of looking at the teaching-research nexus are diverse (cf. Healey, 2005a; Neumann, 1994; J. Robertson, 2007; Visser-Wijnveen, Van Driel, Van der Rijst, Verloop, & Visser, 2010) with all recognising the value of scholarly teaching in enhancing students’ learning. Teaching that is more lively, interesting and stimulating for instance, have been reported by Taylor (2007). In the changing landscape of higher education where classes are larger and students are more diverse, there is a greater need to probe into learning outcomes – an opportunity provided by scholarly teaching (Dewar, 2008).

Scholarly teaching adds another dimension to effective and expert teaching. A scholarly teacher is one who constantly reflects on teaching and makes informed improvements based on pedagogical literature, as well as discusses the latest pedagogical innovations or research on his or her own teaching. Continuous reflection of scholarship-active teachers has been closely associated with expert teaching and student-centred teaching conceptions (Eley, 2006; Haigh et al., 2011; Kreber, 2002, 2003; Lueddeke, 2003).

The underlying principle behind the idea of effective, expert and scholarly teaching is that quality teaching, as perceived by this researcher, is a dynamic concept that is ever-changing and responsive to students’ needs, educational development and socio-economic changes. A reconceptualised idea of expert teaching offered by Tennant, McMullan and Kazcynski (2010) is helpful. They stress appreciating the teachers’ teaching contexts as “workplaces characterised by change, complexity and diversity” (p. 38). The development of teaching expertise, in the context of this discussion on quality teaching, is a process that is dynamic and involves continual improvement. More importantly, it is an on-going self-regulatory process that occurs in the interaction with the wider social and cultural context of university teaching. Such

dynamic and relational nature of expertise renders it to be a “lifelong project where [teacher] identity is fashioned and refashioned over time” (p. 41).

Despite finding no relation between teaching and research, Marsh and Hattie (2002) stress the importance of reconciling the two as part of on-going quality teaching enhancement efforts.

A major aim would be to increase the relations between teaching and research and devise strategies to achieve this mission. Institutions need to reward creativity, commitment, investigativeness and critical analysis in both teaching and research. The time taken to partake either, or both activities need to be recognised... Only when these attributes are recognised it is likely that the relation between teaching and research will be increased in both students and staff. This is a desirable aim of a university (p. 634).

Issues in institutionalising the scholarship of teaching are many. A major factor of the issue is the paradox between reconciling but enhancing the divide between teaching and research. Advocates of scholarly teaching have proposed ways of bridging the teaching-research link (Elsen, Visser-Wijnveen, Van Der Rijst, & Van Driel, 2009; Healey, 2005a; Kane et al., 2004) while some offered models of managing the scholarship of teaching (J. Taylor, 2007; Trigwell et al., 2000). This will be dealt with in the discussion of professional development. Despite the problematic nexus between teaching and research, the role of scholarship in enhancing quality teaching is widely-recognised. The importance of researching one’s own teaching should be recognised.

2.2 Systems support for quality teaching

The importance of looking at systems support in relation to quality teaching is acknowledged by several prominent writers. Skelton (2005) states, “however exceptional an individual appears to be, their work is always influenced to some extent by institutional factors” (p. 61). In their 3P model of teaching, Biggs and Tang (2007) include institutional procedures as one of the factors that influence teaching/learning contexts at the presage stage of teaching/learning. Despite acknowledging that teaching is a private affair, Ramsden (2003) proposes: “no lecturer works alone... To achieve change in the quality of teaching and learning, we ought rather to look carefully at the environment in which a lecturer works and the system of ideas which that environment represents” (p. 9).

Teaching is not an isolated activity that is separate from other university functions, neither is it an exclusive and sole responsibility of the academics. It needs to be viewed as part of the larger academic practices in the institution. Broadening the idea of teaching to a wider concept of

pedagogy reminds us of external influences that shape the idea of teaching excellence (Skelton, 2005). Zukas and Malcolm (2007) stated:

this understanding [of pedagogy], far from focusing on only one polarised aspect of learning and teaching, instead conceives educational practice as situated, multifaceted and complex process, involving multiple relationships and crucially, driven by specific and often conflicting purposes, power relations and interest (p. 62).

Conflicting purposes, power relations and interests that drive educational practices suggested in the above bring to mind market forces and various stakeholders' interests described in Chapter One. They are external forces that inevitably affect the goals of higher education, which in turn shape the notion of excellence in an institution and eventually the understanding of teaching excellence in classroom practices.

2.2.1 Institutional perception of teaching excellence

Although the researcher has argued against the use of the term teaching excellence to refer to quality teaching, the term is used in this section to refer to externally imposed standards in the wider context of quality assurance in higher education.

In thinking about quality and teaching excellence, it is appropriate to acknowledge Harvey and Green's (1993) five ways of viewing quality: (i) exception (associated with distinction and high standards), (ii) perfection (associated with zero defects, fault-free and getting things right), (iii) fitness for purpose (associated with functional designs and intended objectives), (iv) value for money (associated with funding, accountability, customers, stakeholders' expectations), and (v) transformative (associated with value-addedness and empowering the consumers). The nature of quality, according to the writers, is that it is relative to the users of the term and to contemporary circumstances.

Similarly, in his book *Understanding teaching excellence in higher education*, Skelton (2005) argued that the concept of teaching excellence is relative to institutional perceptions. He described four ideal-type understandings of teaching excellence which are *traditional*, *performative*, *psychologised* and *critical*. These ideal-types are institutional underlying beliefs that shape the way an academic institution approaches excellence (Skelton, 2005). Prevailing perspectives in the current state of globalisation and internationalisation of higher education, according to Skelton, are performative and psychologised perspectives: the former is concerned with teaching to produce graduates with relevant skills and knowledge in the global market and the latter concerned with the quality of human relations in the teaching/learning processes, as well as understanding learning needs as advocated in this study.

Tension exists between the two ideal-types due to external forces. The 3Es of economy, efficiency and effectiveness contained in the performative culture, according to Skelton (2007), have marginalised the human quality of teaching and learning held in the psychologised ideal (p. 7). The current interest in institutional quality assurance efforts discussed in Chapter One is argued by many to be taking over genuine improvement efforts to improve teaching (cf. Anderson, 2006; Blackmore, 2004; Hodson & Thomas, 2003; Shortland, 2004), which has promoted a culture of compliance, resistance and “tokenistic window-dressing” rather than substantive change (Patrick & Lines, 2005, p. 47). A paradox in teaching excellence is created; there is interest in enhancing the status of teaching, and yet efforts to support these interests continue to undermine teaching itself (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005). Skelton (2007) calls this the “dark side” of teaching excellence where ideological values held by an institution can sometimes lead to different standards set for teaching and research when it comes to recognition of their status, funding entitlement and levels of provisions.

This teaching excellence paradox is attributed to “uncritical” acceptance of the concept of development which, as argued by D'Andrea and Gosling (2005), stems from goals of higher education that are often “indeterminate, unarticulated and unrecognised” (pp. 24-25). In reflecting on an institution's direction for change, they argued that

there is a need to be open and explicit about which social and value commitments are driving the desire to bring about change. Innovation is not a good in itself. Change is not necessarily for the better. It is therefore imperative that the values that underpin an institutional approach to improving teaching and learning are clearly articulated. (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005, p. 34)

The above highlights the importance of ensuring that institutional goals and values that underpin the goals are shared and accepted by all constituencies within the university. This is to foster co-operation and avoid resistance. More importantly, it ensures that all parties understand what the institution is developing towards. Failure to foster common understanding may lead to resistance that impair institutional enhancement efforts.

Finally, there is a need to align institutional goals with strategies designed to achieve them. All activities designed within a quality assurance framework should adequately and specifically support efforts developed to improve and enhance quality teaching (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Ling, 2005; Radloff, 2005). With reference to goals of higher education, it should also be noted that in the present state of globalisation and internationalisation, higher learning institutions exist in different forms and serve different purposes. This raises the issue of institutional identity and its own unique designs of excellence, often in keeping with its history and missions (Skelton, 2007). Institutional identities, historical background and mission statements have a

powerful influence over institutional goals and perceptions of excellence, which further affects the design of quality frameworks and related efforts.

The following section discusses two major aspects involved in developing and enhancing teaching excellence at an educational institution: teaching evaluation and professional development programmes. Under these aspects, various strategies and related issues are discussed.

2.2.2 Evaluating quality teaching

The understanding that institutional perceptions of teaching excellence has influence over the direction for change and improvement efforts, combined with the complex nature of teaching makes the evaluation of teaching a challenging task that requires critical scrutiny.

i) Student evaluation of teachers (SET)

Student evaluation of teachers (SET) is a common tool used to evaluate teaching in higher education. The current trend in quality assurance at higher education in many universities views students as “customers” (Douglas, Douglas, & Barnes, 2006, p. 251) or “direct receivers of the teaching service” (Douglas & Douglas, 2006, p. 6). Consequently, SET has become an obvious choice for evaluating, maintaining and enhancing teaching quality supposedly, in the best interest of students’ learning experiences. Although students are argued to be immature (Heilman & Matsuzaki, 2009; Pounder, 2007), biased (Douglas & Douglas, 2006; MacFarlane, 2007; Pounder, 2007), and ill-informed about what is current in teaching excellence (2007), they are the ones who can best describe their learning experiences of teaching.

Issues in SET are many. The focus here is on those related to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of quality teaching. Capturing the complexity of teaching in one single summative evaluation is a challenging task. The question of what constitutes excellent or effective teaching poses particular problems in SET content. More often than not, the criteria for evaluation contained in SET are those perceived by people other than the students, resulting in evaluation of teaching that does not truly reflect students’ own learning experiences (Bie & Meng, 2009; Heilman & Matsuzaki, 2009; Shevlin, Banyard, Davies, & Griffiths, 2000).

Working around institutional ideologies and the institution’s perceptions and judgment of teaching excellence can play a significant role in determining how a higher education institution designs and manages teaching evaluation (Skelton, 2005; Tennant et al., 2010). A performative understanding of excellence for instance, tends to associate quality teaching with

on-stage performance which can reduce teaching to a technical activity (MacFarlane, 2007) and ignore the multi-dimensional and complex nature of teaching (Skelton, 2005).

There needs to be an opportunity for consideration of a variety of teaching methods, and make room for teaching innovations and creativity as opposed to traditional lecture. A broader concept of teaching and classroom experience has been suggested (Pounder, 2007; Tom, Tong, & Hesse, 2010). The inclusion of open-ended questions in SET is designed to encourage genuine and in-depth student feedback which provides insightful information better than numerical scores can (acknowledging potential student bias).

Beyond the assessment of teaching, it is important that the assessment is followed through with necessary support to improve and enhance teaching. Firstly, teachers should be informed of their assessment outcomes. Direct access to students' feedback has been suggested as teachers are in the best position to understand the comments within a given context (Rowley, 2003). The use of SET to make personnel decisions that are often found in quality assurance culture should be avoided (Bie & Meng, 2009; Roche & Marsh, 2000).

Secondly, teachers need to be assisted in interpreting the results and developing the appropriate improvement strategies (Marsh, 2007; Roche & Marsh, 2000; Smith, 2008). Negative SET feedback was found to be potentially damaging to a teacher's self-concept (Roche & Marsh, 2000). Further, teachers were also found to have the will and desire to improve their teaching but often did not know where to begin (Budge et al., 2007; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). Marsh (2007) suggests the need for a "systematic intervention" or the use of external consultants, emphasising the need to link teaching evaluation practices with professional development activities. Smith (2008) proposes building a structured model to create this link, arguing for a holistic approach that promotes institution-wide involvement of teachers and institution-wide support at multiple levels.

Finally, keeping a longitudinal database of individual teachers' SET records can help the institution monitor one single teacher's development of teaching over time, rather than comparing results between different teachers (Marsh, 2007). The latter does not provide an accurate picture of teaching performance due to various factors that can influence SET outcomes of different teachers (Ghedin & Aquario, 2008; Pounder, 2007). A longitudinal record of one single teacher can facilitate teaching development efforts that are more genuine.

Despite the variety of issues with using SET to evaluate and enhance teaching, it is indeed, the only mechanism to collect students' feedback in large quantities. We could be pragmatic and be mindful of its limitations (Rowley, 2003). To maximise the use of SET data, relating it to staff

development is essential. Also, supplementing SET with other mechanisms of evaluating teaching can help balance its shortcomings. The following discusses another mechanism for teaching evaluation.

ii) Peer observation of teaching (POT)

Peer observation of teaching (POT) is another common tool used (Gosling, 2002; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Peel, 2005; Shortland, 2004). Among the recognised benefits of POT are the opportunity to have another teacher observe and comment on one's teaching for the purpose of development, to observe other teachers teach and gain ideas from people's approaches, as well as to review, reflect and discuss with another teacher, what was observed and to plan strategies for improvement.

One key issue in POT is who gets to have a sense of ownership in the teaching observation process? Gosling (2002) described three common models of POT: (i) the evaluation model (superior observing teachers); (ii) the development model (expert observing teachers), and (iii) the peer review model (teacher colleagues observing each other), also known as the "collaborative model" (Gosling & O'Connor, 2006). The purpose of the evaluation model is mainly for management purposes, usually as part of the institutional quality management systems for formal report of accountability and performance. Despite its good intentions to facilitate teaching developments in the evaluation model issues include exposure of confidential information that could be used and abused, outcome of reviews that may impact on teacher's career progress, as well as the lack of follow-up after quality reviewer processes are completed (McMahon, Barrett, & O'Neill, 2007; Shortland, 2004; C. Taylor, 2009). All these possibilities could result in teachers' suspicion of and resistance towards POT practices.

The purpose of both Gosling's (2002) and Gosling and Connor's (2006) development and peer review model is to improve teaching competencies. However, the former involves expert feedback while the latter takes place between "genuine peers" of mutual respect (Gosling, 2002, p. 2). Only the peer review model involves letting the person being observed have full control over the structural design and information flow of the observation exercise (McMahon et al., 2007). This is so that the teachers involved could act as the agents of change when they are able to take ownership and control over the processes (Shortland, 2004; J. Taylor, 2007). McMahon et al. (2007) suggest five key dimensions of observee control: (i) having the liberty to choose the observer, (ii) having the opportunity to choose the focus of observation, (iii) deciding how feedback should be given, (iv) deciding what to do with observation information and (v) deciding how to act on it. It is believed that when teachers are given the opportunity to identify what will be most useful to them in professional practice, the review processes can

become more meaningful and promote active engagement (Gosling & O'Connor, 2006). Further, several observations over a longer duration provide teachers with the opportunity to try various teaching techniques, avoid one-time summative evaluation and builds teaching confidence (McMahon et al., 2007).

Faith in teaching observation rests on its transformative potential. It is important to develop a culture of criticism in which teachers are able to criticise constructively and in return, be receptive to others' (Peel, 2005) instead of letting it end up in mere friendly chats of what was observed (C. Taylor, 2009). Cross-discipline observation has also been suggested as it provides the opportunity to see how teachers of other disciplines approach "the craft of teaching" (Gosling & O'Connor, 2006, p. 500; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004).

For follow-up, POT outcomes should be kept well within the cluster of practice, shared in the form of scholarship and learning community, or developed into resource books or multimedia resources (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Nixon, Vickerman, & Maynard, 2010). In short, POT can be a meaningful tool for teaching enhancement if it is structured, well-resourced, collaborative, constructive (not repetitive), well-disseminated and streamlined across the institution (Atkinson & Bolt, 2010; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004; Peel, 2005).

Both SET and POT are common mechanisms to evaluate teaching. Used together, they can offset either's weaknesses and provide complementary feedback on teaching from different perspectives; from students', peers', subject coordinators', professional developers' or pedagogical experts'.

2.2.3 Professional development

The evaluation of teaching is only half the effort in improving and enhancing teaching at an institution. Professional development plays a crucial role in completing the cycle of quality teaching enhancement. In the literature, professional development is also referred to as educational development, faculty development, teacher development and academic development (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Elvidge, Fraser, Land, Mason, & Matthew, 2003; Fraser, 2005a; Patrick & Lines, 2005; Radloff, 2005; Skelton, 2005, 2007). In this discussion, the term professional development will be used to refer to all initiatives related to developing, improving, enhancing and sustaining the quality of teaching.

Professional development that takes a centralised approach encompasses activities related to developing and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in an institution that is managed and coordinated by one centralised body (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Kanuka, 2010). In such a

case, the roles of such a body typically vary from providing teacher training workshops, providing opportunities for teachers to meet and talk about teaching, providing support for the scholarship of teaching, managing the assessment of teaching, managing supplementary activities to enhance teaching and finally ensuring recognition and reward for teaching (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Prebble et al., 2005; Wisker, 2006). Roles may also include the provision and monitoring of student learning support, curriculum design, involvement in organisation policy development, as well as those that go beyond the institutional parameters to span across the higher education sector (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Wisker, 2006).

In a decentralised approach, staff development is managed by a smaller unit or department placed within a school or a faculty. Activities are on a smaller scale and are targeted to develop teaching and teachers through, for example, lunch time forums, dissemination of project outcomes in weekly e-mails (Radloff, 2005).

i) Professional development: between teaching conceptions and teaching strategies

Researchers of teacher thinking present mixed opinions regarding teacher thinking and professional development. Some researchers place changing teaching conceptions before teaching strategies. Much of the work done by Trigwell, Prosser and their team of researchers (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996, 2003, 2004; Trigwell et al., 1994) suggest that developing teachers' student-focused conception of teaching, as opposed to teacher-centred orientation, is a precursor to affecting student-focused approach to teaching. If teachers do not hold a student-focused conception of teaching, introducing student-focused strategies "will be a futile and misunderstood pursuit" (Trigwell et al., 1994, p. 83). Kember and Kwan (2000) also found strong relationships between teaching conceptions and teaching approach, thus believed that "fundamental changes to the quality of teaching and learning may only result from changes to conceptions of teaching" (p. 489). Other writers with similar views are Martin, et al. (2000), Norton (2005), McAlpine, et al. (2006), Light and Calkins (2008) and Postareff and Lindblom-Ylance (2008).

Conversely, some researchers hold the view that addressing teaching strategies in professional development programmes is fundamental in improving quality teaching (Eley, 2006; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). Hativa and Goodyear (2002), for instance, found that award-recipient teachers did not even notice that they were using some effective teaching strategies as they relied on intuition, rather than conscious decision-making. They propose that professional development programmes begin by increasing teachers' knowledge of a variety of teaching strategies so they can choose strategies suitable for their context.

Other studies suggest weak or no relation between changing conceptions in professional development programmes and improved teaching practices. Kane et al. (2002) found no explicit link between the two while Light and Calkins (2008) acknowledged that it is difficult to influence conceptions of teaching in professional development programmes. However, Gibbs and Coffey (2004) found more student-centred conceptions of teaching after more than 60 hours of professional development programmes of various kinds. It is not clear from the research whether teaching conceptions or teaching strategies should take precedence in professional development.

The researcher argues that both teaching conceptions and teaching strategies can and should be developed simultaneously. The importance of critical reflections, reflective practices, engagement in learning community and the scholarship of teaching are also referred to. The researcher also argues that advocating scholarly teaching in professional development approaches can promote concurrent enhancement of teaching conceptions and strategies that is based on pedagogical research and literature. A scholarly approach in professional development efforts in the Western world appears to be the current trend. The following section discusses this and its related issues.

ii) Professional development: considering scholarly approach

One of the challenges faced by university teachers is to strike a balance between teaching and research. Marsh and Hattie (2002) suggest that a desirable aim of a university is to increase the relation between teaching and research. However, they also implied that in becoming productive researchers, academics acquire research skills in daily tasks rather than being formally trained.

Academics receive considerable training in how to be productive researchers and are constantly exposed – through professional reading, conferences, and collaboration – to role models who are productive researchers (p. 634).

The idea that academics receive considerable training to be productive researchers is an assumption. Not all academics in all institutional contexts have the privilege of being involved in or being coached into research activities. Some are left to learn to teach or do research on their own. Holding this assumption can work against helping teachers reconcile teaching and research, and further developing their teaching practices. Skelton (2005) argues for professional development that “puts professionalism at its centre” (p. 137) - one that provides a context in which higher education teachers can explore the relationship between subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, or what is better known as the scholarship of teaching. Writers on

quality teaching stress professional development that assists teachers in developing and enhancing teaching through the scholarship of teaching.

To begin with, it is important for such professional development programmes to be systematically structured. Some projects on the scholarship of teaching are cited. For example, Trigwell et al. (2000) described the Australian Scholarship of Teaching Project 1999 that comprised five units: training in scholarly discourse, scholarly peer review, proposal preparation, publication, and a teaching portfolio. Walker et al. (2008) describe a programme at the University of Minnesota that comprised three facets for deep engagement with scholarship: helping teachers engage with scholarship, putting scholarship into action and finally contributing to scholarship. Mackenzie (2010) describes the Learning Community project at the University of Glasgow, the UK that consisted of meetings, seminars and workshops to discuss scholarly teaching particularly through the discussion of participants' Teacher Development Projects. These projects have helped teachers (i) engage with scholarship, (ii) put scholarship into action, (iii) provide evidence of their scholarship and iv) disseminate the research outcomes.

Smith's (2008) model at Griffith University, Australia is a multi-phased programme that not only takes a scholarly approach to professional development but develops it based on outcomes of teaching evaluation. It is an integrated programme that is embedded in the institutional framework. It is designed to link teaching evaluation with staff development. The model comprises two phases of student evaluation and three phases of integrated staff development. More importantly, it employs four sources of information about teaching: self-reflection, peer review, student learning outcomes and student experience evaluation in order to provide a clearer, more valid and comprehensive picture of teaching/learning situation in the institution.

All the above projects reflect careful thought and consideration in design and implementation. Firstly, the programmes are structured into incremental steps that range from exposure to scholarly research to putting it into action and sharing its outcome. A comprehensive and well-thought out design that guides teachers well in developing reflective teaching and scholarly culture can counter issues of lack of continuity and lack of institution-wide participation (Haigh et al., 2011). Secondly, the use of consultants or experts in scholarship can help develop and sustain interest in teaching-based research. Among the problems in engaging teachers with scholarly teaching is lack of familiarity with the language of educational research (Haigh et al., 2011), lack of familiarity with the measurement tools used in education as opposed to those used in subject-disciplines (Walker et al., 2008), and lack of faith in the value of educational research (Boshier, 2009; Brawley, Kelly, & Timmins, 2009; Dewar, 2008). Finally, a sustained

programme allows the culture of scholarship to take effect on teachers' interest and practices (Walker et al., 2008).

Although these SoTL programmes reported positive outcomes (cf. MacKenzie et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2008) there is also evidence that the gap between teaching and research widened despite current professional development efforts to promote teaching-based research. It has become a major impediment in developing teaching and raising its standard equal to that of research. The source of the problem lies in lower value accorded to pedagogical research compared to disciplinary research. Research on teaching in higher education is seen as being in the "second-class academic ghetto" (Brawley et al., 2009, pp. 23-24) for lack of "theoretical rigour" and "original contribution" to knowledge (Boshier, 2009, p. 3). Related is the issue of academics' primary affiliations to their subject disciplines and professions (Haigh et al., 2011; Halse et al., 2007; Healey, 2008; Healey & Jenkins, 2003; Lueddeke, 2003). Largely to blame, according to these authors, is the existence of a double-standard in criteria for research funding and for academic recognition and reward (Brawley et al., 2009; Healey, 2005a, 2005b; Kreber, 2003; Vardi & Quin, 2011; Walker et al., 2008). Teaching and scholarly research are still undervalued due to strong forces in market competition, league tables and the emphasis on skills and knowledge specialisations (Barnett, 2005; J. Taylor, 2007).

At this juncture, it is appropriate to acknowledge the complex relationship between teaching and research. It has been noted earlier that there are diverse ways to look at the nexus. Studies have shown that the source of the complexity lies in the different ways academic staff and students conceive the ideas of teaching, learning, knowledge and research (Buckley, 2011; Griffiths, 2004; Zamorski, 2002). This has resulted in different ways of looking at how they interact, as well as the extent to which they are related. Boyer's (1990) distinctions between research types of discovery, application and integration are still relevant today (Healey, 2005a). This calls for sensitisation towards the different ways research can be built into the teaching-learning environment. Conceptual distinctions between research-based/-led/-informed/-oriented teaching have offered structured ways of looking at the nexus and diverse possibilities for developing it. Some researchers promote student involvement in research as they are at the receiving end of the teaching-research integration (for example, Buckley, 2011; Jenkins, Healey, & Zetter, 2007) while others discuss the influence one has on the other (for example, Willcoxson, Manning, Johnston, & Gething, 2011). How the teaching-research nexus is developed, implemented, recognised and rewarded requires critical reflection on an institution's underlying philosophies. It also calls for thoughtful planning so that institutional goals and the nation's goals, as well as tensions that may arise from these different goal levels are given due attention (Griffiths, 2004).

The onus is on higher learning institutions to raise the status of teaching and scholarly research within a particular institutional context. It does not mean fighting the external forces but to develop alongside it, opportunities for scholarly teaching to develop. The integration of professional development programmes into the whole university system as in Smith's (2008) model is emphasised. Such effort requires a change of mind set at the university top level. The management need to recognise the worth of research on teaching in higher education and build into the institutional mechanism, a reward system for it, consideration for funding and more importantly to provide platforms for its growth that are linked with other institution-wide practices such as teaching evaluation and remedial teaching programmes.

iii) Mentor programme

Mentoring is a programme that can be built into faculty development, to socialise academic staff members who are new to the profession, to provide emotional and discipline-specific support, and to provide guidance with career development (Cawyer, Simonds, & Davis, 2002; P. P. Wilson, Valentine, & Pereira, 2002). In a university setting, mentoring is often cited as providing protégés with assistance in teaching and doing research (Balmer, D'Alessandro, Risko, & Gusic, 2011; Mathews, 2003; P. P. Wilson et al., 2002). Reported benefits of mentoring are reciprocal; feeling of acceptance, improved confidence and having higher motivation for professional growth on the protégés' side and having better job satisfaction on the mentors' part (White, Brannan, & Wilson, 2010; C. B. Wilson, Brannan, & White, 2010). Traditionally, it involves a "dyadic" or one-on-one relationship between a senior faculty member who acts as the mentor to a junior member known as the protégé (Mathews, 2003; P. P. Wilson et al., 2002).

More recently, emerging models have moved away from dyadic to multiple mentoring (Sorcinelli & Jung, 2007). It is argued that in reality, faculty challenges are multiple and change from one academic task to another (Balmer et al., 2011; de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). Faculty development is a cyclical learning process. Eventually, protégés seek a "mentor of the moment" (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004, p. 269) or "convenient mentor" (Cawyer et al., 2002, p. 235) who is accessible at the time of need. The need to develop a "constellation of relationships" among protégés, peers and mentors highlights the importance of providing different kinds of help by various work peers of different areas of expertise (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004, p. 84).

There are several major issues to be mindful of when designing a mentor programme. Firstly, is to conceptualise the programme and decide on its objectives in order to determine the kind of approach suitable to the needs of a particular academic setting (Lumpkin, 2011). Second,

suitable mentor-protégé pairing is also pivotal; taking into account mentor/protégé characteristics, and gender and disciplinary preferences to ensure trust, mutual respect and higher sense of commitment to the process (Mathews, 2003). Letting protégés choose their own mentors is preferred (Balmer et al., 2011; P. P. Wilson et al., 2002). Third is proper monitoring – ensuring mentor accessibility, maintaining consistent mentor-protégé contact (2002) and sustaining effective mentor-protégé communication (2011). Finally, the effectiveness of a mentor programme needs to be evaluated to ensure a meaningful experience for both participants. Evidence-based evaluation is necessary. Qualitative research approach is claimed to be better in capturing mentoring processes (Lumpkin, 2011; W. McMillan & Parker, 2005).

iv) Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching (PGCert)

Often in a higher education institution, there are teachers who, while holding a relevant qualification in their subject area, are new to the teaching profession due to career change or are fresh graduates who have had no formal qualification in teaching (Butcher & Stoncel, 2011). For these teachers, a postgraduate certificate in teaching (PGCert) can serve as a formal in-service training that provides pedagogical foundation. Following Dearing Report (1997) recommendations, all higher education institutions in the UK are now offering Higher Education Authority-accredited introductory courses for new teachers (Gosling, 2010; Kandlbinder & Peseta, 2009). In other Western countries, such as the USA, Australia and New Zealand, a PGCert is not mandatory but is offered for those interested in pursuing a university teaching career (for example, Gosling, 2010; Humboldt State University, 2012).

To implement PGCert as part of professional development, there are three issues of concern to this project. First is in making PGCert mandatory for beginner teachers. When new teachers are taken temporarily out of faculty functions, their long-term participation in PGCert programmes results in lack of faculty resource. It does the new teachers injustice if PGCert participation is made mandatory by way of affecting promotion, salary increment or tenure for the new (Gosling, 2010). The second issue concerns making real impact on academic practices. It was found that teachers with no teaching qualifications struggle to keep up with new language and jargon, with qualitative research approaches and with the fact that there is no clear solution to teaching/learning issues (Kandlbinder & Peseta, 2009). The third issue relates to generic or discipline-based approach to professional development discussed previously. Long (2010) found that although some teachers reflect on discipline-specific conceptualisation in talking about teaching, generally, their teaching approaches are not discipline-specific despite claiming so. Further, literature that supports discipline-specific pedagogy is scarce (Wareing, 2009). Wareing (2009) advocates a trans-disciplinary approach to teacher training (including PGCert)

due to the non-homogeneous nature of new teacher composition (Butcher & Stoncel, 2011; Wareing, 2009). Occasional references to specific disciplines are however encouraged (Butcher & Stoncel, 2011; Roness & Smith, 2009).

2.2.4 Situating the professional development unit within the university

Every institution has its own underlying beliefs and perceptions of excellence, influenced by its social and cultural history and, manifested in the institutional missions (Skelton, 2005). These beliefs and perceptions impact on professional development efforts in several ways. Firstly, it is important that professional development initiatives take a strategic direction that is aligned with institutional missions and other quality-related initiatives in the university (Ling, 2005; Patrick & Lines, 2005; Radloff, 2005). This means designing professional development activities that are in tandem with institutional quality goals, and quality assurance frameworks. Professional development units should function as a “dynamic conduit” that supports the institutional missions, rather than being taken as solely responsible for the quality of teaching across the institution (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005, p. 52; D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005).

Secondly, teachers should have a sense of ownership of excellence. Skelton (2005) stressed professional development that celebrates “new professionalism” – the idea that teachers should be granted the opportunity to have a say about what is right for them and that they are not “passive recipients of expert knowledge and policy” as far as teaching quality is concerned (Skelton, 2005, p. 138).

It is important that people take responsibility for their views on teaching excellence and recognise that their own understanding is provisional and subject to change... teaching excellence is not a given... encourage discussion about its meaning and practice.
(Skelton, 2005, p. 174)

However, there is a possibility that this idea of new professionalism is unfitting in some higher education contexts, in particular, those that are quality-oriented and that strive to meet externally-set standards. In such cases, the role of the professional development unit is crucial in striking a balance between influencing institutional policies (to include internally-developed ideas of academic quality) and providing the teachers with the opportunity to critically examine the ideas of teaching excellence, as well as to communicate these ideas to the management. Such challenges of the professional development unit is referred to by Kanuka (2010, p. 79) as doing the “centre dance” - to find the right balance in addressing challenges that are continually generated by internal and external forces.

Centralisation of professional development units is pivotal in aligning professional development unit's initiatives with institutional goals. Although the value of a decentralised structure is also recognised for the immediate relevance of activities to specific department contexts (Radloff, 2005), a centralised unit is claimed to be the most effective structure when it comes to achieving institution-wide teaching and learning enhancement (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005). A centralised position (i) provides a "bird's-eye view" of the whole institution, (ii) places the unit in a more powerful position to work with various levels of the university constituencies and (iii) has the power to influence university policies (Kanuka, 2010, p. 76).

Related, is a multi-layered approach to unit functions – one in which professional development initiatives are linked with other practices outside of the unit/centre, creating a more "seamless" and "comprehensive" programmes (Kanuka, 2010, p. 77). A centralised and multi-layered approach puts professional development units in the position to contest university policies for effective change, as opposed to complying with policies that are developed for audit exercise (Patrick & Lines, 2005, p. 47). This can help change an institutional ethos that impedes the development and enhancement of quality teaching which reminds us of the need to foster common understanding of institutional goals and values that underpin them. Institutional ethos that hamper conceptual transformation teaching practices (Budge et al., 2007) and that enhance the divide between teaching and research (Vardi & Quin, 2011; Walker et al., 2008) for instance, should be addressed.

Teachers' lack of interest and participation in professional development activities is an issue noted by Ryan, Fraser and Dearn and Chalmers (2005). Teachers' reluctance to engage in professional development activities is attributed to the pressure of workload and time borne by the multi-faceted nature of academic roles today. It highlights the need for professional developers to find ways of getting teachers interested and engaged in professional development activities.

One way of canvassing teacher support is to establish links with the teaching communities and their departments and to make the unit's/centre's presence felt. In building relationships with the teachers, the approach should be "gentle", "subtle", "consultative" and "collegial" (Budge et al., 2007; Kanuka, 2010). Consistent with the role of a 'dynamic conduit', rather than being held solely accountable for an institution's teaching excellence, professional developers should send out the message that they are available to help rather than being the know-all experts (Kanuka, 2010). Establishing trust is crucial before professional developers can be invited into teachers' "private teaching spaces" (Budge et al., 2007, p. 8).

A final point to note is to provide the programmes in an on-going manner. They need to be sustainable, efficient and effective (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Kanuka, 2010; Radloff, 2005; Ryan et al., 2005; Wisker, 2006). For this, long term support from the top leaders is crucial (Kanuka, 2010) while team leadership that involves the interplay between leaders at multiple levels is no less critical (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Lueddeke, 2003). Above all, it is important to remember that transformative change takes time. The university management should not be quick to judge the effectiveness of professional development unit efforts. Patrick and Lines (2005) noted,

...the organisation needs to have a commitment to the kind of change it desires; it must not lose its nerve and demand that these changes happen too quickly or without the requisite investment of time for change to be initiated and take root and for its impact to be revealed. Pressure for fast results undermines the change process (p. 36).

2.3 Chapter summary

This chapter has established the theoretical foundations behind the current concepts of quality teaching in higher education. Despite the fact that there are various ways of conceptualising quality teaching, a review of studies on teachers' and students' perceptions of quality teaching has revealed at least six dimensions commonly found in studies across different times and places. These include stages of teaching from planning to the evaluation of teaching. These dimensions provide a guide in the investigation of quality teaching perceptions in this study.

A review of literature related to quality teaching has led to the following assumptions about teaching. Firstly, there is neither one correct way to teach, nor is there one correct way of looking at teaching; but there are qualitative differences in teaching. Teaching of 'the most desirable quality' moves away from being teacher-centred to being learner-centred and is claimed to result in higher learner engagement. The most desirable aim of teaching is associated with being effective in bringing about meaningful learning, and having the expertise to be responsive to contextual and momentary needs. In emphasising bringing about meaningful learning, a contemporary view from the Western perspective is adopted in this study. Constructivist approaches to teaching, although not claimed by the author to be the only one correct teaching approach, work along learner-centred views on teaching promoted in this study. The understanding of the desirable aim of teaching/learning and constructivist teaching/learning views leads to the aim of developing sophisticated teaching conceptions.

Secondly, other elements in a teaching context are identified as impacting on the quality of one's teaching. Within the teacher's self, one's beliefs about teaching/learning and how

knowledge is constructed determines teaching intentions and practices. Another part of teacher thinking is their sense of identity within the context of their discipline, as well as their personal qualities, which both influence the way they fuse together their teaching/learning considerations. On the outside, contextual factors can play a critical role in influencing teaching quality. They include specific classroom contexts and institutional ethos, policies and practices, as well as the way teaching is evaluated. A teacher's understanding of how these internal and external contextual factors impact on their teaching adds to sophisticated teaching conceptions. A well-developed conception is argued to be important and complementary to developing teaching strategies. Therefore, professional development efforts need to focus on developing teacher thinking. The value of scholarly research in advancing teaching conceptions is recognised. It should also be the aim of professional development to help teachers reconcile their two major academic functions: teaching and research, in the best interest of enhancing teaching and learning.

This research investigation aims to explore the idea of quality teaching in higher education in Malaysia as a reference point for studying quality teaching in the case institution. However, studies on the notion of quality teaching in the Malaysian higher education are very scarce except for one that dealt with students' perceptions (Ng, 2004). Government documents that served as reference points for quality teaching in higher education are also lacking except for the generic philosophy of national education (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2007b). Further, there is no simple and universally accepted definition of quality teaching except for its large and abstract conceptualisations. Therefore, in order to establish a starting point from which to develop quality teaching enhancement efforts at the case institution, backed by literature support, the researcher felt it appropriate to begin with exploring teachers' and the institution's perceptions of quality teaching and to what extent is there common understanding between them. It was not the researcher's intention to evaluate the teachers' teaching performance as there is no fixed standard to use. This is an exploratory study.

The next chapter describes the methods and methodologies employed to achieve the aim of investigation.

Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological principles behind this study and the methods employed. The case study approach and the over-arching nature of the research inquiry are first discussed. The choice of mixed methods research and its pragmatic stance are then established. The chapter proceeds with a description of the data collection procedures and data analysis processes. In describing the decisions made and the research processes undertaken, a pragmatic position is acknowledged.

Unlike in other chapters where “the researcher” is deliberately used “I” will be used in this chapter. This is to acknowledge the researcher’s personal choices in the research decision-making processes and the researcher’s presence in the research activities. “I” is more “honest and direct” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 201).

3.1 Research questions

The research questions developed for this study are:

1. How do teachers in the case study institution perceive quality teaching?
2. What kinds of existing support for teaching do the teachers find helpful in delivering quality teaching?
3. What kinds of existing constraints are there which impede the teachers’ delivery of quality teaching?
4. What kinds of support for teaching do the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided?

3.2 Research methodology

This section describes the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the mixed methods research processes employed in this study. It begins by establishing the case study research approach and the nature of the investigation. It proceeds with justifying the need for mixed methods research. Following this, the choice of pragmatism is justified and the implications of this pragmatist stance for the research decisions made are discussed.

3.2.1 Case study approach: Universiti Gading Gemilang as one singular unit

In this study, the researcher seeks to understand the problem within its natural setting, thus lending itself to what Lincoln and Guba (1985) term as “the naturalistic inquiry”. As established in Chapter Two, since there is no standard definition of quality teaching and the notion of quality teaching is large and abstract, it is not the researcher’s intention to measure the standard of quality teaching. There is no hypothesis or a particular theory on quality teaching to test out and confirm (Creswell, 1994, 2005; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Instead, the aim of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of quality teaching by exploring teachers’ perceptions at an institution of interest. The nature of the research is that little is known about perceptions of quality teaching in the institution and this is what the research first sets out to explore. This is so that efforts in enhancing the quality of teaching can be improved.

Stake (2005) stresses that case study is a choice of what is to be studied rather than a choice of methodology. The attention is on one *singular unit*. He stated, “[case study] draws attention to the question of what can be learned in a single case” (Stake, 2005, p. 445). The study of a singular case comprises an investigation into the complexity of a functioning system that may range from an individual, a social unit, to a phenomenon. It involves intensive analysis that reveals insights, discoveries and interpretations making it necessary to have rich and thick descriptions. The descriptions are “holistic”, “lifelike”, “grounded” and “exploratory”, taking in as many elements as possible. For these reasons, case study is often placed alongside other qualitative research methods (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 1998). As a result of this thorough and in-depth analysis of one single case, it may then be reported as “a case that has merit in and of itself” (Creswell, 2008, p. 476).

The notion of “boundedness” places a ‘fence’ around the case, defining for one particular piece of research what is and what is not to be studied (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Merriam, 1998). There is “common sense obviousness” for the boundaries which includes the boundary of space and/or time. In other words, the case is situated within a real-life context. There are features within the boundaries of the case where activities are patterned, coherent and in sequence. In-depth investigation into this bounded system uncovers the interaction of significant characteristics or elements such as activities and the people involved, making descriptions and explanations holistic (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998). According to Yin (2003), the elements are so embedded in the situation that the researcher has no control over the phenomenon, but aims to find out how things work and why they work the way they do. Yin (2009) further states, “the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (p. 4). Due to the fact that case study is grounded

in its context and supports in-depth investigation into a complex system, case study is suitable for and is often used in research in education (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In summary, “[it] attends to constructs of society and socialisation in studying educational phenomena” (Merriam, 1998, p. 37).

As described in Chapter One: Introduction to the Research and Contextual Background, this study began with a concern for the quality of teaching at one particular higher education institution in Malaysia – Universiti Gading Gemilang (UGG). Further, within the boundary of its contemporary setting, UGG was undergoing rigorous quality assurance efforts. Of particular interest to the study are the teachers’ ability to teach at their best capacity while, at the same time trying to be actively involved in institutional quality activities. As a point of departure, the teachers’ perceptions of quality teaching were explored. Further, contextual elements that support or impede the teachers’ efforts in teaching well were investigated. The researcher seeks to tease out the relationship between teachers and their teaching contexts. The intention is to tie in as many elements as possible in order to understand why and how the teachers think and teach the way they do, and to explore the nature of interaction between the teachers and the elements in their teaching contexts. Investigating the teachers’ perceptions of quality teaching and the teachers’ teaching contexts would hopefully provide the basis for improving and enhancing quality teaching at the case study institution, which could further support the institutional overall quality goals.

Apart from being descriptive, other features of case study described by Merriam (1998) are that it is particularistic and heuristic. Being particularistic, “the case itself is important for what it reveals about the phenomenon” (p. 29). Being heuristic, the case can bring about the discovery of new meaning that is previously unknown. Studying the case institution – Universiti Gading Gemilang (UGG) - reveals an insight into a Malaysian quality teaching situation within a quality assurance institutional context. As described in Chapter One, UGG may not be the only higher education institution in Malaysia that was undergoing quality efforts considering the announcement of the *National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP)* for international benchmarking. Yin (2003) acknowledges that the boundaries between the case and its context are not always clear cut. Sometimes, there are features outside of the boundaries that have contextual significance. Impacted by significant factors in Malaysia’s national and global contexts, the quality-led changes and the concern for quality teaching at UGG may not be unique to the institution. Other higher education institutions may be experiencing similar changes and may share similar concerns. New meanings of quality teaching in Malaysia’s contemporary setting could be revealed.

For this reason, this research study is both intrinsic and instrumental in nature (Stake, 2005). This research is primarily intrinsic because “...in all particularity *and* ordinariness the case itself is of interest” (Stake, 2005, p. 445). As the contextual investigation brings in national policies and some pertinent global issues, it is realised that other higher education institutions may be experiencing similar changes as UGG due to policies imposed at the national level. Due to UGG’s relations with larger contexts, this investigation may incidentally serve instrumental purposes.

This study will thus serve two purposes : (i) to gain a better understanding of issues in quality teaching in a quality-led institution, and (ii) to transfer theoretical propositions to other local institutions that may be experiencing a similar phenomenon. Stake (2005) further supports the dual purpose of case study. He claims that intrinsic case study cannot avoid generalisation.

The methods for case work actually used are to learn enough about the case not to encapsulate complex meanings into a finite report but to describe the case in sufficient descriptive narrative so that readers can experience these happenings vicariously and draw their own conclusions (p. 450).

Although the purpose of a qualitative study is not to generalise, but to understand a particular case, generalising is inevitably the secondary purpose of intrinsic case study research.

3.2.2 The case study research design

Yin (2003) defines four variations of major case study designs: (i) single case holistic, (ii) single case embedded, (iii) multiple case holistic, and (iv) multiple case embedded (p.40). He distinguished between holistic and embedded case studies by stating that a holistic design examines “only the global nature of an organisation or a program” (Yin, 2003, p. 43). The case and its context are considered as one whole unit which runs the danger of having no guiding principle for data collection. The embedded case study on the other hand, comprises units of analysis that each serves as a source of information that converges as collective data for a particular case or context. These units of analysis are selected through sampling (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). Unit of analysis or sampling are considerations of when, where or who to study in order to understand the case. It is a consideration of research site, time, people and events to investigate within one phenomenon (Merriam, 1998).

The chosen case study research design is the “single case embedded design” (Yin, 2003). The institution is the single case in point, while the embedded units or units of analysis are the various sources of data that provide the ‘quilt pieces’ for which the researcher puts together as a ‘bricoleur’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The investigation into teachers’ perceptions of quality teaching calls for teachers at UGG to be the primary source of data. The teachers will also illuminate findings on factors that constrain or support them in teaching. In order to triangulate

and/or verify findings from the teachers, analysing institutional documents can provide evidence of institutional plans, policies and frameworks. Finally, the third source of data is the institutional managers that provide the human aspect of the evidence for institutional plans, policies and frameworks. They serve to verify information gathered from the documents.

The idea of ‘situatedness’ of a case study is emphasised (Yin, 2003). UGG’s quality assurance context is situated within the Malaysian context of higher education institution’s benchmarking, which is further nested within the worldwide higher education changing contexts characterised by globalisation.

Figure 3.1 shows the situated nature of the single case study design. The institution, marked by thick broken lines, is the single case in point situated within a national context which, is further situated within a larger global context. In the case of this research study, the contexts are quality assurance efforts at the institutional, the national and the global level. Within the institution the three “units of analysis” or data sources identified for this research are (i) teachers, (ii) institutional documents and (iii) institutional managers (Yin, 2003). The teachers are the primary informants for the research questions on perceptions of quality teaching, support for and constraints on quality teaching.

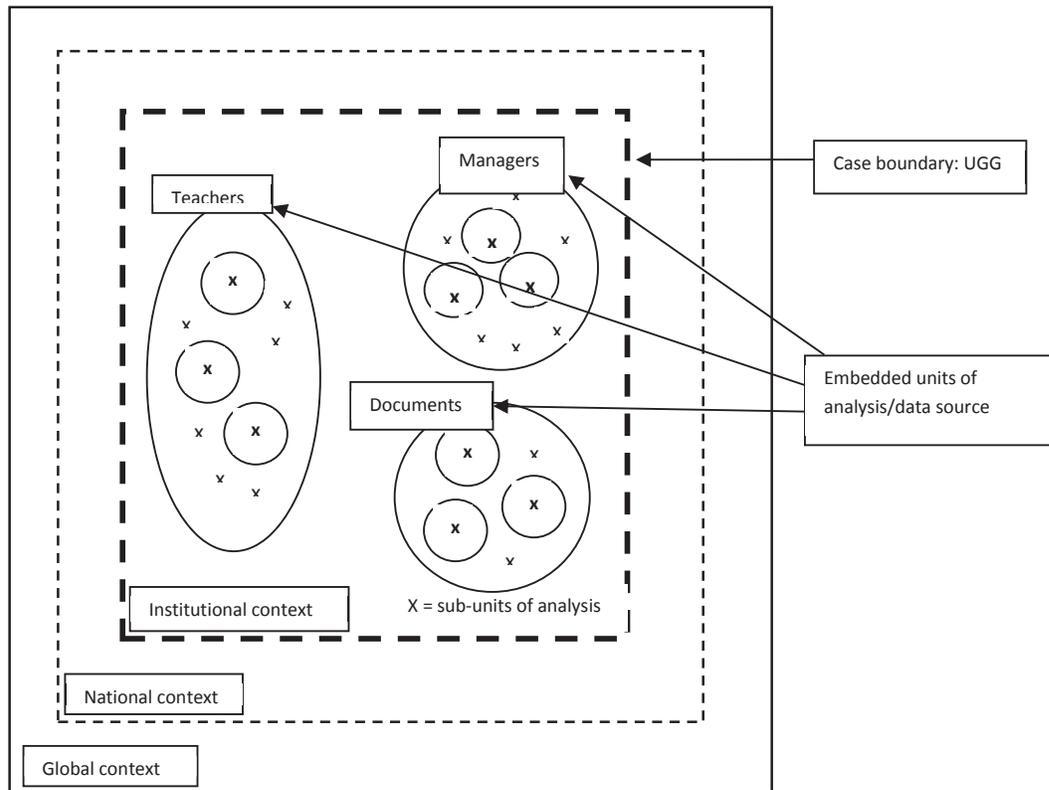


Figure 3.1: Single and embedded case study design

Triangulation is a key feature of qualitative case study. The documents serve as data triangulation to the questions about support for and constraints on quality teaching, while the institutional managers provide further information and clarification on the documents. Both the documents and the managers illuminate perceptions of quality teaching from the institution's perspectives. "x" represents the sub-units of analysis or "sampling units" within each data source (Yin, 2003). The "x"s in circles are the selected few among many available and potential data sources.

3.2.3 The nature of the research problem and the purposes for mixing methods

Although case study does not exclusively belong in the qualitative research paradigm, it is often placed alongside other major types of qualitative research such as grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, historical study and biography (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008; J. H. McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Merriam, 1998). This is because case study is an intensive analysis of one single unit; from an individual to a functioning system making it necessary to be described in rich and thick descriptions (Stake, 2005). This often locates case study within qualitative research methods. However, several major authors have cautioned that a case study approach is not confined to qualitative methods; quantitative methods can also be employed (Merriam, 1998, 2009; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003, 2009). Yin (2009) and Merriam (2009) recognised the need for using multiple sources of data or triangulation to counter the weaknesses of a qualitative case study research. Some of these may be quantitative. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being observed, qualitative research is "inherently multi-method in focus [because] objective reality can never be captured" (p. 5).

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. It combines a predominantly exploratory qualitative investigation of a few teacher participants with a supplementary quantitative survey of the entire teacher population in one case study at UGG. The primary purpose for using both methods is to see whether the findings that emerge from the few qualitative research participants were common or uncommon across the entire university population. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), a study is considered as mixed methods "as long as both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used within the same investigation... even if one of the research approaches is used only minimally" (p. 445). Morse (2003) saw mixed methods research as the use of supplemental strategy or a secondary method in an otherwise regular or common design. Mixed methods research is distinguished from multi-methods research; one in which both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in separate studies and are later combined to become one multi-phased study (Morse, 2003).

Various writers have stressed the importance of considering the nature of the inquiry when deciding to mix methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Datta, 1997; Denscombe, 2008; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Both qualitative and quantitative methods should be used together if doing so provides a better understanding of the research problem than either method used alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The contextual nature of the research investigation is seen in the research questions that explore not only teacher perceptions but also their surrounding teaching contexts.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) outline six types of research problems that fit mixed methods research. They are when a need exists (i) because one data source maybe insufficient; (ii) to explain initial results; (iii) to generalise exploratory findings; (iv) to enhance study with a second method; (v) to best employ a theoretical stance and (vi) to understand a research objective through multiple research phases. Among the six reasons for mixing methods, reasons (i) and (iii) best justify the need for mixing methods in this study. Further, in a review of 19 major authors' discussion on mixed methods research, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) found that the most commonly cited reason for mixing methods is for breadth and corroboration. Using both methods can provide a more complete picture and a fuller understanding of the phenomenon in question. Doing so also enables the triangulation of findings. It can show whether results converge, show consistencies and/or inconsistencies or diverge altogether (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). Finally, using both methods can better handle threats to validity and provide more internal consistency (R. B. Johnson et al., 2007).

3.2.4 Pragmatism as the philosophical foundation of mixed methods research

In the past, combining methods in one single research was considered as unacceptable. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) describe the period of paradigm wars between the 1970s and 1990s that saw the clash in research beliefs better known as the "incompatibility thesis". Qualitative and quantitative research orientations were seen as so fundamentally different that any attempt to combine them was claimed to be "doomed to failure" (p. 19) because of inherent philosophical differences. However, due to interest in and concerns for triangulation, hence the need to combine data sources to study one social phenomenon, mixed methods began to be recognised. Today, mixed methods research is accepted as one of three major research paradigms that sits in a "new third chair" between qualitative and quantitative research (R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; R. B. Johnson et al., 2007). It is also described as a "new orthodoxy" that is more desirable in order to provide adequate answers to research questions (Denscombe, 2008, p. 274).

The worldview held in this study is pragmatism, which is claimed by some to be the philosophical foundation of mixed methods research (Denscombe, 2008; Feilzer, 2010). On the surface, a pragmatic stance is concerned with “what works” to best answer the research questions (R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008). It rejects the incompatibility thesis and instead advocates mixing methods when the research inquiry necessitates. It focuses on being practical, allowing a researcher to combine the use of any method felt appropriate to respond to his or her own research questions effectively. A pragmatic stance is driven by the nature of the inquiry where methods are chosen based on their practical values (Feilzer, 2010). As a result, it improves data accuracy, provides a more complete picture and helps reduce subjectivity compared to when mono-method is employed (Denscombe, 2008). In brief, a pragmatic stance frees a researcher from the limitations of paradigm dichotomy and prescriptive philosophies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Denscombe, 2008; Feilzer, 2010; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008). It is “a commitment to uncertainty” that enables a researcher to “enjoy the complexity and messiness of social life” (Feilzer, 2010, p. 14). Pragmatism as mixed methods philosophical foundation sets mixed research apart from qualitative and quantitative research.

However, there are a myriad of issues to be considered when mixing methods. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) warn against *ad hoc* mixing which poses a serious threat to validity. Mixed methods research should not be used as “an excuse for sloppy research” (Feilzer, 2010, p. 14). There is a need to respect methodological principles and philosophical assumptions of either paradigm. Denzin and Lincoln’s (2005) phases of research provide a structure to discuss the implications of mixed methods research and pragmatic stance on further research processes.

3.2.5 The researcher’s personal ontology and epistemology

On the surface, taking a pragmatist stance, I hold the view that the nature of inquiry, the research problems as well as the research questions play crucial roles in deciding whether or not to do mixed methods research. I believe in the liberating opportunities mixed methods research has to offer – to respond to research questions with fewer restrictions of paradigm duality compared to doing a single method research.

It should be noted that qualitative and quantitative methods are still inherently different and that compatibility is limited. Irreconcilable differences often cited are ontological and epistemological assumptions (assumptions about reality and how it is constructed) (Biesta, 2010; Denscombe, 2008; Feilzer, 2010). Quantitative purists, also known as the positivists, believe that a singular and objective reality can be derived from a neutral and value-free inquiry. Meanwhile, qualitative purists or the constructivists believe that reality exists in

multiple dimensions and layers, and that it is essentially a multiple construct of a researcher's value-laden perceptions (Feilzer, 2010; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Johnson et al. (2007) describe three kinds of pragmatism: pragmatism of the right, the left and the middle. The right pragmatists hold a moderately strong form of realism (positivist-inclined). The left pragmatists hold a moderately strong form of pluralism (constructivist-inclined). Meanwhile, the middle pragmatists believe in paradigm integration and that mixed methods research can peacefully co-exist with quantitative and qualitative philosophies.

Based on the above distinctions, as well as the important considerations for the exploratory and inductive-type investigation of this project, my ontological assumptions are inclined towards being left pragmatist/constructivist. It is my view that reality exists in multiple dimensions, perspectives, constructs and layers and is ever-changing (Merriam, 1998, 2009). I believe that these multiplicities need to be captured as best as one can by way of triangulating data sources and human perspectives. Merriam (2009) points out that from a postmodern research perspective, the notion of "crystallization" is preferred to triangulation, signifying an "infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi-dimensionality, and angles of approach" rather than convergence of three fixed points (p. 217). It is a simultaneous representation of multiple facets of reality rather than sequential and linear. Readers are invited to "explore competing visions of multiple contexts, to become immersed in and merge with new realities to comprehend" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6).

My epistemological assumption is that as a result of having personal values, beliefs and standpoints, my own bias and subjectivities has some effects on the decisions I made throughout the research processes. Biesta (2010) argues that research always involves human intervention. He writes that "knowing is always a thoroughly *human* endeavour [*emphasis as in original*]... the act of observation is not a neutral registration of reality 'out there' but always already involves particular selections of an infinite number of possibilities" (p. 112). When a researcher is also an insider of the researched context, he or she has a certain degree of knowledge and beliefs about the context at hand. This poses possible limitations to the way data is collected and negotiated. Being a relative insider to the case institution in terms of being in the same higher education sector in Malaysia, I countered this challenge by going into the interviews with an open mind, doing my best to put aside my knowledge and beliefs to focus on understanding participants' views. The semi-structured interview schedules, allowed ample room to pursue issues that emerged from participant responses. However, despite this positioning and care taken, my professional experiences, which are very similar to the

participants in the study, gave rise to the possibility of bias. This may have influenced what I chose to see in the data.

Finally, Feilzer (2010) suggests the notion of “utility” – arguing that a pragmatist researcher should not aim at producing an accurate representation of reality but instead be reflexive; to constantly ask oneself how his or her value judgments influence the research processes and the research outcomes (p. 8). In view of my left pragmatist/constructivist approach, I acknowledge the fact that my subjectivities have in one way or another influenced most parts of the research processes such as the choice of themes from the teacher interview to follow-up on in the survey, or the interpretation of interview data that may be influenced by my own judgment and life experiences. Even at the starting point of this research, as argued by Morgan (2007), research questions “are not inherently important and methods are not automatically appropriate” (p. 69).

The researcher makes personal choices. I chose to expand my investigation beyond teacher perceptions to include the exploration of their contextual surroundings, not because the latter is inherently important to the investigation but because I chose to make it so. In doing so, this study has become an institutional level case study. The following section describes the theoretical drive of the research and how it affects the research design, as well as analytical and inference processes.

3.2.6 The theoretical drive

Unlike other authors such as Johnson et al. (2004), Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) and Denscombe (2008) who stress the consideration of research questions in mixed methods research, Biesta (2010) highlights the importance of reflecting on the wider purpose of research since the purpose of research frames the research questions rather than the opposite. Two purposes of research were discussed. Interpretive research, seeks to understand human actions by making meaning out of people’s reasons and intentions while explanatory research seeks causes of human actions. Recognising the purpose of research has some relations with a researcher’s ontological assumption that determines what he or she looks for in an investigation. Biesta describes two approaches to ontology: social and mechanistic ontology. A social ontological approach focuses on making meaningful connections between findings thus involve primarily interpretive processes. Meanwhile, a mechanistic ontological approach concentrates on predictive or pre-existing causal links in the way the world works.

I take the social ontological approach in the investigation as I seek to understand reasons and human intentions behind the research participants’ perceptions of quality teaching. I believe that

their perceptions of teaching and the claims they make about how they teach are a result of their social interactions with their teaching context, namely the students and institutional ethos. These influences do not cause the teachers to think and act in certain ways but rather mutually interact to influence one another. I am not looking for causal links but rather meaningful interpretations of the research experience. In this respect, analysis would be inductive rather than deductive. Themes are generated rather than compared with existing theories, adhering to social rather than mechanistic ontology (Biesta, 2010). This research is interpretive in nature.

The implications of this theoretical drive are on the research design, data analysis and interpretation of findings. The research design takes on qualitative orientation and qualitative method as the core component; the data analysis involves inductive coding and an interpretation of quantitative findings by comparison with qualitative findings; and finally, the interpretation of findings employs *abductive reasoning* that is, to move back and forth between meanings of quality teaching generated from the findings and comparing them with some pre-existing theories established in the literature review (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) note,

The theoretical drive reminds the researcher of the overall direction of the project. It assists the researcher to remain consistent with the principles of induction and qualitative inquiry (for QUAL projects) or with deduction and quantitative inquiry (for QUAN projects) (p. 347).

The following sections discuss in detail the implications of interpretive theoretical drive of this study.

3.2.7 The overall research design

One fundamental principle of mixing methods is to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods strategically, that is to fuse them together in such a way that the study has “complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 16). In mixing strategically, two important considerations are sequence of mixing and methods orientation as they impact on the complementary intentions of this study (Creswell, 2008; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Johnson and Christensen (2008) view mixed methods as belonging to a continuum from being mono-method to being partially mixed. Similarly, this research project is partially mixed, with quantitative method playing a minimal/secondary role to qualitative method. This is mainly due to the exploratory nature of the research investigation as previously established.

The typology of research design for this study is adapted from Creswell (2008), Johnson and Christensen (2008), and Creswell and Plano Clark (2011). The typology can be illustrated as follows.

Exploratory; (QUAL → quan)

The capital letters “QUAL” symbolise the dominant status of qualitative method. Teacher interview is the major method of data collection that drives the exploration into the central theme. The symbol “→” signifies a sequential design. It means that the qualitative interviews will have to take place before the quantitative survey questionnaire can be developed and conducted. This is because the qualitative interviews enable the development of categories or themes for further investigation in the survey. This typology is known as the “exploratory mixed methods design” (Creswell, 2008) or the “exploratory sequential design” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). With regards to the purpose of this design, Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) justification of the design purpose matches the researcher’s intention:

The primary purpose of the exploratory design is to generalize qualitative findings based on a few individuals from the first phase to a larger sample gathered during the second phase (p. 86).

Figure 3.3 illustrates this study’s overall research design that employs a single embedded case and exploratory mixed methods. The research design is divided into two stages of data collection: Phase 1, qualitative data collection and Phase 2, quantitative data collection. The qualitative sources of data comprise teacher interviews, document analysis and manager interviews while the quantitative data is comprised of a teacher survey. The primary data source is the teacher interviews. Observation of teaching is felt inappropriate since this study essentially investigate perceptions; not to evaluate teaching performance. Exploratory information gained from them will feed into the central theme of quality teaching perceptions at the case study institution, as well as into the exploration of constraints on and support for it. The teachers’ perceptions are triangulated with the survey results. The results are later compared and corroborated to see whether they converge or diverge.

3.2.8 Data analysis and presentation of findings

Consistent with the qualitative-dominant mixed methods typology, the main approach taken to data analysis is that of constructivist and subjective reality. Onwuegbuzie and Combs’s (2010) inclusive framework for emergent data analysis techniques in mixed methods research provides a useful guide to help unite both qualitative and quantitative research traditions.

i) Qualitative analysis

Coding strategy was used to analyse the major data source – teacher interviews. Coding was done in several recursive stages; regular and irregular patterns identified and refined as thematic categories were developed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Flick, 2011; Merriam, 2009). An inductive coding technique was employed as I examined the data, identified meaning units and attached codes to them (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010).

Further, all three forms of qualitative data are analysed alongside one another in a triangulated manner in order to capture the multiple representations of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6; Merriam, 2009). This triangulation within a method strengthens the interpretive findings. The major theoretical drive is inductive rather than deductive; the wider research purpose is to explore and find meaning in teacher perspectives rather than to compare them (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

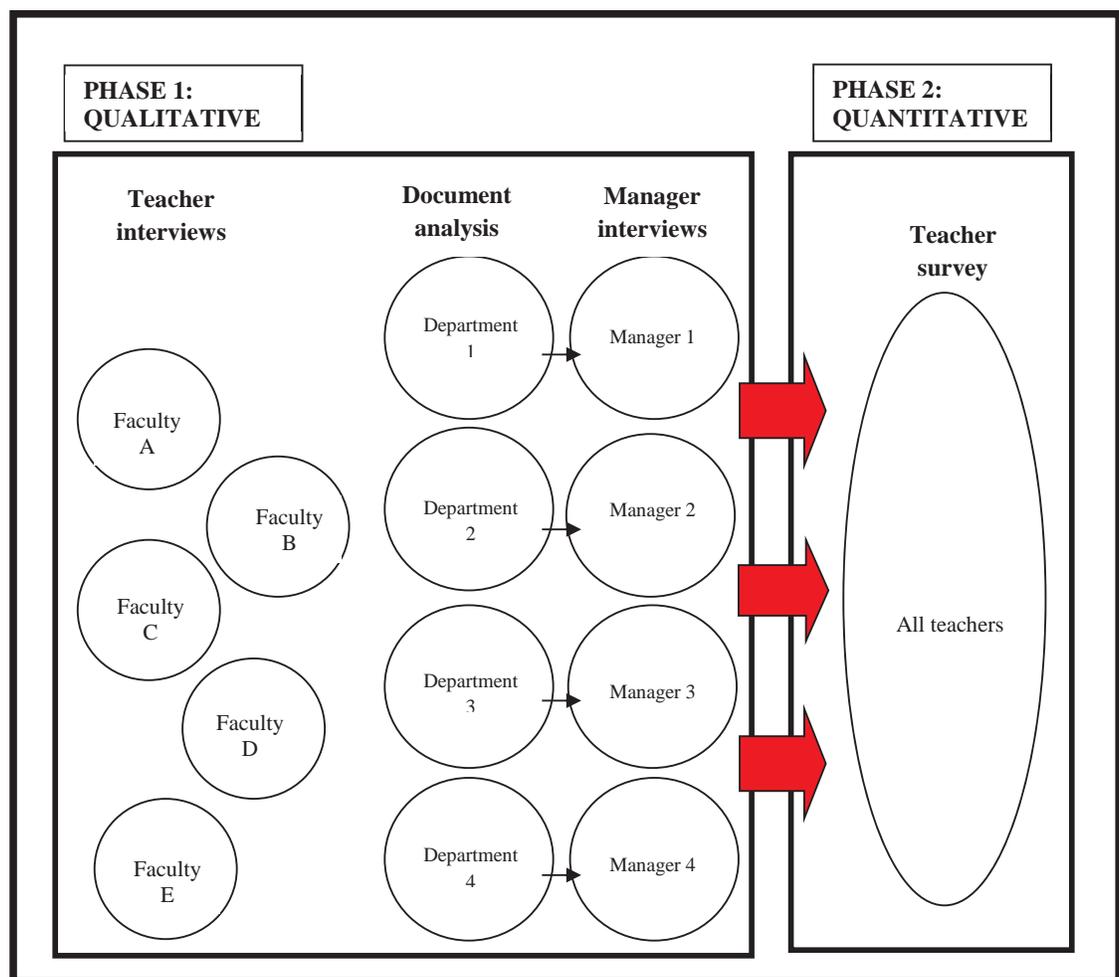


Figure 3.2: Overall research design

ii) Quantitative analysis

Since the quantitative phase of this study was given less priority than the qualitative phase, the quantitative data analysis did not necessitate sophisticated data analysis (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). Descriptive statistical analysis was preferred to inferential analysis. Driven by the inductive and interpretive type of investigation I was interested in measures of central tendency. It served the research purpose of comparing findings between qualitative and quantitative rather than to test a hypothesis or assumption. My intention for employing quantitative methods was to broaden the scope of inquiry, not to analyse data into clustered groups or to identify relationships among them (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010).

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) stressed that although one should be mindful not to violate the methodological assumptions of the core method, it is also important to respect the assumptions of the supplemental method. The triangulation purpose in conducting mixed analysis also requires that both analytical strands are kept independent of one another (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). It is my view that both qualitative and quantitative methods generate different kinds of knowledge in different ways, have the potential to generate their own themes and thus should be analysed separately. As noted by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) in Onwuegbuzie and Combs (2010),

Although the two sets of analyses are independent, each provides an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. These understandings are linked, combined or integrated into meta-inferences ... These analyses can lead to convergent or divergent results (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010, p. 415).

Research question one seeks teachers' views on quality teaching. Since the themes were open, exploratory and emergent, presenting the analysis separately can best bring out themes that emerged from either method. However, with research questions two, three and four that seek corroboration, convergent or divergent results, the analysis of qualitative and quantitative methods are put side-by-side in order to make comparisons.

However, there is a *point of integration* in mixed methods research when both data sets are brought together (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). In this thesis, a *preliminary* integration occurred at the end of the findings chapters. It is considered a preliminary integration because both sets of data were brought together in table summaries to compare the strengths of themes that emerged in preparation for discussion; not yet to synthesise the findings and make

meaningful interpretations. The following section discusses the implications of my pragmatic view on the interpretation of data and the presentation of research outcomes.

3.2.9 Interpretation and presentation of research outcomes

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), in a sequential-qualitatively driven design, qualitative findings are put on hold until findings of the supplemental components are completed. This is so that emerging issues from the qualitative data can be looked further into with the supplemental data. In this research project, as described above, the analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative findings were analysed separately, conforming to epistemological assumptions of either method. The *actual* point of integration occurs in the Discussion chapter where findings from both qualitative and quantitative methods are integrated so that interpretations and meaningful connections can be made. The integration allows a narrative interpretation.

With regards to social ontology described in the theoretical drive, Dewey's transactional constructivism is highlighted. The essence of this concept is that the outcome of a research investigation is argued to be the result of human actions and interactions with his or her the context of investigation. Therefore, knowledge generated from this investigation is constructed by the investigator, that resulted from his or her subjective and biased deductions and/or conclusions of what was observed. Biesta further (2010) states, "knowledge will ever offer us only *possibilities* but not certainty [italics as in original]" (p. 111).

The implication of these assumptions on this research study is that, in making meaning out of the findings, I seek to understand the reasons behind my research participants' perceptions of quality teaching. In doing so, it is necessary to relate their responses to their contextual influences. This includes the consideration of physical surrounding, institutional ethos, university policies, teaching philosophies, as well as the timeframe within which a particular institutional initiative takes place. Research participants' responses are also compared with other sources of data, particularly institutional documents, in order to make meaningful interpretations of their motives and actions. In other words, when making sense of participants' responses, I hold the view that the participants' experiences are a result of their social interaction with their environment. In the view that knowledge only offers possibilities rather than certainty, during the discussion of findings, I am mindful that the inferences made are my own subjective interpretations. Bias is inherent. The conclusions drawn are only possibilities and the discussion maintains a tentative tone rather than a firm and fixed conclusion of outcomes.

Biesta (2010) cautions against simplistically assuming pragmatism as the philosophical foundation of mixed methods research and as a third philosophical paradigm, arguing that such a “container concept” can be unhelpful (p. 98). One of the pitfalls is the instant association of quantitative research with an objectivist view in the way knowledge is generated. Research always involves human intervention (Biesta, 2010); there is no such thing as objective reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998, 2009).

Based on this argument, I believe that it is possible to conduct quantitative research and yet acknowledge subjective elements in such approach at the interpretation stage. Following this, it is my view that the statistical figures/the survey findings are not self-explanatory. They are value-laden with reasons for specific responses. They need to be compared with the qualitative findings in order to understand the teaching context in which the teacher participants functioned, as well as personal bias that might influence both the qualitative and quantitative findings. I believe that the survey results are not a ready-made presentations of reality but instead require my sense-making. As argued in personal ontology and epistemology, I hold the view that all knowledge contains some subjective elements (Biesta, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Pragmatism of the left is upheld in data analysis with a pluralistic view on reality (R. B. Johnson et al., 2007).

Credibility, dependability and maintaining rigour

To deal with biased and value-laden trade-offs in qualitative case study research, the following steps were taken. In place of internal validity in quantitative research, a consideration of dependability involves providing adequate explanations and descriptions as to how I arrived at a certain conclusion. It is important to show that findings were consistent with the data (Merriam, 1998, 2009). In place of reliability, I ensured credibility by being aware of limitations of research skills in both qualitative and quantitative components of the research. I had also elicited information to the best of my ability; aware of the influence of personal style and personality. I believed that my strength as a researcher lies in being a discerning listener, doing active listening, taking notes and making quick decisions during elicitations and eliciting as much as is necessary (Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 1998, 2009; Seidman, 2006).

Interpretive rigour refers to the extent to which the researcher’s “constructed co-creations” (Lincoln and Guba, 2000 cited in Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 37) can be trusted to provide evidence of what was observed. In order to ensure rigour in mixed methods research interpretations and inferences, a pragmatist stand assumes abductive reasoning as previously mentioned (Feilzer, 2010; Morgan, 2007).

This constant checking of data against theory, as well as between methods and one's view of knowledge and reality, helped guide the exploration and determine the workability of mixing methods. Mindful of the need for abductive reasoning and to be constantly reflexive, I was careful not to make claims beyond of what was allowed of the research methods employed. Limited interpretation of findings by, for instance the extent of interview inquiry, or by the type of survey analysis was observed.

This kind of reasoning requires the researcher to be reflexive and to constantly ask himself or herself if the outcomes of his or her reasoning are justified against the methods by which the outcomes were derived. This leads to Dewey's notion of "warranted assertion" where we are encouraged to always judge our knowledge claims pragmatically (Morgan, 2007, p. 67). We need to relate our interpretation of findings against the strategies used in the research processes. We should be careful not to make claims beyond what is allowed of the strategies employed (Biesta, 2010, p. 113; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

3.3 Research procedures

Prior to data collection, full ethics approval was obtained from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) in March 2009 in MUHEC: Southern A, Application 09/03 (see Appendix A). In ethical research, it is important to ensure minimisation of harm to the research participants. Over-arching ethical considerations include ensuring informed participant consent, respecting their anonymity and confidentiality and providing the right to withdraw from the research (Berg, 2007; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2008; J. H. McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

3.3.1 Ethical considerations

The following are ethical considerations undertaken in this research that complied with MUHEC code of conduct. The relevant appendices are mentioned in the section that follows.

i) Informed consent

All authorities contacted for permission to conduct research, as well as all research participants – both teachers and managers - were given full information about the study and what was expected of them through information sheets. Potential survey participants were given similar but brief information through an e-mail invitation to participate. The exploratory purpose of the research was emphasised so that the participants were clear about how the information they provided would be used.

ii) Privacy

Most interviews were conducted in the privacy of participant's own offices. This was agreed with participants. Where rooms were shared, an alternative private space was sought.

iii) Anonymity

The identity of the survey participants could not be identified through an online survey. I was not able to identify who responded to the survey or follow-up on who did not.

iv) Confidentiality

It was acknowledged in the information sheet that, while not named, the identity of the institution may become apparent to some because of the particularity of the institution's characteristics that emerged in the research report.

Confidentiality for the institution and interviewees was ensured by using pseudonyms in the research report or by censoring information that could identify the research participants in interview transcripts. Caution was taken so as to not identify the participants' posts, units, departments or faculties they belonged to. In protecting the confidentiality of information, interview transcriptions were shared with the respective participants to give them the chance to withdraw, edit or delete any information in the interview that they thought were sensitive or could reveal their identity. Where transcribers' service was used confidentiality agreement was signed.

v) The right to withdraw and to choose language medium

Interview participants were given the right to withdraw from the study until the interview transcripts were finalised. With regards to language medium, participants' preferences to use either English or Malay was respected. All interview participants agreed for the interview to be conducted in English. Where Malay was used by some interviewees regardless, the interview was translated into full English with the help of a translator.

3.3.2 Preparation for data collection

Soon after ethics approval was obtained, permission to conduct research at the case study institution was received from the Vice Chancellor of the institution (see Appendix B). Data gathering began at the start of the new semester of the academic year (June 2009) to avoid collecting data during the period of a special semester when many teachers would have been

away from work. Prior to making the trip to Malaysia, the months of April and May 2009 were used to make contact with the authorities and potential participants.

For the teacher interviews, access to the full staff list was first obtained from the Human Resource department of UGG through e-mail. The selection of potential teacher interview participants was done by a *random selection method* (Alreck & Settle, 2004). Ten teachers were selected from every faculty to be invited to participate based on every N^{th} name. A complete list of academic staff categorised by faculty and sequenced by academic positions. Based on this list, I counted the population size of every faculty and divided the number by 10, thus obtaining every N^{th} name. This gave me a list of names with a mixture of gender and academic positions from each faculty. The selected 10 names were invited to participate in the study via e-mail along with information sheets (see Appendix C: information sheet for teachers). Since one of the faculties only had six teachers, all were invited giving a total of 46 invitations from five faculties at UGG. From these selected 10, three were further shortlisted from every faculty. In cases where more than three selected participants agreed to be interviewed, the names were shortlisted by drawing lots. In cases where less than three participants agreed, 10 more were invited. Participants who had to be turned down were informed and were asked if they were willing to be placed on the reserved list. All the 15 teachers identified in the final selection round were informed of their participation. Consent forms were obtained from them as evidence of participation contract (Appendix D). The date and time for the teacher interviews were set once the researcher reached Malaysia.

For the document analysis, the respective managers from the three faculties identified relevant for the study were also contacted through e-mail from New Zealand. The departments were the department of human resource (DHR), the department of quality assurance (DQA) and the department of pedagogical training (DPT). Requests for access to the documents were accompanied by the letter of approval issued by the Vice Chancellor. The request is contained in Information Sheet for Managers (Appendix E). When permission for access to documents was granted all the managers agreed that the relevant documents would be negotiated in person once the researcher was in Malaysia.

Finally, with the manager interviews, the institutional managers were invited to be interviewed along with requests for document access. The managers were given the option of nominating an alternative officer should they decline to be interviewed. Signed consent forms were obtained from them as evidence of their willingness to participate (Appendix F: Manager consent form).

3.3.3 Phase One: Qualitative data collection procedures

Pilot teacher interviews

Pilot teacher interviews played a major role in making better preparations for the actual interviews. They were conducted in New Zealand prior to the data collection trip. The pilot interview participants were three Malaysian postgraduate students who were also tertiary teachers from different disciplinary areas and universities of origin, very similar to the interview participants' background. On the whole, the pilot interviews gave a sense of the richness and messiness of qualitative data. It made me realise how important it is to plan towards having more structure and to control unpredictability in an exploratory research. Crucial lessons learned from the pilot interviews were the importance of:

- breaking the ice and establishing rapport – It was important to make the interviewee feel at ease from the start of the interview; to start on “the right key” Gillham (2000, p. 40).
- dealing with exploratory questions – It was important to be in control; to strike a balance between being open-ended and exploratory, as well as being focused and direct in the way I asked questions.
- controlling the duration of the interview – Interviewees' responses could be lengthy. It was necessary to interject when the interviewee digresses from the question. It was also important to listen actively and to make quick decisions about whether what the interviewee was saying was relevant and useful.
- being confident and assertive – It was important to ask questions with confidence.

i) The sequence of data collection

Phase one of the data collection took place between the 8th of June and the 5th of August 2009. The sequence of data collection was done thoughtfully. Being the primary data source, the teacher interviews were arranged first. Information gathered from them provided the basis for further investigation in the documents and the manager interviews. Scheduling more than one interview in one day was avoided since interviews can demand a lot of concentration and as Gillham (2000) notes, can be a “wearing business”. The interviews were arranged in a mixed sequence of faculties to get a broader sense of different teaching contexts.

Halfway through the interview phase, the institutional records were accessed. The first record to be accessed was the Department of Pedagogical Training that provided information on the

central phenomenon being investigated – institutional perceptions of quality teaching. The next department was the Department of Human Resource. It provided clarifications of the types of institutional constraints and support. The last two departments explored were the Department of Organisational Planning and the Department of Quality Assurance. The Department of Organisation Planning was not part of the initial plan. It was added during data collection when I realised that it was closely related to the Department of Quality Assurance. Combined, they both provided background information of the institution’s overarching quality contexts. Interviews with the respective managers followed immediately after reviewing each department records. Table 3.1 shows the specific order of the qualitative data collection processes. The order in which different sources of data were collected influenced the order in which themes emerged and the way further exploratory inquiries were conducted. This will be dealt with in the discussion of findings.

Table 3.1: The order of data collection process

Week	Beginning	Teacher interviews	Document gathering	Manager interviews
1	June 8th	Interviewed all 15 teachers in mixed sequence of faculties of origin.		
2			Gained access to documents from the Department of Pedagogical Training. Obtained record file for self-selection	
3				
4		An average of three teachers were interviewed every week.		
5			Academic semester I 2009/2010 commenced	
6			Gained access to documents from the Department of Human Resource, the Department of Quality Assurance and finally the Department of Organisational Planning.	
7				
8				
9		July 30 th		
10				

The demographic information of the interviewed teachers is as in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Demographic information of teacher interview participants

	Demography	Number of teacher interview participants
1.	Gender	6 females; 9 males
2.	Academic positions	3 principal lecturers; 2 senior lecturers; 6 lecturers; 2 assistant lecturers; 2 lab tutors.
3.	Years of teaching experience	Between less than one year to 11 years.
4.	Formal teacher training	Only one had formal teacher training; one other teacher had some trainer courses; 3 admitted to not having any; the rest did not discuss teaching experience.
5.	Faculty of origin	3 from each Faculty A, B, C, D and E.

ii) **Conducting teacher interviews**

Interviews with the teachers began during the course of a semester break when the teachers were not teaching and were preparing for the new semester. It provided flexibility in terms of appointment times and uninterrupted conversations. I used the short breaks in between interviews to reflect on how each interview went. Reflections and refinement of skills were made mostly by hunch, referred to by Kvale (2007) as “craftsmanship” comprising the interviewer’s “skills, sensitivity and knowledge” (p. 48). I was aware that I needed to “decentre” from myself (Gillham, 2000, p. 3). The conversation was about what the interviewee has to tell me. I went into the interviews with genuine interest to listen to their stories and with a broad purpose of exploring their views on quality teaching (see Appendix G: teacher interview schedule). In order to guide the exploratory investigation, the structure of the interview was adhered to: (i) demographic information; (ii) perceptions of quality teaching; (iii) existing institutional support; (iv) existing institutional constraints and (v) needed support.

Interviewing the managers was challenging since they were persons of higher academic positions, social standing and wider age gap. This was consciously countered in two ways. Firstly, establishing initial contact through e-mail helped ‘break the ice’. The tone of approach when setting up appointments was kept informal yet straight to the point noting the idea that overfriendliness can be off-putting (Gillham, 2000). Secondly, I found that appearing confident when meeting people in person was crucial. Combined with genuine interest in and open-mindedness about what they had to say, elicited personal stories that provided rich information. At some points, it was sensed that some interviewees had “an axe to grind”. Information such as this was treated with caution. Matters raised were given due attention as issues that mattered to some individuals and checked against other interview data. These personal stories are given due respect in this study by citing only the relevant parts and by maintaining participants’ anonymity.

Other important lessons were firstly, to take notes. Although the interviews were recorded, jotting down key points and interesting topics helped me return to some that were felt worth pursuing. Active and selective listening were employed to make these instant decisions (Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 2009; Seidman, 2006). The second lesson learned was to expect interruptions and to be prepared with how to deal with them such as interviewees’ phone ringing and visitors knocking on the door. The audio recording was put on pause out of respect for the interviewee’s privacy and personal contexts. Change of plans should also be noted. A teacher who had agreed to participate was not available at the time of the interview. My teacher reserve list proved to be helpful.

On the whole, I received full co-operation from the teachers who readily and enthusiastically shared their views. I had thoroughly enjoyed all the interviews and generally sensed honesty and trust from the participants' responses.

iii) Gathering and analysing documents

As the interviews progressed and themes began to emerge, I had a clearer sense of the specific kinds of information I wanted from the institutional records. The relevant officers and institutional managers were contacted to arrange for access. Accessible and relevant records were decided by the managers with all due respect. Some documents were obtained in electronic format and some on paper. Once obtained, they were examined at two levels. First, striking themes of constraints on and support for quality teaching that emerged in the teacher interviews were sought in the documents for verification. These themes formed the basis for the manager interview schedules. Second, other information pertaining to support for quality teaching that did not emerge in the interviews was also noted. They were investigated further with the respective managers. Therefore, each interview manager had a unique interview schedule (see Appendices H, I, J and K: manager interview schedules). A general structure that applied to all of them comprised four parts: (i) clarification of the roles and the nature of activities of the department; (ii) clarification of information from teacher interviews; (iii) further elaboration of support for quality teaching not mentioned in the teacher interviews and (iv) managers' views on quality teaching with regards to the institution's quality assurance contexts.

iv) Conducting interviews with the managers

Following the preliminary document analysis, interviews with the respective managers were arranged. With the institutional managers, maintaining respect was crucial (Seidman, 2006). All appointments were made through the manager's personal assistants and re-scheduled meetings were respected. Since managers generally have high work commitments and tight schedules, some interviews had to be cut short while some took place in more than one session.

As I browsed through the documents, I realised that information from the Department of Organisational Planning which was not part of the initial research plan was needed to supplement information from the Department of Quality Assurance. The Department of Organisational Planning (DOP) was then included in the investigation. Although the department played a smaller role, understanding the nature of its activities helped illuminate the quality assurance context of the institution. Like the teachers, the managers too gave full co-

operation and responded well to elicitations. To protect the manager's identity, they are identified as M1, M2, M3 and M4 based on the sequence of interviews.

v) Interview transcriptions and preliminary data analysis

The interviews recordings were transcribed at first by a professional transcriber. Following accent issues, the service of a non-professional transcriber who had the same language background as the interview participants was sought (Appendix L: transcriber confidentiality agreement). The service of a translator was also used to translate and transcribe one interview into full English (Appendix M: translator confidentiality agreement). All interview participants – both the teachers and the managers - were given a copy of their own transcriptions to be verified and returned to the researcher with full consent (Appendix N: authority for release of tapescript).

Preliminary analysis of major themes was done on paper using a matrix developed as in Appendix O: Sample of preliminary analysis of teacher interviews. The coding categories were developed based on the frequency of mentions and recognising patterns or themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009). At this early stage, the interviews were analysed for breadth of common themes by listening to all the interviews repeatedly, as well as going over the transcripts and highlighting the themes. As a summary of findings, a matrix was created, structured by sections of the interview and put against individual teacher's input, clustered by faculties. Data was filled in by bullet points and keywords. Clustering the data by faculties did show some patterns of faculty cultures. Since the teacher identities needed to be protected, the faculties they came from are not identified in the thesis. The report and discussion of findings acknowledge unique faculty contexts but omits specific references to them in the way that can identify the teachers.

vi) In-depth analysis of qualitative data and coding strategies

Following the preliminary analysis on paper, further in-depth analysis was done using NVivo computer software. The use of NVivo has enabled combined analysis of all three qualitative data sources together. It was easier to move from one data source to another when they are all compiled within one system. Among the features that were found useful compared to doing paper analysis were coding and re-coding categories or collapsing and creating new nodes, immediate tracking of sources, as well as quick word search that enabled content analysis by word count (Lavery & Hansen, 2008).

Various writers have described similar coding processes or data reduction technique in qualitative data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2008; R. B. Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Merriam, 1998, 2009). They are (i) reading through all text data, (ii) dividing data into segments with similar ideas, (iii) labelling the segments into codes, (iv) eliminating overlaps and redundancies and finally (v) collapsing overlaps into themes. Following this, tree nodes were first developed in NVivo based on the structure of research questions. Open coding began with an expansive list. A long list of themes was developed under each research question. Overlapping themes were identified and re-coded until the themes look physically separated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Data that did not fit into the developed categories were coded under free nodes. The coding categories were finalised once they reach the point of saturation where nothing new emerges (Merriam, 2009). On the whole, the analysis was highly inductive, looking for the specific to identify broader themes.

3.3.4 Phase Two: Quantitative data collection procedures

i) The development of survey questionnaire and pilot teacher survey

After the preliminary analysis of the teacher interviews and prior to its in-depth analysis, the survey questions were developed. Figure 3.3 shows an extract taken from a section of the survey draft. It illustrates the nature of the exploratory study, the vastness of emerging themes and the initial attempt at constructing a structured investigation in the survey; a ‘shift of gear’ from the semi-structured and open-ended interviews. This section on perceptions of quality teaching was the most difficult to develop in the survey since it was the central idea at the heart of the exploratory inquiry. It is contained in the box on the right.

II. Beliefs about teaching (Likert scale)

Technology

1. How important is the use of technology to aid the subjects you teach?
2. I try my best to incorporate technology in my teaching.
3. A teacher who doesn't use technology in the classroom is not up-to-date.
4. Using technology in the classroom is necessary to make my lessons interesting.
5. Using technology in the classroom is necessary to make my lessons effective.
6. The use of technology in my lessons includes PowerPoint.

Collaborative learning

1. How important is group project in the classes you teach?
2. How often do you use group projects in the classes you teach?
3. I try my best to incorporate group projects in my teaching.
4. Group work is necessary for effective learning.
5. Group work is necessary to develop communication skills.
6. Group work is necessary to prepare them for future work environment.

(the list goes on)

I. Perception of quality teaching

1. What are the most important qualities of a university teacher? Choose 5 and rank them in order of importance (1 – most important; 5 – least important)
 - Interesting personality
 - Good presentation skills
 - Promotes independent learning
 - Uses a variety of teaching methods
 - Has a clear and structured goals
 - Has self-confidence
 - Uses technology or multimedia
 - Motivates
 - Interested in students' welfare
 - Passion for teaching
2. Which 5 of the following do you aspire to be as a university teacher?
3. Which 5 of the following do you believe the students want?
4. Which of the following describes you the closest as a university teacher? Choose one.
 - Transmitter (passes on knowledge)
 - Developer (guides learning)
 - Nurturer (motivates learning)
 - Apprenticeship (models professional behavior)
 - Social reformer (challenges thinking)

Figure 3.3: Designing the survey from preliminary findings of the interview

In order to provide more structure to the section on perceptions of quality teaching, Pratt's (1998) five perspectives on teaching discussed in Chapter Two was used as an important theoretical basis from which to explore varieties of quality teaching perceptions. This gave the study "objects of critical reflection" (Pratt, 2002, p. 14) . The rest of the survey such as the section on "Beliefs about Teaching" contained in the box on the left comprised statements that were generated based on emerging themes from the qualitative data sources, some underpin by literature like Pratt (1998, 2002), Biggs and Biggs and Tang (2003; 2007) and Ramsden (2003). Table 3.3 shows the structure of the survey questionnaire developed for the final draft.

Table 3.3: Structure of the teacher survey questionnaire

Section number	Section name	Section purpose/ frame of reference	Theoretical basis
1.	Introduction to the survey	To briefly explain the purpose of the survey and what is expected of the respondents.	
2.	Demographic information	To elicit personal details.	
3.	Perception of self as a teacher	To gauge the teachers' level of interest in teaching, their perceptions of role as a teacher, emphasis in teaching and perceptions of student assessments.	(Pratt, 1998)
4.	Perceptions of and beliefs about teaching (RQ1)	Based on themes developed from the interview. Guided by dimensions of quality teaching and theoretical assumptions about quality teaching developed in the literature review.	(Biggs, 2003; Biggs & Tang, 2007; Dunkin, 2002; Dunkin & Precians, 1992; Palmer, 2007; Ramsden, 2003; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996, 2003; Trigwell et al., 1994; Trigwell, Prosser, & Waterhouse, 1999)
5.	Perceptions of improving teaching (RQ4: needed support)	Based on themes developed from the interview. To explore the teachers' perceptions on the need for professional development	
6.	Constraints on quality teaching (RQ3)	Based on themes developed from the interview.	(Biggs, 2003; Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003)
7.	Support for quality teaching (RQ2)	Based on themes developed from the interview.	
8.	Perceptions of university quality standards	An open-ended question developed to find out if the teachers' and the institution's quality goals are aligned.	(D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Skelton, 2005; Watty, 2003)

Due to the exploratory nature of the interview and the supplementary purpose of the survey, there was a strong temptation to cover as many themes as possible in the survey. The questionnaire structure presented in Table 3.3 did address this concern to a certain extent. The questionnaire was then transferred onto an online survey medium using Survey Monkey. The medium was chosen primarily for its user friendliness and ease of downloadable data. The survey progress could also be monitored live and fixed immediately should there be an error.

Pilot survey

The online survey questionnaire on Survey Monkey was piloted with six postgraduate students in New Zealand who were also tertiary teachers and came from the same country of origin as the actual survey respondents. Feedback from the pilot survey centred on the issues of:

- length of survey - the amount of time taken to complete the survey varied between 10 minutes to 25 minutes. The initial survey that comprised 30 questions was reduced to 19 questions.
- open-ended questions - the number of open-ended questions was reduced to one (excluding those related to the question with “other” or “further comments”) pertaining to perceptions of institutional quality goals.
- “neutral” in Likert scale - the middle category of opinion or “non-substantive response” was given serious consideration during the survey design. It was also felt necessary to allow “ambivalent attitudes” when they are not sure about their feelings on certain questions (de Vaus, 2002). Forced choice was decided to be inappropriate (Alreck & Settle, 2004; de Vaus, 2002; Saris & Gallhofer, 2007)
- language barrier - despite keeping the language direct and comprehensible, providing an alternative version in the native language could increase the number of respondents and maximise the opportunity for accurate responses.

The survey was conducted online for three reasons: (i) it was feasible and economical since the data was obtained from outside of New Zealand; (ii) every teacher at the case institution has his or her own computer at work; (iii) all the teachers were technologically well-versed.

iii) Conducting the survey

The survey was conducted between March and April 2009 (Appendix P: E-mail invitation to participate in survey). It was made available in both English and Malay versions (Appendix Q: sample of survey questionnaire). All the academic staffs at UGG were invited to participate. Ten days through initial online posting, 78 teachers responded. Reminders were sent out twice through e-mail and the survey was extended for another 7 days. It closed when the number stopped rising at 107 respondents. Table 3.4 shows the demographic information of surveyed teachers.

Table 3.4: Demographic information of surveyed teachers

	Demography	Number of teacher interview participants
1.	Gender	41 females; 48 males
2.	Age	21 between 21-30 years old; 46 between 31-40 years old; 15 between 41-50 years old; and 8 between 51-60 years old.
3.	Faculties of origin	Faculty A – 38; Faculty B – 15; Faculty C – 23; Faculty D – 2; and Faculty E – 12.
4.	Academic positions	11 principal lecturers; 27 senior lecturers; 34 lecturers; 3 assistant lecturers; 13 tutors; 1 research assistant.
5.	Years of teaching experience	Between less than one year to 11+ years.
6.	Last job before being employed at UGG	24 fresh graduates; 32 from the teaching area; 14 from the engineering area; 8 from the IT area; 8 from the business area; and 4 from other areas.

Note: Data in this table is based on 90 usable questionnaire responses

iv) Cleaning survey data

The raw survey results were exported into SPSS and “cleaned” using the following processes (Field, 2009; Flick, 2011). Firstly, non-responses or phantom respondents who did not complete the survey beyond demographic data were eliminated. From 107, the number of usable returned surveys was reduced to 90; 69 in English and 21 in Malay. This gave a 23% rate of survey responses out of the total teacher population. Secondly, data from both the English and the Malay versions were combined into one spreadsheet. Thirdly, numerical data were separated from open-ended or textual responses as they required different types of analysis. Fourth, the scales of responses in the numeric data were assigned values for any further statistical analysis and/or graphs and charts. Finally, textual responses were exported onto NVivo8 for thematic/content analysis.

v) Quantitative data analysis

Since the survey results only served to add breadth and to corroborate findings from the interview, numerical figures that were generated from the survey were treated as simple figures to measure the proportion of negative, positive or ambivalent positions (de Vaus, 2002; Gorard, 2006). Basic descriptive statistics were used to do this, comprising the analysis of modes and medians (Alreck & Settle, 2004; Rea & Parker, 2005).

The analysis of relationships between institutional elements such as faculty patterns were not considered as important to the study because the focus is on looking at the institution as a whole and making meaning out of its systemic functions rather than analysing causal relationships influenced by faculty differences.

vi) Making meaningful connections between qualitative and quantitative findings

As described above, the actual point of integration between qualitative and quantitative findings occurs in the discussion chapter during interpretations of findings. Abductive reasoning ensured that I have considered how substantive the findings are and how I have arrived at my conclusions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Merriam, 2009). To assist reasoning, theoretical assumptions about quality teaching in the West as established in the literature review provided a frame of reference (Biggs, 2003; Biggs & Tang, 2007; Fosnot, 2005; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Pratt, 1998; Ramsden, 2003):

- Teaching and learning are intertwined concepts;
- The desirable aim of teaching is to bring about meaningful learning and deep learning approaches;
- Constructivist approaches to teaching and learning help develop qualitative change in student thinking beyond mere understanding;
- A well-developed teaching conception embraces the idea of effective and expert teaching, and the influence of contextual factors within and outside a teacher's self;
- Scholarly research helps expand teaching conceptions.

In view of the situated nature of case study, the possibility for applying outcomes of this study to other universities in Malaysia were considered and discussed using “analytic generalisation” (Yin, 2009); a particular set of results might be useful to other institutions. By adhering to the inductive theoretical drive, preserving methodological integrity and sensitising myself to my personal ontology and epistemology, I had attempted to provide “a line of inquiry” (Yin, 2009, p. 106). I provided an audit trail of how my deductions were arrived at and by staying true to my data (Merriam, 2009). “Naturalistic generalisation” was also possible. Readers could make entire generalisations or in part where quality assurance and quality teaching issues were relevant to other institutions under similar national and political jurisdictions (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). To this, “inference transferability” were acknowledged, taking into account to what extent the contexts of the case study and the other institutions may be similar (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has been presented in two parts: conceptual methodological framework and methods in action. In the first half, the case study approach and mixed methods framework of this study was presented. A qualitative-dominant orientation and its implications for the choices made in the research processes were then discussed. Despite the qualitative theoretical drive, a pragmatist stance enabled the reconciliation of the core qualitative method with its supplementary quantitative method. Issues in integration with particular reference to philosophical assumptions were also dealt with. The second half of the chapter described research in action. Reasons and justifications for research activities were described. In brief, the methods framework for this study was designed to appreciate the richness and complexity of human relationships, contextual influences and the interactions between them.

The next chapter presents the findings on the central theme of this study – teachers’ and institutional perceptions of quality teaching.

Chapter 4 FINDINGS: PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY TEACHING

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings related to *Research Question 1: How do teachers in the case study institution perceive quality teaching?* In this chapter, qualitative and quantitative data are presented separately. Qualitative findings from the teacher interviews, the manager interviews and the document analysis are presented first followed by findings from the teacher survey. The separate presentation of qualitative and quantitative findings, as established in Chapter Three, was to maximise the opportunity for themes of quality teaching to emerge due to the different kinds of information each data set yielded (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). At the end of the chapter, findings from both sets of data were brought together in a summary of findings.

4.1. Qualitative findings

This section presents the qualitative findings related to perceptions of quality teaching. It is divided into two parts: 4.1.1 Teachers' perceptions of quality teaching and 4.1.2 Institution's perceptions of quality teaching and comparison with teachers' perceptions. The sequence of themes is based on frequency of mentions. The institution's perceptions of quality teaching are largely based on interviews with institutional managers, supported by information from the respective department records. Findings of both the teachers' and the institution's perceptions are compared at the end of this section.

4.1.1. Teachers' perceptions of quality teaching

There are nine themes of teachers' perceptions of quality teaching. It was revealed that a quality teacher is viewed as someone who:

- i) is well-equipped with knowledge of the subject-matter;
- ii) develops good teacher-student relationships;
- iii) communicates knowledge effectively;
- iv) has genuine interest in teaching and students' learning;
- v) makes an effort to improve teaching;
- vi) is able to relate theories of classroom learning to practice in the real world;
- vii) challenges students' thinking;
- viii) engages in research; and
- ix) ensures that students are following the lesson.

i) A quality teacher is well-equipped with knowledge of the subject-matter.

Being well-equipped with knowledge of the subject-matter was mentioned by ten of the fifteen teachers. Three aspects were identified: i) knowing the subject-matter, ii) being well-prepared to teach and iii) incorporating extensive materials beyond course requirements.

In knowing the subject-matter, two teachers described how important it is to “*know*” and “*understand*” the course outline, course content and course structure (Lili, li.179-182; Amin, li.166). Meanwhile, three other teachers used the words being “*well-versed*” (Amin, li.167), being “*competent*” (Noor, li.158) and having “*sound knowledge*” (April, li.73). April elaborated,

[s]ound knowledge means that [a teacher] has a certain number of years of experience in teaching the subject, as well as working in that subject area (April, li.73-74).

Adda summarised the point succinctly saying,

[t]hey must know what they're talking about (Adda, li.569).

Three teachers talked about the importance of being well-prepared to teach. With these teachers, having the knowledge only was not enough. One needs to be well-prepared for class to ensure confidence in teaching. The teacher interviewees prepared well by “*mastering*” the subject first, preparing teaching notes and going over the notes several times in order to understand what was presented (Adda, li.384), by making sure that the teacher knew “*the flow*” of the lecture (Lindan, li. 435) and by making sure that the teacher was competent enough to deliver a lecture (Noor). Noor described what she meant by “*knowledge competency*”,

...if some topics or items that I think needs further strengthening, meaning I have to go back and prepare and make sure that we ourselves are good enough and confident enough, and we still competent enough to deliver to the students, because if you don't have that then you wouldn't have anything to give them. (Noor, li.159-163)

Included in being well-equipped with knowledge is incorporating extensive materials into lesson preparation beyond course requirements. Orked prepared extensive teaching materials in order to keep her students challenged and interested.

The textbook given is actually very brief, and I have assessed the level of the skills and understanding of the students. I find that they're actually very good. So, I find my own initiatives. I've come up with extra things.

*I'm not a (*particular subject) teacher but I try my best... So to me, I think I have given whatever that I can to cultivate their interest and show that they have enough skills to move on (Orked, li. 105-116).*

Adda did the same in order to engage students' interest and to update her materials with more current information.

I go through all the textbooks, read it, and know the important points... I will also include interesting notes... sometimes I go through the internet also... When I get a new (course to teach), I go to senior lecturer first, and ask if she or he has old notes. Then, I look into those notes as well and try to understand, and see what is being taught. And then I will combine it with new things I found in the books or the library. And from that I will actually do the Power Point (Adda, li. 402-411).

The findings from six teachers presented thus far suggest the perception that quality teaching means delivering knowledge in a 'neat package'. The teachers felt that knowledge should be presented to students by the teacher in the most accurate and complete form, if not extensive and interesting. Conversely, there are also perceptions that the students should be responsible for their own learning mentioned by four teachers. Fahrie only covered half of the course syllabus saying, "some parts you didn't teach, you ask them to look in the book (li. 179-181). Sobrie and Bahar made students explain their answers in problem-solution tasks. Sobrie said, "they should have the analytical thinking to explain why they get the answer" (Sobrie, li. 473-474) while Bahar said, "I like to ask questions why" (Bahar, li. 1065).

Luqman encouraged his students to read relevant topics before his lecture so that they would be able to follow lessons better. He described his teaching approaches.

So basically what I do in my lecture is I just give them the skeleton of a particular topic. They have to fill in the flesh by reading the textbook... because in (the course that I teach), we refer to a lot of tables and charts and equations... The students actually have to read and know when they can use the equations, they can't just use blindly. And those things I don't cover in my lecture. (li. 309-312; li. 335-339)

On one hand, these examples suggest that the burden of seeking or constructing knowledge of the subject-matter is also placed on the students by some teachers. On the other hand, these examples also show different teacher perceptions of how knowledge is constructed between what is written in textbook and those discovered by students themselves in problem-solving activities.

ii) *A quality teacher develops good teacher-student relationships.*

Developing good teacher-student relationships was mentioned by nine teachers for several reasons. The first reason was to find out from students how they felt about the teaching/learning experiences, mentioned by four teachers. Good teacher-student rapport allowed the teacher to find out how their students felt about the teacher's teaching. Noor appreciated the "direct feedback" from students (Noor, li. 905) while Orked liked finding out from the students, "Oh, the other classes, they don't have this" (Orked, li. 167). A related reason for developing good teacher-student relationships is that it allowed the teacher to gauge students' learning progress. According to Noor and Amin, developing rapport with students was important so that the students felt comfortable enough to approach the lecturer if they had learning problems. Amin used the word "friendly" in describing teacher approachability.

The friendliness means that if I approach to the students, I ask them, "Okay, can you do this question?" They can say freely, "Actually, I don't understand what you are teaching. Can you please explain more?" (Amin, li.408-410)

For the same reason, Noor preferred to conduct her own tutorial classes so that, "I can have the avenue to build relationship with students and also can monitor their progress" (Noor, li.958-959).

Meanwhile, three other teachers saw good teacher student-relationships as an opportunity to educate students with lessons in life, for example, playing one's role in the community such as to be a better "employee", a "brother or sister", a "husband" (April, li. 499) and a "good student" (Mahmud, li. 887), as well as to learn a lifelong skill like mind-mapping as illustrated in Razak's position.

My personal idea is that every semester I want find at least one or two (students) that I can help. So, I was able to help two students last semester. One of them was almost going to fail if nothing is being done, which he didn't know. So, I got him in and showed him how to do mind-mapping. (Later on), when he came in and shook my hands in full respect, you can see how he valued (my help). That is good enough. I went home feeling very happy. I have done something. (Razak, li. 394-401)

For four teachers, developing good teacher-student relationships is simply to appreciate human connection. April preferred to be called by his first name rather than his academic title (April, li. 599), Fahrie earned herself a term of endearment - "mother" (Fahrie, li. 850), Adda and Fahrie helped solve students' personal issues like fees and passport issues (Adda, li. 313; Fahrie, li. 792) while Azlan connected with students by joining them for a drink (Azlan, li.566-

567). Fahrie's comment is an illustration of how the teacher-student bond helps make teaching/learning a better experience.

All the students they call me mother. I feel less [of] being a stern teacher... When you're in class, you have to feel at home as well with the students. Otherwise, you're in front, and they're over there. There's a barrier... you know? And they may not be enjoying your class. Most of all you're not enjoying teaching them. (Fahrie, li.850-863)

Azlan's statement exemplifies an honest and open invitation for human connection which he believed, could help learning.

During break for example I can sit down and have tea with them, and then they can ask questions more openly. You give this sense of sincerity and honesty that you are there to help them (Azlan, li.566-568).

iii) A quality teacher delivers knowledge well.

The third perception of quality teaching is that a quality teacher delivers knowledge well as mentioned by seven teacher interviewees. For Razak, good delivery is associated with communicating knowledge effectively instead of teaching from the book. Razak said that a good lecturer is,

able to think, to find a way... to pass the knowledge in a manner that would assist the students to grab the knowledge. Not just read, read, pass, read. They need to go through additional steps... So, a good lecturer will have to think of a way that can effectively communicate the subject to the students (Razak, li.208-277).

April associated good delivery with classroom teaching that was comprehensive enough so that the students did not have to find answers beyond classroom teaching.

[Q]uality teaching for me [is] you deliver your materials in class and students understand there and then. That's quality teaching. Without students being you know, to review again, revise again many times until they understand fully what you're talking about (April, li.88-92).

Good delivery is also associated with structured teaching. The teacher interviewees referred to teaching that is "organised", "clear", "point-by-point" (Fahrie, li. 1002) and teaching that gains students' attention by "conveying principles clearly, concisely and precisely" (Luqman, li. 137-138). This perception also includes the view that teaching requires good presentation skills such as having "very good body language" and can "influence their audience" (Mahmud, li. 184-185).

The use of teaching media and teaching tools is an important aspect of good delivery. Three teachers preferred to use Power Point presentations slides to teach for different reasons. One of the reasons was that Power Point was seen as raising students' interest. It allowed teachers like Lindan and Fahrie to incorporate pictures, diagrams, audio and video materials in the presentation slides, making teaching “*more interesting*” (Lindan, li. 457) and “*less boring than having to look at textbook*” (Fahrie, li. 501). Animation can also facilitate understanding especially in engineering subjects according to Luqman and April. For instance, in describing a theoretical principle called “motion linkages” Luqman said,

At times, students have difficulty to actually visualise how a linkage will move. So, if we could... use a computer simulation and show by certain inputs, how the linkage will behave, that will further enhance or further be appreciated by the students, and I believe that might help the learning process (Luqman, li.157-161).

As opposed to using technology in teaching, several other teachers still believed in the effectiveness of using the conventional teaching medium – the whiteboard.

...for my experience,... even if you have a very good multimedia presentation but if you don't use the whiteboard and write at the front, and explaining things, it wouldn't give a good impact to the students in terms of learning that particular topic... at the end of the day, we still need to explain in our own words and highlight things on the board. (Noor, li.1056-1063)

Reasons for using the whiteboard include to draw “*block diagrams*” that shows topic overview and connections between sub-topics (Noor, li. 1069), to show “*step-by-step mathematical calculations*” (Mahmud, li. 248-249) and to bring teaching to life with “*movements*” and “*gestures*” (Lindan, li. 444; April, li. 374). Luqman added,

When I use the [whiteboard], I feel more alive. When you use the Power Point, you just stand in the corner and click the button, your motion is almost nil. But when you use the [whiteboard], you're moving up and down, scribbling here, scribbling there... and that will maybe make your class more alive (Luqman, li. 556-560).

iv) A quality teacher has genuine interest in teaching and in students' learning.

Seven teachers thought having genuine interest in teaching and students' learning is part of quality teaching. The first group of words associated with genuine interest are “dedication” and a “sense of commitment” which includes “*doing extremely thoroughly what you are supposed to do*” (April, 587-588) and seeing that “*learning takes place rather than talking*” (Eddie, li.

976).

Genuine interest in teaching and learning is also associated with a teacher's "heart", understood differently by the teachers. Adda related it to sincerity in teaching saying,

For me, when you are sincere, you will do everything that is in your power to make the best out of your teaching experience. So, you tend to do more, you tend to be proactive, you start to learn more, dig more, you will find your way to help the students because sincerity for me comes from the heart (Adda, li. 239 – 261)

A teacher's heart relates to feeling concern for students for Razak.

If you are not concerned, your heart is not there, you just go into class for the sake of finishing the syllabus (Razak, li. 375-261).

Orked believed in the importance of having the heart to teach, relating it to having genuine interest in students' personal growth.

Personally, I find that teachers must have the heart to teach because to me that's the most crucial thing. As an educator, you want your students to excel and do well. I'm open for the students to come and see me, get further information, explanation. Quality teaching to me, beside teacher must have a good reason to become a teacher, it means this people want to see other people grow (Orked, li. 86-93).

Finally, four teachers - Lili, Eddie, Orked and Fahrie - talked about the importance of giving time for student consultation. For example:

Teaching is about caring and you don't go just up to 5 o'clock, you know. You also go a little bit more. Go beyond 5 o'clock. (Fahrie, li.1617-1618)

v) ***A quality teacher makes an effort to improve teaching***

Seven teachers discussed improving teaching as part of quality teaching. They identified six different ways to improve teaching. by visiting other universities (Luqman, li. 464), observing colleagues who are more experienced (Noor, li. 215), talking to other same-subject colleagues (Orked, li. 142), joining professional bodies and connecting with a network of professionals through online forums (Sobrie, li. 224; Eddie, li. 416), and by reading books that provide insights into teaching (April, li. 721). Improving teaching through years of experience was mentioned by three teachers (Noor, li. 214; Orked, li. 127; Lili, li. 1141-1142).

Orked's comment illustrates, in the context of lesson preparation, how she developed her teaching skills with practice over time.

Researcher: Do you think (preparing for lessons) is difficult since you don't have training in teaching?

Teacher: I think, I might still acquire it through practice. But of course it will be good if I'm given the opportunity to go through formal training, I think it will be even more effective. But I think so far I have actually got the feel of it... you must have learning objectives, you need to achieve certain things at the end of the class, you need to assess the students to know how well they have understood you. These kinds of things, after a while, you get the feel of it, of what teaching is all about. (Orked, li. 118-128)

Lili's comment emphasises the teacher's own initiative to improve his or her own teaching, developing her skills through trial and error.

At first when you first started teaching, of course, lots of things need to be improved. But as time goes by you will learn more during class. You will also do some experiment, sometimes, "If I teach this way, I can see that this student is improving, their understanding is better". So based on that, we improve. Mainly, it's the initiative from the lecturer itself. (Lili, li. 1140-1145)

The above comments show that these teachers developed their teaching skills by intuition over the course of time. More important to note is that their teaching intuitions, as Orked described, could be aided by formal teacher training.

vi) A quality teacher is able to relate theories in classroom learning with practice in the real world.

Five teachers talked about the ability to relate teaching/learning materials to practice in the real world. For two teachers, it is important to help students relate classroom learning to industry needs so that the students are able to see the significance and value of what they are learning.

Sometimes when we just depend on the textbook, the students do not understand the significant. Why do they have to learn this topic?(Lindan, li. 131-133)

Bahar's comment illustrates the importance of being able to apply what is taught and learned in the classroom to real life needs. He also refers to meaningful learning.

Most Engineering teachers tend to forget that Engineering is not only about numbers but for you to understand what those numbers are and how does it affect our lives. For example, if you are designing a particular equipment and doing some analysis and you've got some numbers out of your analysis. So what can we say about those numbers? Is it realistic? Will it mean that it will incur more cost for example? Or will it mean that it will incur environmental impact? Or... do you think that those numbers or those results will be pleased by the management? So in other words, the

meanings of those numbers is I think, more important (Bahar, li.1005-1022).

Within the contexts of specific teaching areas, four teachers discussed how they helped students apply what is taught in class to what is demanded of them in their future job tasks. Most of these teachers provided examples to help the students relate theory with practice. In the management field, Lindan told her non-IT students that knowledge of computer systems development was relevant to them so that as a management executive, they could understand, “*where will you be involved?*”(Lindan, li. 141). In the field of construction work, Sobrie told his students that knowing about the grades of construction materials is important “*because somebody might cheat you and it will affect your work*” (Sobrie, li. 435). In the field of energy, Bahar stressed making students understand as opposed to memorising.

When I teach my subjects, I try to make my students understand why this analysis... [is] important. When to use it, not just to know what they are and memorise them, but to understand, when is it important (Bahar, li. 988–992).

Differently, in the field of information technology, Razak described a student assessment that emulates real-life tasks. He taught IT applications by getting the students to undertake relevant tasks.

The students are interested in cars. So I ask them, “What car would you like to drive when you work?” ... And then once you got their interest in the car, I said, “If you want to buy a car, not many of you can buy cash, unless your parents can afford to do so”... So, we have to buy using a loan. And that’s how I get to teach how to get a car loan... Then, I teach the functions that they need to calculate the monthly installments and so on, so forth. Now they understand that... I give an assignment for them to go to the bank and ask about the interest rate, go talk to the sales[people]... so they become... very much involved, right? (Razak, li. 282-296).

Four of these teachers acknowledged the importance of teachers having industry experience so that they can bring their experiences in the real world into the classroom. Three teachers were thankful for the fact that they were able to use their experience in the industry to relate to the students (Amin, li. 663-670; Bahar, li. 1036-1037, Razak, li. 119-125). Razak said:

I was really able to communicate with the students because I can really tell them what I have experienced. Now... if you’re talking to them based on other people’s experience, or based on your knowledge from the book... the impact is not (as) much (as) if you say, “I have done this”, “this is what I’ve experienced”, “This is what I’ve gone through” (Razak, li. 119-125)

Finally, Lindan’s comment signifies regret for not having experience in the profession to bring

into the classroom.

I have no experience in industry, that's my problem actually, that's the constraint... Sometimes when I go to the industrial visits, I talk to the supervisor and I found out what are their requirements, what are their needs, what are their demands. I try to relate what are the current requirements to... the problems students will be facing at the industry. (Lindan, li. 123-130)

vii) A quality teacher challenges students' thinking.

Four teachers felt that quality teaching is when the teacher is able to challenge students to think. Azlan, believed that good teaching is when the students are able to be “*much, much more analytical and critical in the way they see things*” (Azlan, li.132). Adda thought that a good teacher can make students do “*serious thinking*” with regards to their social surroundings and how their actions can affect the society (Adda, li. 584-593). Sobrie stressed developing students' analytical thinking.

I don't give a direct answer for the discussion or result...they should have the analytical thinking to explain why they get the answer. (Sobrie, li.472-472)

Bahar challenged his students' thinking by testing them on what they already know.

Sometimes, I purposely give an example which lead to an unrealistic result, to see whether the students will - after the analysis, the step may be right, the formula may be right but since the data given is wrong, or unrealistic, so the answer will be unrealistic - I want to see whether they will think and give a comment to the answer they get. If they just take it as the final answer, I think the student is not doing the thinking (Bahar, li. 1102-1125).

These teachers' comments show that they did not only recognise the importance of challenging students' thinking beyond what was contained in the course materials, but that they had also tried to do so. Azlan's comment exemplifies a perspective on 'undesirable teaching' as opposed to challenging thinking.

a lot of time we hear lecturers parroting what was parroted to them. So at the end of the day what we get are parrots too. (Azlan, li. 135-137)

viii) A quality teacher engages in research.

Four teachers related quality teaching to teachers doing research. Lindan and Orked believed that a teacher who is actively involved in research has more knowledge to “share” with students (Lindan, li. 356; Orked, li. 644). Knowledge expansion is another quoted reason for teachers to do research (Razak, li. 195; Orked, li. 645) exemplified in the following comment:

Research in a way can help lecturers teaching the particular subject to be up-to-date, and maybe to be even further in front. I'm talking about research from lecturer perspective, right? Not from university perspective. It's an enrichment. I think it would be a bit sad if a lecturer in the university environment doesn't consider research. (Razak, li. 228-233)

Luqman illustrated how being actively engaged in research helps a teacher teach better. He referred to maturity in understanding teaching material, in delivery, as well as developing teaching confidence.

[i]f you do not do research, you're just teaching the students from the textbook. You don't have any other knowledge. But if you do research... you will become more matured in understanding your materials, hence your delivery is more matured. You're more confident in teaching your students. It's your area (Luqman, li.1157-1167).

ix) A quality teacher ensures that students are following the lesson.

Three teachers mentioned ensuring that students follow the lesson as part of quality teaching, and felt it is important to look at what the students do while the teacher was teaching. These teachers ensured two-way communication by asking questions and expecting students' immediate response (Fahrie, li. 97-105; Sobrie, li. 68). Lili wanted to ensure that learning had taken place.

if we can see that (the students) are no longer following the lecture, then it's time to stop and ask some questions regarding what we have been teaching. Because sometimes when we just deliver the lecture 'till the end and then we just dismiss... then the students will take for granted. "Okay. After the lecture... nothing will happen... and I can go out." But when we start asking questions, they will start looking back at their notes (Lili, li. 224-231).

Fahrie's comments stressed active teaching and learning.

The most important for me, it's not just passive teaching. It's active teaching... if there is a response from the students, I think that's good teaching". (Fahrie, li.118-119)

4.1.2. Institutional perceptions of quality teaching and comparison with teachers' perceptions

The above section has reported how 15 teachers at UGG perceive quality teaching. The institution's perceptions of quality teaching were also sought to see if the teachers' and the institution's perceptions were aligned (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Skelton, 2005; Watty, 2003). The following section presents findings from the institutional managers supported by

documents from the managers' respective departments. The institutional managers were from the Department of Pedagogical Training (DPT), the Department of Quality Assurance (DQA), the Department of Human Resource (DHR), and the Department of Organisational Planning (DOP). The managers are named M1, M2, M3 and M4 based on their interview sequence.

The most frequently mentioned perception of quality teaching is teaching that has managed to achieve student understanding of the lesson (three managers: M1, li. 1710; M2, li. 1272; M4, li. 1038). M2 related success in achieving students' lesson understanding with "good scores" in the student evaluation of teaching (M2, li. 1272-1273). M4 related student understanding in the lesson to learner-centred teaching.

[Teaching] can be learner-centred. It can be the lecturer giving a problem or situation where learners are supposed to have discussions and do small research on a given task and present it to the class and the lecturer (M2, li.1041-1043).

Two other perceptions of quality teaching are similar to those mentioned by the teachers: being well-equipped with content knowledge and communicating knowledge effectively. However, they were only mentioned by one manager (M1, li. 1709).

Interestingly, one other perception of quality teaching, identified by one manager, deserves to be highlighted because evidence of a similar perception is found in the documents. Outcome-Based Education (OBE) was mentioned by M3 who believed that it is a "*comprehensive way of looking at [particular course to teach]*" (M3, li. 478) based on the different levels of course outcomes and the assessments that follow. The manager indicated that OBE was management's preferred way to support teaching and learning at UGG.

Researcher: I would like to get the management's perspective on this. In your opinion, what is good teaching?

Manager: I think the approach we have taken in Engineering, we have implemented Outcome-Based Education... It's a good approach... It's actually based on IET (The Institution of Engineering and Technology). It's based on their requirements. (M3, li. 405-424)

Analysis of the institutional documents revealed that OBE was indeed an approach to teaching and learning that the institution has adopted and implemented, not necessarily as quality teaching but to meet industry needs.

Gemilang has adopted Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in its academic programmes... in its efforts to ensure that the changing needs of the stakeholders are addressed in a systematic method and to guarantee that

the graduates produced meet their requirements [sic]. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 83)

The implementation was confirmed in another institutional document that stated,

*all programs are moving towards implementing Outcome Based Education (OBE) framework. For instance, (*name of a faculty) has started the ball rolling and the other colleges are following suit. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B7.3)*

Industry-driven goals of OBE were apparent in the institution's corporate strategy which was "to delight our customers - our students - through programmes designed to make them resilient and industry-savvy" (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 144). It suggested that the major stakeholder perceived by the institution is the industry the students would be engaged in, in their future professional careers.

Further analysis of the institutional documents confirmed that the institutional perception of quality teaching was industry-driven. The institution's statement of goals contained references to "unique and enriching learning experiences" (Department of Vice Chancellor, 2009, p. 3) which might be delivered through one of the quality objectives stated in the same document - to provide teaching and learning experiences that "prepares graduates for lifelong learning and equips them to make a positive contribution to society" (Department of Vice Chancellor, 2009, p. 5). This evidence revealed that the kind of quality teaching and learning promoted at the institution prepared the students for the institution's perceived major stakeholder – the industry.

The institution's *Teaching and Learning Policy* is an important document that can provide evidence of institutional perceptions of quality teaching. The policy outlines 15 attributes of the academic staff in "making explicit the value-base of effective teaching" (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2009, p. 6). The attributes are to:

- i) demonstrate a high level of knowledge and understanding of the subject material they teach through genre approach;*
- ii) demonstrate in their teaching knowledge and understanding of how students learn;*
- iii) use methods for teaching and learning which are appropriate for the subject area and for the level of the academic programme;*
- iv) use pedagogic learning technologies which are apposite to the context of learning;*
- v) demonstrate clearly the linkage between teaching, learning outcomes and student assessment;*
- vi) use teaching practices which are inclusive and non-discriminatory, as well as being deferential of, and responsive to, differences among students;*
- vii) scrutinise and appraise their own teaching activities;*
- viii) search for novel ways to help student learning;*
- ix) actively share ideas on teaching with other academic staff members;*
- x) work as members of an educational team with shared goals;*
- xi) support the application of quality assurance methods to improve the quality of student*

learning;

- xii) avow respect for individual learners, entailing commitment to their development and empowerment.*
- xiii) commit themselves to the development of learning communities, including students, teachers, and all those who support learning activities.*
- xiv) commit themselves to scholarship in teaching, both generically and within their own discipline.*
- xv) commit themselves to encouraging participation in higher education and to equality of educational opportunity.*

Among these 15 attributes of effective teaching, attribute (i) regarding knowledge and subject expertise relates to the teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, and was mentioned by one manager. These similarities suggest that content knowledge is the most important aspect of quality teaching perceived by both the teachers and the institution. Attribute (iv) relates to the use of technology in teaching also mentioned by the teachers as part of good delivery of knowledge. Other attributes like (ii), (iii) and (viii) and (xii) relate to being concerned with students' learning and personal growth which were indirectly implied in the teachers' perceptions of quality teaching. Likewise, attributes (vii), (ix) and (x) to do with efforts in sharing teaching experiences and in improving teaching were demonstrated by some interviewed teachers. This suggests that the teachers were already endorsing the effective teaching attributes outlined by the institution whether they realise it or not. Interestingly, no reference was made by either the teachers or the managers to attribute (vi) which focuses on inclusive education despite the fact that the institution has international students and local students of diverse cultures and languages.

Three other attributes were also unrecognised by the teachers since they were not cited in the teacher interviews which are attributes (v) related to OBE (although OBE was not directly mentioned in the Teaching and Learning Policy) and (xiii) and (xiv) to do with learning communities and the scholarship of teaching. Attribute (v) was cited by only one institutional manager who suggested OBE as a comprehensive way of looking at a course. Although attributes (xiii) and (xiv), regarding learning community and the scholarship of teaching, were not explicitly mentioned by either the teachers or the managers the attributes bring to mind the teacher perception that teachers should be actively engaged in research. The lack of mention of learning community and the scholarship of teaching when the teachers discussed doing research was noted.

Many of the attributes of effective teaching contained in the *Teaching and Learning Policy* were already demonstrated in teacher interviews, though not widely for some. That some attributes were not frequently mentioned suggests that the institutional perceptions of quality teaching

needed to be promoted and aligned with the teachers'. It was possible that some of the institution's ideas about quality teaching have not reached the teachers.

4.2 Quantitative findings

The second part of this chapter presents the quantitative findings of the teacher survey with regards to perceptions of quality teaching. It follows the sequence of sections of the questionnaire survey. The teachers' perceptions of quality teaching were explored in three sections: 4.2.1 Perceptions of self as a teacher, 4.2.2 Perceptions of quality teaching and 4.2.3 Perceptions of improving teaching.

4.2.1 Perceptions of self as a teacher

This section presents findings that relate to how the surveyed teachers perceived themselves as teachers. It comprises their reasons to teach, the perception of their roles as university teachers, the emphasis they place in teaching and their perceptions of gauging students' learning progress.

Table 4.1 displays results to the first question “Which of the following statements describe why you have chosen to teach?”

Table 4.1: Reasons to teach

Q.7.0 Which of the following statement(s) describe(s) why you've chosen to teach? (You may tick more than one answer).				
		<i>n</i> = 90	Freq.	%
Ranked position				
1	I have always wanted to teach		46	35.9
2	My educational qualifications led me into teaching.		39	30.4
3	I wanted to try teaching		19	14.8
4.5	When I graduated, there was no job available in the related professional job market.		7	5.5
4.5	Job hopping from my last work place led me into teaching.		7	5.5
6	Economic pressure		5	3.9
7	Other		3	2.4
8	Family pressure		2	1.6
Total			128	100.0

The top three ranked reasons to teach are to do with having interest in teaching. The fact that the reason “ I have always wanted to teach” (1st) far exceeds the reason “I wanted to try teaching” (3rd) suggests that more teachers had had a long existing interest in teaching compared to those who had recently developed the interest (though there is a possibility that some teachers have checked both reasons). With regards to the reason, “my educational qualifications led me into teaching” (2nd), this statement could be interpreted in two ways; the teachers had some form of formal teacher education and were qualified to teach in their subject

areas or, they were considered eligible to teach at UGG because they had the relevant industry experience and/or some teaching experience. Demographic details of the survey participants showed that 35.6% of them came from a teaching background prior to teaching at UGG, 37.8% of them were from a non-teaching background while the remaining 26.6% were fresh graduates. It can be said that the teachers' educational qualifications that led them into teaching might mean that close to one-third of them were qualified to teach.

Following the top three reasons, the next ranked reasons are a tie between "when I graduated, there was no job available in the related professional market" (4th) and "job hopping from my last work place led me into teaching" (5th). These two reasons to teach are related to the job market and the current state of employment in the country. The next ranked reason is "economic pressure" (6th). Combined, these three reasons suggest that the contemporary state of national economy and job market might have driven these teachers into teaching. Only two teachers chose "family pressure" (8th) as their reason to teach.

Overall, it is evident that a larger portion of the surveyed teachers (81.9%) teach out of interest and being qualified to teach (ranking 1st, 2nd and 3rd) while a smaller portion of them (17.2%) teach because of limited choice or having some kind of pressure to go into teaching (ranking 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th). The three "other" reasons stated by the surveyed teachers were "encouraged by lecturer during studies", "secondment from parent company", and "the opportunity for doing research in area of interest".

The next three questions explored the teachers' perspectives on teaching. The questions and item descriptions were developed based on Pratt's (1998) *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult Education*. It provided a framework for a structured investigation of teachers' perceptions of teaching, giving the study "objects of critical reflection" (Pratt, 2002, p. 14). In finding out the teachers' perceptions of their teacher roles, the emphasis they place in teaching and their perceptions of gauging learning, combined, it provides an overview of UGG teachers' perspectives on teaching.

The following table presents results to the question "Which of the following teacher roles describe(s) BEST how you see your role as a university teacher?" Classification labels like "facilitator" and "instructor" were used instead of "developer" and "transmitter" because they are more meaningful for the surveyed teachers. It should be noted that the classification labels, the item descriptions and the entire section on Pratt's five perspectives are the researchers' interpretation of Pratt's (1998) "Chapter 10: Analyzing Perspectives".

Acknowledging Pratt’s idea that a teacher may hold more than one perspective, the surveyed teachers were allowed to choose up to three perspectives, ranked in order of dominance. “Weighted scores” are used to account for scale of dominance. Therefore, frequency counts are presented rather than percentages, as it is the basis for calculation of the weighted score. The results are displayed in descending order. Table 4.2 shows results of teachers’ perceptions of their roles as university teachers. The teachers’ most preferred perception of their teacher role is “facilitator” followed by “instructor”, “role model”, “provocateur” and finally “friend”.

Table 4.2: Teachers’ perceptions of their roles as university teachers

Q8.0 Which of the following teacher roles describe(s) BEST how you see your role as a university teacher? (You may tick up to 3; 1: most dominant role, 3: least dominant role)						
<i>n</i> = 90	1 (F)	2 (F)	3 (F)	Total freq.	Miss- ing	Total weighted score
Ranked position						
1 Facilitator (one who guides learning)	25	24	11	60	30	134
2 Instructor (one who passes on knowledge)	25	21	11	57	33	128
3 Role model (one who models appropriate behaviour to students' future professions)	21	6	15	42	48	90
4 Provocateur (one who challenges thinking)	9	11	13	33	57	62
5 Friend (one who provides support for learning)	5	12	15	32	58	54

Note: “Total weighted score” is calculated as the following: F1*3 scores (most dominant role) + F2*2 scores (less dominant role) + F3*1 score (least dominant role).

The descriptions in the parentheses were originally included in the survey.

The respondents were allowed to choose up to three teacher roles; therefore, there were at least two missing responses for each respondent.

Based on the total weighted scores, the top two roles showed close results between facilitator and instructor. These results suggested that the teachers most preferred to see themselves as one who guides learning first, closely followed by one who passes on knowledge. Third preferred, nearly 30 scores behind was the role model role, one who modelled appropriate behaviour in the profession. Yet another 30 scores behind were provocateur and the friend roles which were similarly low in strength. This suggested that the teachers perceived their roles far less to challenge students to think and to provide support for learning.

The entire distribution of results is displayed in order to enable comparison among category of responses (Alreck & Settle, 2004). This is illustrated in Figure 4.1. The figure is arranged by total weighted score in descending order. The bars show frequency distributions that account for scale dominance. A clustered bar graph is used in order to compare results within one and across all teacher roles.

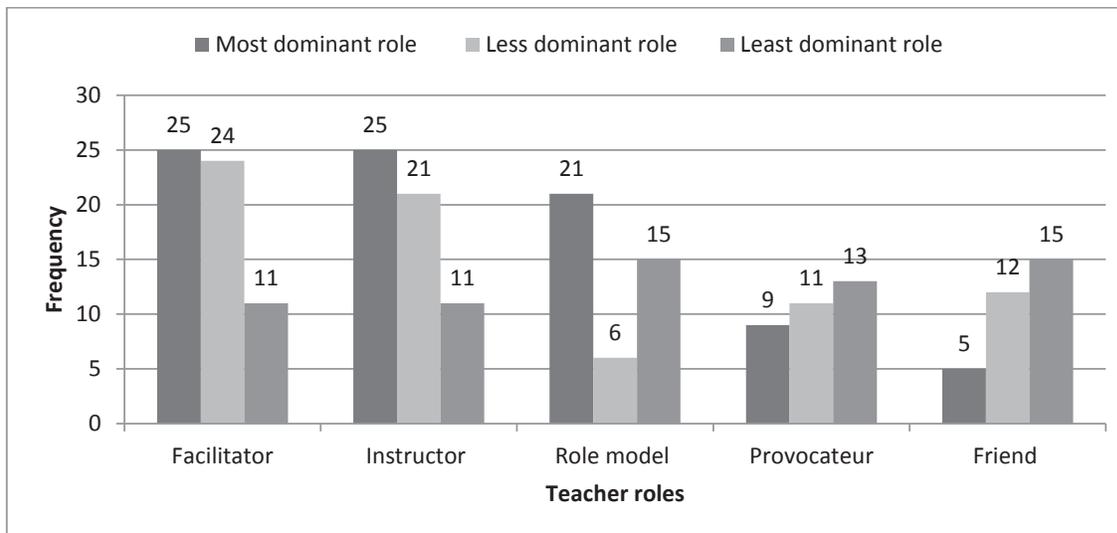


Figure 4.1: Teachers’ perceptions of their roles as university teachers

Firstly, facilitator and instructor show similar patterns as opinion distributions are skewed towards the most dominant role. The rating is constantly reduced in the lower opinion scales. This illustrates strong preference and strong rating for both the facilitator and instructor teacher roles. On the opposite end of the continuum, provocateur and friend teacher roles share similar patterns as the distributions are skewed towards the least dominant role. The rating constantly increased in the lower opinion scales. This shows that as well as its low preference in perceived teacher roles, opinion ratings are also weak, confirming relatively weak results for provocateur and friend as perceived teacher roles.

Interestingly, the middle-preferred role – the role model role- shows mixed results. Within this role, although the most dominant role is rated the highest, it is also highly rated as the least dominant role. This suggests that although the role model role is the third preferred, this mixed ratings suggest mixed reactions compared to clear preferences and ratings for the other four teacher roles.

Next, teachers’ perceptions of their roles as university teachers were further explored with the question “Which of the following statements describes best, the emphasis you place in teaching?”

Table 4.3 illustrates the surveyed teachers’ preferred emphasis in teaching arranged in descending order by the total weighted score. It is to be noted that the types of teacher perspectives in the parentheses were not displayed in the original survey so that they could not identify with the roles they chose in the previous question. Further, the order of teacher perspective types was re-arranged to avoid predictability. These steps were taken in order to

maximise the opportunity for natural responses. The same steps were taken for the following two questions.

Table 4.3: Teachers' emphasis in teaching

Q 9.0 Which of the following statement(s) describe(s) BEST, the emphasis you place in teaching? (You may tick up to 3; 1: most emphasis, 3: least emphasis)						
<i>n</i> = 90	1 (F)	2 (F)	3 (F)	Total freq.	Miss -ing	Total weighted score
Ranked position						
1.5 Students' strong grasp of subject content (Instructor)	21	13	13	47	43	102
1.5 Students' learning experiences that are close to situations in their future world of work (Role model)	18	17	14	49	41	102
3 Students' critical views of the subject discipline and how it plays its role in the surrounding community (Provocateur)	23	7	10	40	50	93
4 Students' learning activities in class and how they make sense of learning (Facilitator)	13	20	11	44	46	90
5 Students' high confidence level and self-esteem towards learning the subject (Friend)	9	15	15	39	51	72

Notes: "Total weighted score" is calculated as the following: F1*3 scores (most dominant role) + F2*2 scores (less dominant role) + F3*1 score (least dominant role)
Teacher roles in the parentheses were not included in the original survey.
The respondents were allowed to choose up to three teaching emphases; therefore, there were at least two missing responses for each respondent.

The identical total weighted scores for "students' strong grasp of subject content and "students' learning experiences that are close to situations in their future world of work" show that despite most strongly preferring the facilitator and instructor perspectives, the teachers' espoused emphasis in teaching reveals instructor and role model perspectives. This shows that subject content and learning experiences that are close to real-life situations are both strongly emphasised in teaching. Not far behind are the weighted scores for teaching emphases on "students' critical views of the subject discipline and how it plays its role in the surrounding community" followed closely by "students' learning activities in class and how they make sense of learning". These reflect the provocateur and facilitator perspectives respectively. The marginal difference of total weighted scores between these two, illustrates similar strength of preferences for the emphasis on developing students' critical views and on utilising learning activities in teaching. Finally, the lowest preferred perspective is to stress developing students' learning confidence in teaching. This result suggests that the teachers least preferred the friend perspective.

As in the previous section, observing the frequency distributions may add to interpretation of the findings. See Figure 4.2.

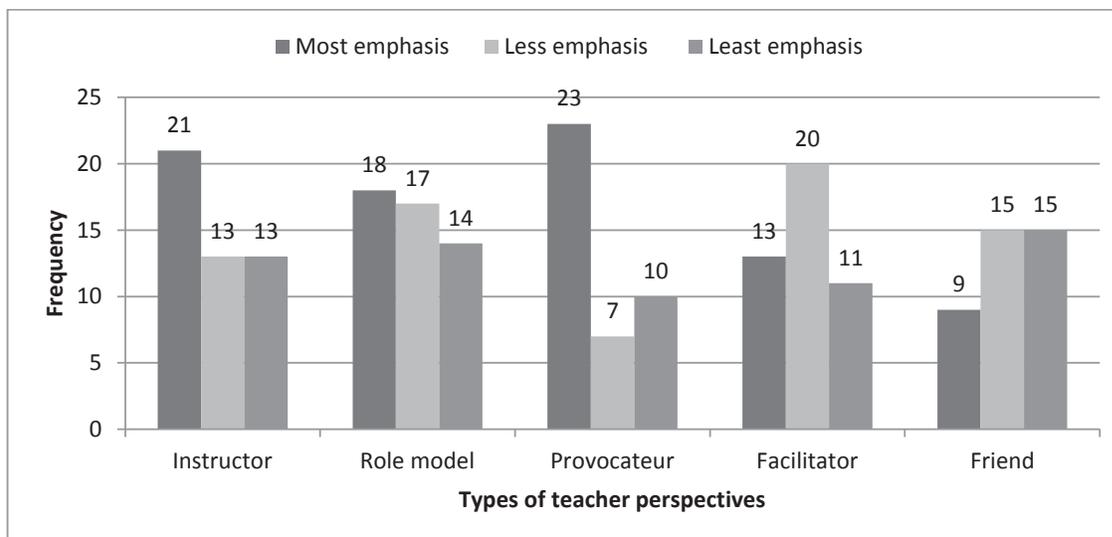


Figure 4.2: Types of teacher perspectives with regards to emphasis in teaching

Figure 4.2 shows the perspectives arranged left to right by total weighted score in descending order. The distribution of frequency counts shows some notable observations that add to the weighted score analysis. Firstly, although provocateur perspective is the third preferred by score, it has the highest number of “most emphasis” rating among all the teacher perspectives. The difference between provocateur and instructor in “most emphasis” results is marginal by only two frequency counts. Hence, as well as emphasising subject content (instructor), some teachers also strongly see the importance of developing students’ critical views (provocateur). This shows that despite the fact that the instructor and role model perspectives had a tie in highest weighted scores the provocateur perspective is nonetheless quite strongly emphasised.

Also the facilitator perspective has the highest result for “less emphasis” among all the perspectives, influencing its fourth preference by total weighted score. Finally, friend is clearly the least preferred perspective in teaching as the distribution is skewed towards the lower opinion scales. It also has the lowest result for “most emphasis” among all the teacher perspectives. To summarise, looking at the total weighted scores reveal the teachers’ order of preferences in teaching but in looking at the distribution of frequency counts, it is evident that their preferences between instructor, role model, provocateur and facilitator roles are similarly high. This highlights the need to take these findings into account for discussion.

Next, the teachers’ perspectives on how they gauge students’ learning were sought. The following table displays the results to the question *“Which of the following statements describe best how you know whether your students have learned well in your class?”*

Table 4.4: Teachers’ perceptions of gauging learning

Q10.0 Which of the following statement(s) describe(s) BEST how you know whether your students have learned well in your class? (You may tick up to 3; 1: most preferred, 3: third preferred)							
<i>n</i> = 90		1	2	3	Total	Miss-	Total
Ranked position		(F)	(F)	(F)	freq.	ing	weighted score
1	Demonstration of skills and creativity in a variety of coursework projects (Facilitator)	30	22	11	63	27	145
2	Demonstration of learned skills in model or product-based projects (Role model)	17	17	8	42	48	93
3	Objective test scores that are based on content learned in the course (Instructor)	14	11	18	43	47	82
4	Facial expressions or gestures in class that demonstrate students’ sense of learning achievements (Friend)	12	14	11	37	53	75
5	Essays that demonstrate critical thinking (Provocateur)	10	9	15	34	56	63

Notes: “Total weighted score” is calculated as the following: F1*3 scores (most dominant role) + F2*2 scores (less dominant role) + F3*1 score (least dominant role).
 Teacher roles in the parentheses were not included in the original survey.
 The respondents were allowed to choose up to three ways to gauge learning; therefore, there were at least two missing responses for each respondent.

Table 4.4 shows the results for teachers’ perceptions in gauging learning in descending ranking order by total weighted score. The first ranked way of gauging learning is through “demonstration of skills and creativity in a variety of coursework projects” (facilitator perspective). The big difference in the total weighted scores between (1) and (2) should be noted. It marks a distinctive preference for the demonstration of skills and creativity in a variety of coursework projects (facilitator perspective) compared to model- or product-based projects (role model perspective).

The third preferred way to gauge learning is through “objective test scores that are based on content learned in the course” (instructor perspective), then “facial expressions or gestures in class that demonstrate students’ sense of learning achievement” (friend perspective) and finally “essays that demonstrate critical thinking” (provocateur perspective). These results can be interpreted in two ways. One, in terms of assessment objectives, all these results suggest that the teachers most preferred demonstration of skills and creativity, then of learned skills (skills application), next grasp of course content, followed by facial expressions in classroom teaching and learning, and lastly, of critical thinking. Two, in terms of assessment types, the results may also indicate the teachers’ preferences for first, a variety of coursework projects, then model or product-based projects only (emphasis on transfer from theory to practice), then objective test scores, next immediate responses in class, and finally essays. The teachers’ responses may genuinely reflect the perceptions of quality teaching by their perceptions of assessment

objectives. The findings may also reflect choices of assessment types that are already prescribed by the institution. Since the results can be seen either or both ways, related discussions need to account for this.

It is enriching to go beyond total weighted score and ranking positions. Figure 4.3 illustrates further comparison of the results.

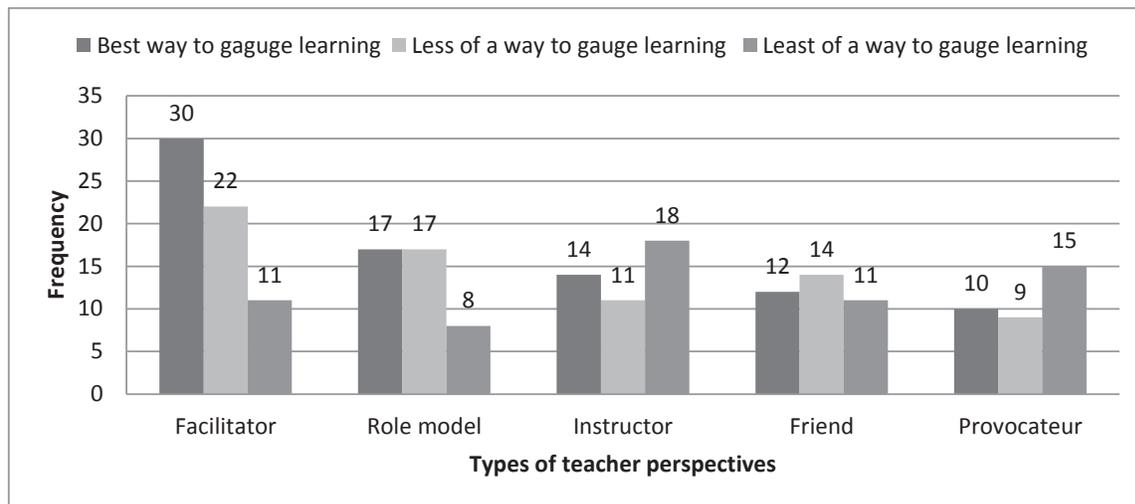


Figure 4.3: Teacher perceptions of gauging students’ learning

Figure 4.3 shows the frequencies for perceptions of ways to gauge learning arranged left to right by total weighted score for each perspective in descending order. There are some notable observations. Firstly, among all the teacher perspectives, facilitator perspective has the highest rating for the most preferred way to gauge learning and the second preferred way to gauge learning. This confirms strong teacher preferences for demonstrating skills and creativity in learning and gauging it through a variety of coursework projects. Next, for role model perspective, most and second preferred ways to gauge learning share similarly high rating, confirming high preferences for demonstrating learned skills and gauging it through model and product-based projects.

What have been presented thus far are illustrations of UGG teacher perspectives based on Pratt (1998). They comprise findings for the way the teachers perceived their roles as university teachers, their perceptions of emphasis in teaching and the way they perceive the best ways to gauge learning. These findings need to be put together in order to make meaningful results (see Figure 4.4).

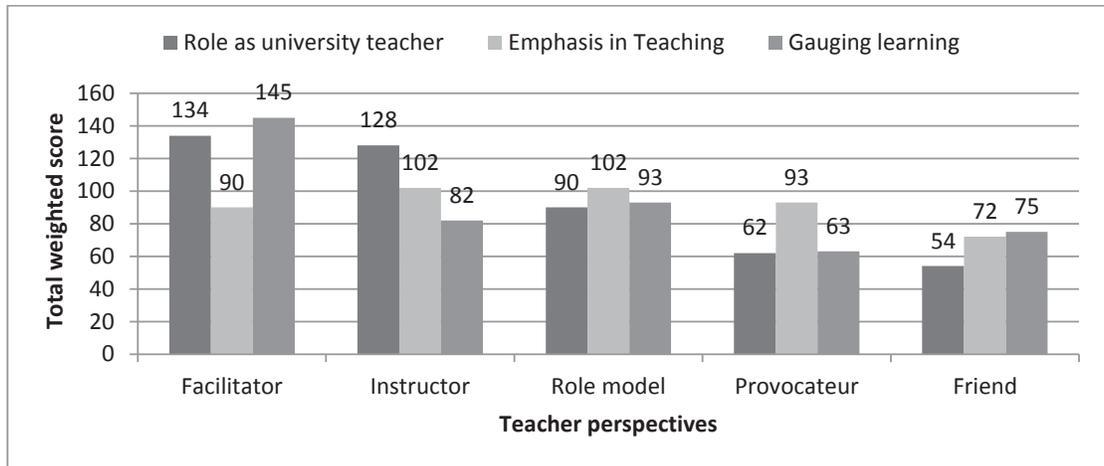


Figure 4.4: Comparison of Teacher Perspectives on Perceptions of Teacher Roles, Emphasis in Teaching and Gauging Students’ Learning

Figure 4.4 shows a comparison of various aspects of teaching and learning clustered into teacher perspectives. The bar graphs show total weighted scores. The results are arranged in descending ranking order based on results of role as university teacher. Looking across the chart, it is evident that within each teacher perspective, the preferred perceptions of role as university teachers, emphasis in teaching and gauging learning shift in varying degrees. As an example, within the facilitator perspective, it is first preferred as a way to gauge learning, second preferred as a teacher, and fourth preferred for emphasis in teaching. Further, in looking across the chart, the facilitator perspective is the first preferred in gauging learning and in teacher role and is only the fourth preferred for teaching emphasis. These observations suggest how the teachers perceive themselves as teachers (what they intended to be as a teacher) may not be what they actually do in teaching (what they believe is ‘right’ in teaching). Their actual practice did not reflect their espoused roles and their preferred ways to gauge learning. As Pratt (1998) stated, “the discordance between espoused theory and theory in-practice is a common problem in higher education” (p. 107).

This shifting degree of preferences shows that the teachers’ predominant perspectives change according to a given aspect of teaching and learning. As noted by Pratt (2002), “each perspective is a unique blend of beliefs” and that there are overlaps in the beliefs between different perspectives (p. 6). The shifting degree of preferences in all the perspectives confirms the inter-related nature of teacher beliefs. Similar results are observed across the chart with the remaining four teacher perspectives, showing degree of preferences that kept changing. Due to this, Pratt (1998) further stated, “an affiliation with two or three perspectives is to be expected”

(p. 204). Clearly, the shifting teacher perspectives in different aspects of teaching and learning show that the teachers do hold multiple perspectives.

The following figure clusters the comparison differently to get an impression of role preferences. The results are clustered according to different aspects of teaching and learning, arranged by roles as a university teacher in descending ranking order.

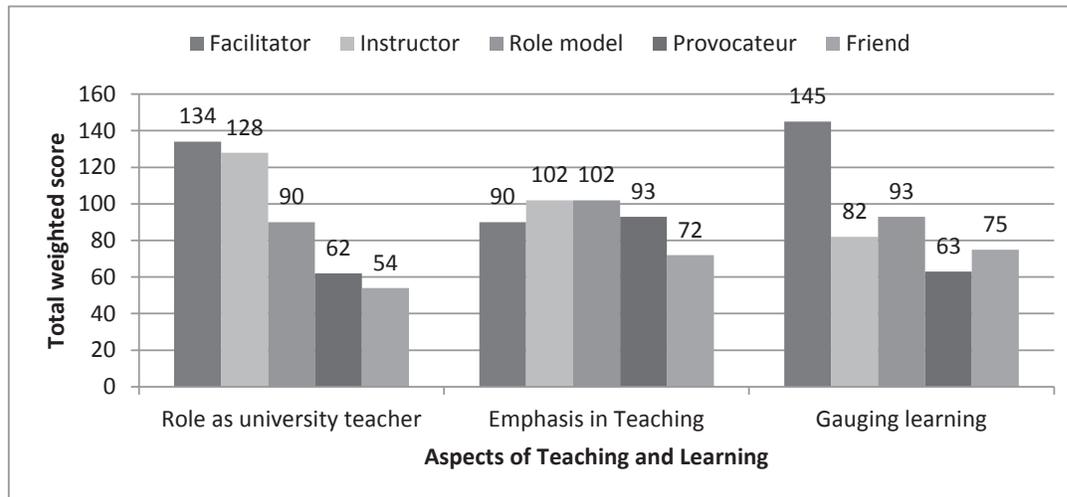


Figure 4.5: Comparison of Perceptions of Roles, Emphasis in Teaching and Gauging Students’ Learning in Different Teacher Perspectives

Figure 4.5 shows the comparison of perceptions of teacher roles, emphasis in teaching and gauging learning in different teacher perspectives. Again, we can see that the preferences fluctuate in different teaching/learning circumstances. Taking an impressionistic look across the roles as university teacher, the top three most preferred roles are facilitator, instructor and role model roles. With emphasis in teaching, the results between facilitator, instructor, role model and provocateur perspectives are close, showing almost similar emphasis for these four perspectives. Finally, with gauging learning, the result that stands out is the facilitator role, followed by role model and instructor. The perspectives that constantly top the three positions are the facilitator, the instructor and the role model perspectives.

Thus far, the discussion has dealt with results of all the teacher perspectives and how within each perspective, the teachers’ strength of perceptions in the three given circumstances - perception of teacher role, emphasis in teaching and gauging learning – changed and shifted. These changing and shifting strengths of results suggest that within each given perspective, the

surveyed teachers' standpoint is not static. The type of perspective they chose to perceive from changes in different situations may suggest reflection in context. This is to say that although they strongly perceive their university teacher role as to facilitate or guide learning for instance, they do not necessarily hold the same facilitator perspective in classroom teaching. They do not necessarily like to incorporate learning activities in class or believe that it leads to better learning and sense-making. Despite believing in their facilitator role, they might prefer to take the role model perspective in classroom teaching instead, and simulate classroom learning experiences that are close to students' future work experience. Why and how the perspectives change is not known at this point. It may be due to their natural teacher instincts, level of comfort in their personal teaching approaches, personal beliefs about what is right and wrong in teaching, or perhaps, barriers in their teaching environment that prevent them from teaching and assessing students' learning in the way they believed best or intended to do. At this juncture, it is sufficient to say that there is possibility that a teacher may hold multiple perspectives, and these may change in different contexts.

The following section presents findings of the second survey section regarding teachers' perceptions of quality teaching.

4.2.2 Perceptions of quality teaching

Similar to the teacher interviews, the investigation into the teachers' perceptions of quality teaching is the survey core. In this section, the teachers' beliefs and intentions in their reflection of quality teaching were elicited. The difference between teachers' intentions and beliefs has been established in the Chapter Two. A teacher's belief is associated with "values and strategies that inform actions" (theories-in-practice) while a teacher's intention is associated with "values and strategies we proclaim" (espoused theories) (Pratt, 1998, p. 107). It has also been proven in some studies that intentions and beliefs are not always aligned; intentions can change in relation to contexts (McAlpine et al., 2006; Norton et al., 2005) while beliefs are claimed to be "most stable and least flexible" (Pratt, 1998, p. 21). This discrepancy can lead to failing to "practice what we preach" (Pratt, 1998, p. 106). Therefore, apart from investigating the surveyed teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, this section also attempted to explore their beliefs and intentions.

Following Norton and his team's (2005) study, the item statements on beliefs in the survey are general statements that point towards good teaching ("Good teaching is...") while the item statements on intentions are expressed using "I", representing what the teachers claim they practice in teaching. The six dimensions of quality teaching discussed in Chapter Two provided a framework for the investigation of this section. More importantly, themes that emerged from

the teacher interviews informed most of the question items. In order to provide opportunity for new themes to emerge in the survey, the respondents were allowed to offer additional comments in the “further comments” section at the end of some survey sections. The comments are presented where appropriate.

Table 4.5 presents the results to the question “*To what extent do you agree with the following statements about good teaching?*”

Table 4.5: Teachers’ beliefs in teaching

Q11.0 To what extent do you agree with the following statements about good teaching? Good teaching is when the:					
Ranked position	<i>n</i> = 90	Valid percent (%)			Freq. (F)
		D	N	A	Missing
1.5	teacher delivers a clear lecture (11.06)	0.0	4.8	95.2	7
1.5	students can approach the teacher to discuss learning problems (11.07)	1.2	3.6	95.2	7
3	teacher is able to raise students' interest in the subject (11.10)	0.0	4.9	95.0	9
4	teacher knows the subject well enough to answer students' questions (11.01)	3.6	3.6	92.8	6
5	students respond well to teachers' questions in class (11.13)	2.4	9.8	87.8	8
6	teacher is able to support students' job aspirations (11.12)	3.7	11.1	85.2	9
7	teacher tries to incorporate group activities in teaching and learning (11.05)	2.4	13.3	84.3	7
8	teacher builds the structure of the subject content for students (11.03)	1.2	17.9	80.9	6
9	teacher makes an effort to get open-ended student feedback on his/her teaching (11.17)	4.9	18.3	76.8	8
10	teacher uses technology in teaching and learning (11.04)	7.2	17.9	75.0	6
11	students score high marks in the final exam (11.14)	6.2	24.7	69.2	9
12	teachers' teaching notes can be used for students' exam revision (11.02)	8.3	23.8	67.9	6
13	students thank the teacher after the course finishes (11.15)	8.6	32.1	59.3	9
14	teacher is able to stay beyond working hours for student consultation (11.11)	17.2	28.4	54.3	9
15	teacher scores high marks in the standard teacher evaluation form (11.16)	15.9	36.6	47.6	8
16	students can approach the teacher to discuss personal problems (11.08)	8.5	46.3	45.1	8
17	teacher is granted "the Best Teacher Award" (11.18)	22.6	45.0	32.6	10
18	students can approach the teacher to have a drink together (11.09)	20.5	53.0	26.5	7

Note: D= “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree”; N= Neutral; A= “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”
 Shaded results are for analysis in percentage.

In the table presentation, percentages are used instead of frequency counts. This is to illustrate proportions of responses that fall into “disagree”, “neutral” and “agree”. Valid percent is presented in order to compare the overall results without “missing” counts. However, missing count is also included in the display to give an indication of the number of teachers who did not respond to the questions. The five-point Likert scale in the original survey design is collapsed into a three-point scale for display. This is to better see which opposing opinions the teachers held as this is the main interest of this survey section. This also enables better comparisons of the overall results. The above table is arranged in descending order based on results in the “agree” column.

The results were analysed in sets based on the percentage results of “agree” column. The first set of results (agree: 90.0% - 100.0%) comprised, in descending ranking order, (1.5th) teacher delivers a clear lecture, (1.5th) students can approach the teacher to discuss learning problems, (3rd) teacher is able to raise students’ interest in the subject, and (4th) teacher knows the subject well enough to answer students’ questions. For all these perceptions, the teacher plays an active role in teaching; guiding learning, ensuring students’ learning interest and having the content knowledge. It is interesting to note the 0% “disagree” results for ranked positions (1.5th) and (3rd). They suggest strong opinions that teachers should give clear lectures and raise students’ interest in the subject.

The second set of results (80.0% - 89.9%) comprised (5th) students respond well to teachers’ questions in class, (6th) teacher is able to support students’ job aspirations, (7th) teacher tries to incorporate group activities in teaching and learning and (8th) teacher builds the structure of the subject contents for students. Here students begin to be seen as playing a part in quality teaching (ranking 5th and 7th). Seeing that students’ respond in class and engage in group activities suggests recognition of students’ active role in the teaching/learning processes. However, the teacher is still seen as being responsible in supporting students’ future career (6th) and has the content knowledge and develops it for students (8th) similar to ranking (4th).

Noted in this set of results was the rising number of “neutral” rather than “disagree”. To cite an instance, close to one-fifth of the teachers (17.9%) felt neutral about developing knowledge structure for students. Neutral results might suggest (i) ambivalent attitude in which the teachers felt neither positive nor negative towards a given perception (can’t choose); (ii) genuine lack of view on the matter (don’t know), or (iii) an intention to conceal opinion to due privacy issues (de Vaus, 2002; Saris & Gallhofer, 2007). Privacy issues might not be relevant in this case since anonymity had been guaranteed in the e-mail invitation. A comment from one teacher provided one possible answer.

*As a new staff, I am not able to answer some of the questions effectively,
that is why I maintained neutrality (Survey respondent 15, Q.15)*

The survey respondents’ demographic information showed that there were 24 fresh graduates or newly-employed teachers out of the 90 who completed the survey (26.7%). This group of teachers, like Respondent 15, might genuinely lack view on some matters, contributing to a large portion of the neutral percentages.

The third set of results (60.0% - 79.9%) comprise (9th) teacher makes an effort to get open-ended student feedback on his/her teaching, (10th) teacher uses technology in teaching and learning, (11th) students score high marks in the exam and (12th) the teachers’ teaching notes

can be used for exam revision. Ranking (9th) suggests that the teachers are concerned about their teaching performance and wish to hear from the students. Ranking (10th) suggests that the teachers see the need for a teaching aid to enhance teaching, while rankings (11th) and (12th) show concern for the effect of teaching seen through students' learning performance. Within this set of results, the fact that the percentage of "neutral" are close to a quarter for ranking (11th) and (12th), suggest ambivalent, unsure or lack of opinions on gauging the effectiveness of one's teaching through students' performance.

For the remaining set of results (00.0% - 59.9%), the perceptions comprise (13th) students thank teacher after the course finishes, (14th) teacher is able to stay beyond working hours for student consultation, (15th) teacher scores high marks in the standard teacher evaluation form, (16th) students can approach the teacher to discuss personal problems, (17th) teacher is granted the "Best Teacher Award", and (18th) students can approach the teacher to have a drink together. These perceptions relate to two aspects; one to do with teachers' personal time and space (13th, 14th and 16th) and the other to do with mechanisms for evaluating teaching (15th and 17th). Worth noting in this set of results is the high percentages of "disagree" for four perceptions. It appears that the teachers quite strongly opposed the idea of going beyond working hours for student consultation (14th) (disagree – 17.2%) and sitting with students for a drink (18th) (disagree – 20.5%), which both relate to personal choices that encroaches into personal time and space. The teachers also held negative opinions towards student evaluation of teachers (15th) (disagree – 15.9%), and towards the "Best Teacher Award" (17th) (disagree – 22.6%). They disagreed that these are indicators of good teaching, showing low opinions of the institution's mechanisms for evaluating teaching.

Also to note is the fact that the percentages of neutral for these four perceptions (14th, 15th, 17th and 18th) are higher than the percentages of disagree. This suggests unclear opinions in addition to the quite strong oppositions towards these four perceptions. Further, for the three lowest ranked perceptions (16th, 17th and 18th), the percentages of "neutral" are higher than both "agree" and "disagree", also adding unclear opinions. The level of unclear opinions is close to 50% with regards to discussing students' personal problems (16th), gauging teaching through the Best Teacher Award (17th) and more than 50% socialising with students over a drink (18th).

Two participants' comments in this section are worth looking at. One is to do with letting students construct knowledge for themselves and being responsible for their learning. It contrasts with the result at rank (8th) regarding teacher building the structure of subject-content for students. It also brings to mind the interview findings that teachers should be well-equipped with content knowledge. The following indicate less of teacher-centred view of teaching.

Good teaching is also proven when a student can help weak students/friends to better understand the subject (Survey respondent 38, Q.11).

The other comment resonates with seven interviewed teachers' perceptions of quality teaching. It relates to having genuine interest in students' learning and personal growth.

The good lecturer is just like a mother and father to students, guide them, sometimes angry with them, care for them, and a lot of thing and not just agree all the time... (Survey respondent 32, Q.11)

The following section presents results to the question *"To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teaching and learning?"* Although the original purpose of this section was to explore teaching intentions, in hindsight, some of the item statements can also be taken as general beliefs about teaching. At best, the statements that use "I", "me" or "my" as reference to the survey respondents and their teaching contexts reflect personal choices in teaching rather than what indicates quality teaching in general. It provides some contextual reference to reflect intentions closer to practice than general beliefs. With this design in mind, three statements regarding knowledge reflect teachers' beliefs about knowledge rather than teaching intentions (statements ranked 14th, 15th and 18th). Also, to note is the fact that during the analyses and interpretation of results, it was found that the difference between beliefs and intentions are not as clear as intended. Therefore, the following analysis refers to the results as perceptions of quality teaching. References to intentions and beliefs are only used in the Discussion chapter where appropriate. Table 4.6 displays the results in descending order based on "agree" column.

Table 4.6 shows some interesting results of teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. The results are thematically clustered (colour-coded). Discussion of the results proceeds in themes. The first theme in the top most rank (yellow) is to do with using technology in teaching. They are ranked as 1st, 2nd and 5th among all the perceptions, indicating that the use of technology is highly preferred in teaching. The reason for this preference is mostly to deliver clear and structured teaching (1st) but also depending on subjects taught (2nd), while using it to make lessons interesting is the third preferred (5.5th).

Table 4.6: Teachers' intentions in teaching and learning

12.0 To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teaching and learning?					
Ranked position	<i>n</i> = 90	Valid percent (%)			Freq. (F)
		D	N	A	Missing
1	I use technology in the classroom to make my teaching structured and clear (12.02)	1.2	7.2	91.6	7
2	I use technology in the classroom depending on the subjects I teach (12.03)	2.4	7.2	89.2	7
3	I incorporate group activities and projects in my lessons to prepare students for their work environment (12.07)	1.2	9.8	89.0	8
4	I believe that problem-based approach to teaching can lead to effective learning (12.04)	2.4	11.9	85.7	6
5.5	I use technology in the classroom to make my lessons interesting (12.01)	2.4	13.3	84.3	7
5.5	I incorporate group activities and projects in my lessons to promote effective learning (12.06)	3.6	12.0	84.3	7
7	I am comfortable with the way I teach (12.16)	2.4	13.4	84.1	8
8	I believe that I have an interesting personality as a teacher (12.17)	1.2	21.0	77.8	9
9	I try to emulate the styles of teaching of teachers I know to be effective (12.18)	3.6	20.5	75.9	7
11	OBE helps me prepare lessons according to targeted objectives (12.09)	2.4	26.8	70.7	8
11	OBE helps me with teaching approaches in class (12.10)	2.4	26.8	70.7	8
11	OBE helps me with designing course assessments (12.11)	3.7	25.6	70.7	8
13	I believe that the conventional standard lecture can lead to effective learning (12.05)	14.5	34.9	50.6	7
14	knowledge is to be constructed by the students (12.15)	14.5	39.8	45.8	7
15	knowledge is to be constructed by the teacher (12.14)	24.4	40.2	35.4	8
16	I incorporate group activities and projects to reduce marking load (12.08)	37.3	30.1	32.5	7
17	OBE is not suitable for the subject(s) I teach (12.12)	54.3	32.1	13.6	9
18	knowledge is as stated in the books (12.13)	57.8	31.3	10.8	7

Note: D= "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree"; N= Neutral; A= "Agree" and "Strongly Agree"

The number in the brackets represents the item number in the questionnaire.

The colour-coded themes are as follows:

Intentions in using technology in teaching;
 Intentions in using group work and problem-based learning;
 Perception of self as teacher
 Perception of OBE;
 Perception of knowledge

The second top ranked theme (orange) was to do with employing group activities and problem-based learning to promote effective teaching and learning. Group activities were incorporated into teaching to prepare students for their work environment (3rd) and to promote effective learning (5.5th). Related, far below at position 16th was the idea that employing group activities can reduce marking load which indicates that collaborative learning is first employed in the best interest of student learning before teacher interest in reducing marking load. With regards to perceptions of effective learning, the use of problem-based learning is first preferred (4th), then group activities and projects (6th) while far below at position (13th) is conventional standard lecture. This shows that compared to students' active role in learning through group activities, teaching by lecture is less preferred for effective learning. These results further indicated that collaborative and active learning were preferred to lecture for effective learning.

The next cluster of statements (pink) relate to perceptions of self as teacher. At positions (7th), (8th) and (9th), the teachers display confidence in their perception of themselves as teachers. They are comfortable with their teaching styles (7th) and believe that they have interesting teacher personalities (8th). They did not strongly feel the need to emulate others' teaching styles (9th).

All three items in the fourth theme to do with OBE (blue) shared the same ranked positions at 11th. A percentage of 70.7 of the teachers agreed that OBE has helped them with making lesson preparations, teaching approaches and designing course assessments. These results clearly show that the teachers have found the outcome-based education approach to teaching and learning helpful in the three aspects of teaching. Quite far apart at position 17th was the perception that OBE was not suitable for the subjects the teachers teach. Only 13.6% of the teachers thought that OBE is not suitable. This result strengthened the positive perceptions for OBE being helpful to ensure quality teaching.

Finally, the last theme to appear in the ranked results (green) was to do with perceptions of knowledge. The teachers believe that knowledge is best constructed by the students (14th), then only by the teacher (15th). The lowest perception among all the given items in this survey section is that knowledge is as stated in books (18th). These results add strength to the idea of active learning in the results related to group activities. The students were seen by teachers as playing active roles in learning and gaining knowledge. Also, the teachers were showing a positive perception that knowledge is not fixed or only found in books.

It is worth noting the high percentages of “neutral” responses that reached one-quarter for some of the perceptions. Most prominent are the perceptions to do with OBE and knowledge (10th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th and 18th). With these perceptions, the “neutral” percentages are higher than “disagree”. This suggests that as well as agreeing, a sizeable number of the teachers hold ambivalent, unclear or unsure opinions towards these two areas of perceptions. Also interesting are the results for using group activities to reduce marking load (16th) where an almost even distribution of opinions suggest mixed reactions.

Two relevant comments in this section are highlighted. One is to do with knowledge delivery. It adds to the findings on the use of technology in teaching (items ranked 1st, 2nd, 5.5th) as opposed to a far lower ranked lecture approach to teaching (13th). It also calls upon contrasting views between the use of PowerPoint and whiteboard under the interview theme of “teacher delivering knowledge well”.

I have heard from a student that one of the most senior lecturers in my college does not provide Power Point slides, but simply writes notes on the whiteboard; and still, he thinks this lecturer is the best one he has ever had. It makes me wonder why I go through so much trouble preparing my slides and updating my course website every week for my students (Survey respondent 51, Q.12).

Another comment contains references to being creative and flexible in one's teaching approach suggesting an open attitude for a mixture of teaching strategies and approaches. The other comment is to do with being well-equipped with knowledge. It stated,

Lecturer needs to be creative and positive with the way they teach and don't rely on books too much, be flexible. (Survey respondent 32, Q.12)

The following section presents results of teachers' perceptions of ways to improve teaching. Following from the themes in the teacher interviews, this section of the survey extends the findings.

4.2.3 Perceptions of improving teaching

The teachers' perceptions of improving teaching were sought at two levels; firstly by investigating their perceptions of factors that help improve teaching and secondly, by exploring what aspects of teaching they would like to improve. Table 4.7 presents the results for the question regarding ways to improve teaching. As above, "total weighted score" is used to determine ranked preferences. The results for the scaled preferences are presented in frequency counts for the calculation of total weighted scores.

Results of all five point scales are displayed to show ranked importance rather than to identify positive or negative opinions. However, showing the entire distribution of responses poses difficulty when comparing among items because there are many values to study (Alreck & Settle, 2004). This section contains five scales of opinion which makes comparison among items difficult. Therefore, in order to enable comparison, means as a measure of central tendency are used (Rea & Parker, 2005). This is to identify at which scale of importance each item statement was centrally rated. A highly preferred item (by total weighted score) may not necessarily mean that it is also rated as most important.

Table 4.7: Teachers’ perceptions of ways to improve teaching

Q13.0 The following are several ways to improve teaching. Based on your opinion, choose FIVE only and rank them in order of importance (1: most important; 5: least important).
What helps improve teaching are:

Ranked position	1 (F)	2 (F)	3 (F)	4 (F)	5 (F)	Total freq.	Rating mean	Total weighted score
1 Academic qualifications	23	21	13	9	11	77	3.47	267
2 Experience in the relevant industry	17	16	22	14	5	74	3.35	248
3 Teaching experience	15	16	14	12	14	71	3.08	219
4 Doing research	5	14	20	21	10	70	2.76	193
5 Teacher development courses	15	5	9	14	15	58	2.84	165
6 Formal teacher training	7	8	2	10	19	46	2.43	112
7 Other	1	1	0	1	0	3	3.67	11

Note: “Total weighted score” is calculated as the following: F1*5 scores (most important) + F2*4 scores (second important) + F3*3 scores (third important) + F4*2 scores (fourth important) + F5*1 score (fifth important).

Rating mean is calculated as the following: Total weighted score/total frequency counts.

For rating mean, max. value (based on scores) = 5/most important; min. value =1/least important.

Table 4.7 shows the results of perceptions of ways to improve teaching. The two most preferred ways to improve teaching are by academic qualification and experience in the relevant industry. The close rating means for these two confirm marked preferences for them. The third preferred way to improve teaching is by having teaching experience. Noted is the preference for industry experience (2nd) before teaching experience (3rd) as a way to develop teaching. This may suggest that the teachers perceive teaching as a skill that can be learned later in life, through experience or that it is important in teaching not to just know about something but to also be able to use that knowledge in real life contexts. It can come later than the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills in the related industry. The fourth preference relates to knowledge expansion by doing research. It is interesting to note that doing research is preferred more than any form of teacher training, be it through teacher development courses (5th) or formal teacher training (6th) (though few rated doing research as most important. The preference for research before enhancement of teaching skills shows the teachers’ high regard for knowledge which is clearly seen as a necessity to teach better. Another result worth noting is the stronger endorsement for teacher development courses (5th) (intended as short courses) compared to formal teacher training (6th) (intended as long term teacher education programme). Reasons for this need/are to be investigated. With “other”, although there are three counts, only two teachers stated what they are: “publication” and “passion/love for teaching”.

The rating means reveal that although some aspects are included less frequently in the choice of five ranked statements, they are considered more important than their higher preferred counterparts. For example, although more people chose to rank doing research higher than teacher development courses as ways of improving teaching, in terms of the actual rankings,

teacher development courses are seen as more important than doing research. These mixed results can be interpreted as a close tie between doing research and participating in teacher development courses as ways to improve teaching.

Overall, it is observed that the order of preference for ways to improve teaching is by academic qualifications, then industry and teaching experience, next research and lastly teacher development and training. In the above analysis, teacher development courses were found to be only the fifth preferred among the six given ways to improve teaching. Despite this weak result, aspects of teaching the teachers would like to improve were sought in the survey to illuminate findings on support for quality teaching as answers to later research questions. The six given aspects were developed based on the interview findings on perceptions of quality teaching. Table 4.8 shows the results.

The top two ranked positions in Table 4.8 are teaching methods and approaches (1st) and teaching notes/teaching materials (2nd). They are to do with teaching preparation and delivery. The results between the two compared to the other given aspects of teaching to improve are also close, suggesting strong preferences for teaching methods and approaches and teaching notes/materials. The next two aspects of teaching to be improved also have close results. They concern motivational support for learning (3rd) and feedback on students' assessments (4th). Both can be said to do with encouraging good learning.

The next aspect of teaching is interesting to note. Rapport with students (5th) can be compared with motivational support in learning (3rd) as both are related to good teacher-student relationships, partly boosting students' learning confidence. The lower result for rapport with students suggests lower need for help in this area compared to help in providing students motivational support. Finally, professional conduct (6th) is the lowest preferred among the six given aspects of teaching, indicating teachers' confidence as teachers or, as role models of their professional area of expertise. Suggestions for "other" comprise "medium of instruction" and "interest in teaching".

Firstly, with professional conduct, although only about half the sample ranked this as an aspect to improve, those who did so ranked it as more important to improve than ways to support student motivation, give feedback, or develop teacher-student rapport. It appears that professional and/or teacher identity is felt as more important or in need of help compared to

Table 4.8: Aspects of teaching teachers would like to improve

Q14.0 The following are some aspects of teaching. Which of them would you like to improve the MOST?
Choose FIVE only and rank them in order of importance (1: most important; 5: least important)

<i>n</i> = 90	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Rating	Total
Ranked position	(F)	(F)	(F)	(F)	(F)	freq.	mean	weight- ed score
1 Teaching methods and approaches	29	30	4	7	7	77	3.87	298
2 Teaching notes / teaching materials	20	17	20	8	11	76	3.35	255
3 Motivational support for learning	9	9	18	23	10	69	2.77	191
4 Feedback on students' assessments	8	12	11	13	23	67	2.54	170
5 Rapport with students	7	5	14	13	17	56	2.50	140
6 Professional conduct	7	6	10	13	8	44	2.80	123
7 Other	1	0	0	1	0	2	3.50	7
SUM TOTAL	81	79	77	78	76	391		1184

Note: “Total weighted score” is calculated as the following: F1*5 (most important) + F2*4 (second important) + F3*3 (third important) + F4*2 (fourth important) + F5*1 (fifth important).
Rating mean is calculated as the following: Total weighted score/total frequency counts.
For rating mean, max= 5/most important; min =1/least important.

aspects regarding student motivation, feedback on learning and teacher-student rapport. Also, with the medium of instruction - English in the case of UGG - although it was mentioned by only one teacher, the fact that it was rated as “most important” deserves to be looked into. There may be other teachers who are also struggling with teaching in English.

To bring this section on teachers’ perceptions of improving teaching into focus, although teacher development courses were less preferred as a way to improve teaching, the findings presented above reveal some aspects of teaching that the teachers could be supported with. All of the six suggested aspects of teaching to be improved could be assisted through teacher development courses.

4.3 Summary of qualitative and quantitative findings

There is a need to bring both the qualitative and quantitative findings together in order to see whether the findings converge or diverge (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). The following table combines both sets of data for a summary of findings. In respect of the theoretical drive and the qualitative research orientation, the summary follows the sequence of qualitative findings (R. B. Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Also, the summary presentation retains the qualitative approach to analysis by using frequency of mentions for the qualitative findings and by ranked positions for the quantitative findings, rather than by statistical results. Table 4.9 presents the findings summary.

Table 4.9: Summary of qualitative and quantitative findings on perceptions of quality teaching

	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS
	A quality teacher:	
1	Is well-equipped with knowledge of the subject-matter Mentioned by 10 teachers mainly to do with teachers' active role in teaching, 1 manager, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as demonstrating high level of knowledge and understanding of the subject material teachers teach.	Instructor teacher role who passes knowledge ranked (2/5), content emphasis in teaching (1.5/5), content-based assessments (3/5), teacher delivers clear lecture (1.5/18), teacher knows the subject well enough to answer students' questions (4/18), teacher builds the structure of the subject content for students (8/18), teacher's teaching notes can be used for students' exam revision (12/18), students score high marks in the final exam (11/18), knowledge is to be constructed by the students (14/18), knowledge is to be constructed by the teacher (15/18), knowledge is as contained in the books (18/18).
2	Develops good teacher-student relationship Mentioned by 9 teachers mainly to do with approachability for student motivation and learning support, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as understanding how students learn and searching for novel ways to help students learn.	Facilitator teacher role who guides learning ranked (1/5), emphasis on class activities and sense making in learning (4/5), Friend teacher role who provides learning support (5/5), emphasis on building students' confidence and self-esteem in learning subject (5/5), assessment of learning by facial expressions and gestures in class (4/5), students can approach teacher for learning problems (1.5/18), teacher is able to raise students' interest in the subject (3/18), students can approach teacher for personal problems (16/18), students can approach teacher for social drink (18/18), students thank teacher after the course finishes (13/18).
3	Delivers knowledge well Mentioned by 7 teachers mainly to do with effective communication of knowledge, 1 manager, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as the use of technology in teaching.	Instructor teacher role ranked (1/5), content emphasis in teaching (1.5/5), knowledge is constructed by the teacher (15/18), facilitator teacher role who guides learning (5/5), knowledge is constructed by the students (14/18), emphasis on class activities and sense making in learning (4/5), content-based assessments (3/5), demonstration of creativity in variety of assessments (1/5), teacher delivers clear lecture (1/18), teacher uses technology to teach (10/18), technology used to make teaching clear (1/18), technology used depending on subjects (2/18), technology used to make teaching interesting (5.5/18), lecture can be effective teaching (13/18). - 1 surveyed teacher mentioned the use of lecture and whiteboard to teach

		as opposed to PowerPoint slides can also lead to effective teaching.
4	<u>Has genuine interest in teaching and learning</u> Mentioned by 7 teachers mainly to do with having the heart to teach and genuine care for students' welfare, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as demonstrating understanding of how students learn, ensure teaching practices that are inclusive and non-discriminatory, searching for novel ways to help students learn and to avow respect for individual and commit to developing and empowering them.	Friend teacher role that provides learning support (5/5), emphasis on building students' confidence and self-esteem in learning (5/5), assessment of learning by facial expressions and gestures in class (4/5), teacher is able to raise students' interest in the subject (3/18), students can approach teacher for personal problems (16/18).
5	<u>Makes an effort to improve teaching</u> Mentioned by 7 teachers mainly to do with individual strategies and community network to improve one's own teaching, mentioned by 1 manager, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as scrutinising and appraising teachers' own teaching activities, actively share ideas on teaching with other teachers, work as members of an educational team with shared goals, commit to developing learning communities and commit to the scholarship of teaching. Ways to improve teaching comprise i) visiting other universities, ii) observing colleagues, iii) talking to colleagues, iv) connecting with professional network, v) reading books on teaching, vi) teaching experience.	Teacher makes an effort to get open-ended student feedback on teaching (9/18), teacher scores high marks in the standardised student evaluation of teachers (15/18), teacher is granted the "Best Teacher Award" (17/18), comfortable with the way they teach (7/18), believes they have interesting teacher personalities (8/18) and tries to emulate other teaching styles (9/18). Preferred ways to improve teaching are by i) academic qualifications, ii) industry experience, iii) teaching experience, iv) doing research, v) teacher development courses (short courses), vi) formal teacher training (long-term teaching certificate-awarding programmes), vii) having love for teaching. - 1 surveyed teacher cited research publication as a way to improve teaching, 2 surveyed teachers cited passion/love for teaching.
6	<u>Is able to relate theories in classroom learning with practice in the real world</u> Mentioned by 5 teachers mainly to do with relating teaching to future job needs, mentioned by 1 manager as Outcome-Based Education (OBE), cited in various institutional documents as institutional-level OBE implementation, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as creating a link between teaching, learning outcomes and assessment.	Role model teacher role that models behaviour appropriate to students' future profession (3/5), emphasis on learning experience close to real job situations (1.5/5) emphasis on the development of students' critical views on subject discipline and how impact on community (3/5), product- or model-based assessments (2/5), teacher is able to support students' job aspirations (6/18), teacher incorporates group activities to prepare students for work environment (3/18), problem-based learning leads to effective learning (4/18), OBE helps with lesson preparation (11/18), teaching approaches (11/18), assessment design (11/18), OBE is unsuitable to courses taught (17/18).
7	<u>Challenges students' thinking</u> Mentioned by 4 teachers mainly to do with developing analytical and critical thinking.	Provocateur teacher role that challenges students to think (4/5), emphasis on the development of students' critical views on subject discipline and how their views impact on community (3/5), essay-type assessments that demonstrate critical

		thinking (5/5), knowledge is to be constructed by the students (14/18).
8	Engages in research	
	Mentioned by 4 teachers mainly to do with knowledge expansion and knowledge sharing with students, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as developing learning communities among students and teachers and teachers' commitment to the scholarship of teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 surveyed teacher mentioned the opportunity to engage in research as a reason they took up teaching. - 1 surveyed teacher cited research publication as a way to improve teaching.
9	Ensures that students are following the lesson	
	Mentioned by 3 teachers mainly to with students active responses in class, mentioned by 3 managers mainly to do with ensuring students' understanding, cited in the <i>Teaching and Learning Policy</i> as demonstrating understanding of how students learn, ensure teaching practices that are inclusive and non-discriminatory, searching for novel ways to help students learn and to avow respect for individual and commit to developing and empowering them.	Students respond well to teachers' questions in class (5/18), teacher tries to incorporate group activities in teaching/learning (7/15), teacher incorporates group activities to prepare students for work environment (3/18), for effective learning (5.5/18), to reduce marking load (16/18).

Note: - 2/5 means the second position out of 5 given choices in the particular section There were reasons to teach, 5 perceptions of roles as a university teacher, 5 types of emphasis on teaching, 5 perceptions of gauging learning, 18 beliefs on teaching and 18 intentions in teaching and learning.

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented findings on UGG teachers' perceptions of quality teaching based on teacher interviews, manager interviews, document analysis and the teacher survey. Findings from the teacher interviews yielded nine themes of perceptions of quality teaching. Based on these themes, findings from relevant sections from the teacher survey have been juxtaposed in a table summary to enable the comparison of results. It has been stated at the outset that the purpose of the teacher survey is for triangulation of results - to see whether what is found in the smaller teacher interview sample can be generalised to the larger population (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The outcome of the findings comparison shows both similar and different findings between the qualitative and quantitative sets of data in terms of frequency of mentions and ranked positions of item statements. Therefore, concluding whether the qualitative and quantitative findings converge or diverge (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010) does not do justice to the complex nature of perceptions of quality teaching observed in these findings. Further, the complexity of these perceptions, as well as their inter-related connections may also have bearing on the findings for the research questions 2, 3 and 4 on constraints and support for quality teaching. The inter-related and contextual nature of perceptions of quality teaching is discussed in-depth in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 5 FINDINGS: INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS AND SUPPORT

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings for institutional constraints on and support for quality teaching at Universiti Gading Gemilang (UGG). The chapter is divided into two major sections: (I) Institutional constraints on quality teaching and (II) Institutional supports for quality teaching. The research questions in order of data presentation are:

Research question 3: What kinds of existing constraints are there which impede the teachers' delivery of quality teaching?

Research question 2: What kinds of existing support for teaching do the teachers find helpful in delivering quality teaching?

Research question 4: What kinds of support for teaching do the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided?

Similar to the analysis approach taken in Chapter 4, qualitative and quantitative findings are presented separately. In keeping with the qualitative-inductive approach of this study, qualitative findings for all the research questions are presented first followed by quantitative findings from the teacher survey. Findings from both the data sets are combined at the end of the chapter as a findings summary.

5.1 Qualitative findings

In this section, findings from the teacher interviews establish the themes, verified or otherwise by document evidence and manager interviews where appropriate.

5.1.1. Institutional constraints to quality teaching

This section presents findings to *Research Question 3: What kinds of existing constraints are there which impede the teachers' delivery of quality teaching?* Unlike the previous chapter where teachers' and institutional perceptions were presented separately, findings from the teacher interviews are presented alongside findings from the manager interviews and the document analysis. This is because the investigation of constraints on and support for quality teaching are mainly informed by the teachers based on their teaching contexts while the manager interviews and the documents serve to substantiate or otherwise, the teachers' claims. Four themes around institutional constraints emerged from the teacher interviews. Arranged in order of frequency of mentions, they are:

- i) institutional quality-related activities
- ii) class size
- iii) quality of students
- iv) material provisions

i) institutional quality-related activities

Eleven teachers identified the institution's quality-related activities as a constraint. Three said that these activities were excessive. Words used to describe this are that the institution was "so obsessed" with (*Fahrie, li. 1855*) and "very ambitious" (*Orked, li. 416*) about obtaining certified recognition and that the quality activities were "too much" (*Lili, li. 1362*). The following comments express similar concerns in a more implicit way: *[q]uality is important. But there's a time and need. Not everything at one go (Luqman, li.1138).*

A review of the institutional documents revealed various quality initiatives that were taking place under the institution's Quality Initiative Framework (QIF) at the time of data collection (see Figure 5.1). The framework comprised four major operations under the Department of Quality Assurance (DQA) which are (i) MS ISO 9001: 2008, (ii) Quality Management Excellence awards (QMEA), (iii) Quality Environment (QE), and (iv) Continuous Performance Improvement (CPI) (Department of Vice Chancellor, 2009) . Within these operations, there are further levels of quality recognition awards. Obtaining all these quality recognitions would help the institution achieve its ultimate institutional strategy – UGG10 which is in line with the parent company's corporate strategy – CS10/10. *UGG10 2007-2010 Strategic Plan* states "through UGG10, the university embarks on its business plans and corporate strategies customised towards service excellence" (*Department of Organisational Planning, 2007, p. 74*). Figure 5.1 illustrates the relationship between the corporate strategy, the institutional strategy, Quality Initiative Framework and quality recognition awards. The four key operations are marked "*".

Figure 5.1 shows how the corporate strategies trickle down to the institutional strategies, then to the institutional objectives, followed by the key and sub- initiatives which were then translated into the quality initiatives framework. The framework comprised six quality recognition efforts: ISO (both Academic and Services), Chancellor and Presidential Quality awards (AKC/AKP), Prime Minister's Industrial Excellence – Quality Management Excellence Award in Industrial Excellence (AKIPM – QMEA), Quality Environment award (QE) and Continuous Performance Improvement efforts (CPI), four among which are the key operations described earlier. Table 5.1 provides further descriptions of these quality recognition efforts.

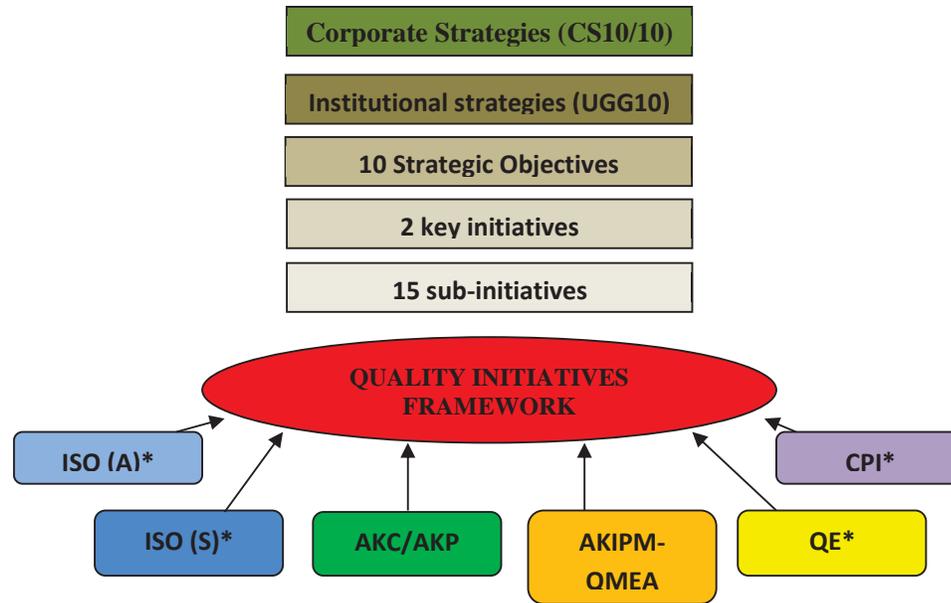


Figure 5.1: UGG Quality Initiatives Framework (QIF)

Adapted from DQA (2009b). *AKP 2009 Report: Slides presentation*, slide 79. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b)

Table 5.1: Descriptions of UGG quality recognition efforts

	Quality recognitions	Description	Certifying body
1.	ISO (A)	MS ISO 9001:2008 (Academic) * a quality management system under the International Standards Organisation that helps organisations meet the needs of customers and stakeholders	SIRIM QAS (A Malaysian Brand Certification Scheme)
2.	ISO (S)	MS ISO 9001:2008 (Services)	(Same as above)
3.	i) AKC ii) AKP	i) Chancellor Quality Award ii) President Quality Award	i) Internal institutional audit & Malaysian Productivity Corporation (MPC) ii) Parent company
4.	AKIPM – QMEA	Prime Minister’s Award of Industrial Excellence – Quality Management Excellence Award in Industrial Excellence	National level award
5.	QE	Quality Environment (comprising 5S principles of housekeeping practice and optimal workplace organisation which are sort, arrange, clean, standardise, sustain)	Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC)
6.	CPI	Continuous Performance Improvement (comprising Internalising Core Values campaign (ICV). The 4 corporate core values are integrity, customer first, business excellence, caring)	UGG’s quality initiative to measure its performance, which covers six areas of improvement monitoring plan, one of which is ICV campaign.

Source: Department of Vice Chancellor. (2009). *Quality Assurance Manual*. Undisclosed: Universiti Gading Gemilang.

One direct implication of the institution's pursuit of the above quality recognitions is that most teachers would be assigned to special task committees comprising academic and support staff who would participate in activities designed to help the institution obtain the quality recognitions contained in the quality initiatives framework. Adda's comment exemplifies the situation of one teacher with various committee responsibilities.

We (assistant lecturers) have been assigned to a lot of committees. I'm the secretary of three committees, and these committees run concurrently. All the activity has to be made every week... (Adda, li. 930-948)

A direct effect of committee tasks is the lack of time to make adequate teaching preparation as mentioned by six teachers (Adda, li. 948; Luqman, li. 231; April, li. 776-779; Bahar, li. 1452-1457; Orked, li. 610 and Eddie, li. 1278). Orked's comment is an example of a beginner teacher who was trying to cope with managing committee tasks and making adequate teaching preparations for a new course.

At the moment I consider that my module is not a stable module. I want to keep on improving things. Once you have reached a stage where things are there, you just want to add a little bit here and there, then you'll have more time. I think we're quite occupied with a lot of things in this university. Very ambitious. (Orked, li.412-416).

Meanwhile, Luqman's comment illustrates a more experienced teacher's intention to prepare interesting teaching and learning materials if he had less obligation to committee tasks. In the context of developing graphical simulations to relate mechanical principles, Luqman said,

...because of time constraints engaging with other activities, I don't have the time to actually go and building those (graphical) models online to show the students (Luqman, li. 231-233)

Committee task deadlines and meetings to attend resulted in a divided focus between teaching and committee tasks (Eddie, li. 1399-1409; Mahmud, li. 418-430), the use of old teaching notes (Adda, li 913) and teaching preparations that are only done two hours before class (Bahar, li. 1452-1457). Late return of students' coursework feedback is also a consequence of teachers' involvement in committee tasks and lack of time.

What is suffering normally is the feedback to the students. They hand in their assignments, but they get it back four weeks later (Noor, li. 1340-1342)

Adda's comment summarises her colleagues' disappointment in not being able to teach to the best of their ability.

So that's the sad story behind it. We'll manage successfully [to] run the programme here and there, camp here and there, seminar, here and there. But it jeopardises our teaching quality and our learning (Adda, li.942-948)

The institutional documents provided evidence that supports the teachers' claims. Document analysis revealed a cross-functional team approach to utilise manpower in driving the institution's quality initiatives. This means that for major quality initiatives, involvement of staff was expected from all departments and faculties (See Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Examples of cross-functional unit committees

Activity/ project	Involvement
AKP (President Quality Award)	All departments and faculties
ISO9001:2000 (previous ISO application)	All departments and faculties
5S – "Big Cleaning Day"	All departments and faculties
UGG10	All departments and faculties

Adapted from Department of Quality Assurance. (2009). *AKP 2009 Report* (Slides Presentation). Undisclosed: UGG, slide 134.

The table shows four quality initiatives within one financial year that required co-operation from all faculties and departments. As a result, each quality-related committee would include staff members from a variety of business units and faculties. It was also revealed that there were 30 committee taskforces altogether (*AKP Report 2009*, slides presentation, slide 133). Table 5.3: Cross-functional unit platforms shows activities or projects held at the institution from 2007 to 2009. These activities are "*the avenue for staff to contribute and show their commitment to UGG*" (*Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 78*). They do not only relate to quality initiatives but also include recurring institutional events such as open day, convocation day, and annual conferences which also require academic staff involvement. Highlighted in the table is the frequency of institutional level events in one year that involved all academic staff (marked "*").

Table 5.3: Cross functional unit platforms

Activity/ Project	Number of Departments Involved		
	2007	2008	2009
UGG 10 **	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
Risk management	8 Departments	9 Departments	6 Departments
Anugerah Kualiti Presiden (AKP/ Presidential Quality awards) **	All Departments and Colleges*	N/A	All Departments and Colleges *
ISO 9001 : 2000 **	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
5S Gotong Royong Perdana (5S Big Cleaning Day) **	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
UGG Open Day Committee	All Colleges & Departments except HR,SCP,PPK & Procurement*	All Colleges & Departments except HR,SCP,PPK & Procurement*	All Colleges & Departments except HR,SCP,PPK & Procurement *
UGG Registration Day	All Colleges, Registrar, Marketing PPH, ITMS & Finance*	All Colleges, Registrar, Marketing PPH, ITMS & Finance*	All Colleges, Registrar, Marketing PPH, ITMS & Finance *
UGG Convocation	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
GIBMC 2007 Conference	KSHAS & COBA, ITMS, PPH, Finance	N/A	N/A
International Conference on Energy and Environment 2006 (ICEE)	COE, ITMS, PPH, Finance, Security, Business Development & Communications	N/A	COE, ITMS, PPH, Finance, Security, Public Affairs
Hari Sahabat (Camaraderie Day)	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
Alumni Homecoming	N/A	All Departments and Colleges except HR*	N/A
Tun Mahathir Lecture Series	N/A	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
International Conference on Information Technology & Multimedia 2008 (ICIMU)	N/A	COIT, ITMS, PPH, Finance, Security, Public Affairs	N/A
Internalising Core Values (ICV)	N/A	All Departments and Colleges*	All Departments and Colleges *
International Seminar on Renewable Energy & Technology (ISARET)	N/A	N/A	COE, ITMS, PPH, Finance, Security, Public Affairs

Adapted from Department of Quality Assurance (2009a).*AKP Report 2009 (Report)*. Undisclosed: UGG, p.78

The table shows that in 2009 there were 10 events that required every teacher's involvement, which is about once a month. Out of these 10 events, four were part of the quality initiatives framework (marked "***"). These four activities have required staff involvement since 2007. Expectations of staff have increased over the two-year period as the institutional events and activities increased. Given there were 30 committees at the university level and that cross-functional academic staff contributions have increased over the span of three years, the teachers' claims that committee-related responsibilities "jeopardises" teaching quality are verified.

Apart from committee meetings and task deadlines, quality-related events and celebrations have also required some teachers to be deeply involved. The following conversation with Orked (li. 500-541) is an example of a teacher's deep involvement in an institution level annual celebration called "Quality Month" that culminates in a final closing called "Quality Day". The teacher described her position as an agent of Internalising Core Values (ICV) whose role was to promote "caring values" at the university through time-consuming activities.

Researcher: *So, how have these (events and activities) affected you as a teacher?*

Teacher: *Too much. Taken too much of our time ... For example ICV, one whole week I spent on ICV, because I'm the agent. Every business unit, they will appoint an agent... they'll send us to (a team-building programme) ... when we come back here we will be the agent... to promote about this ICV... in the same week, we have the "Hari-Q" (Quality Day). So... all the caring agents from other business units, will have to come up with a montage – a live show. (Orked, li. 500-541)*

Other teachers who were not directly involved reported similar issues with the use of time at work for quality events, affecting teaching commitments.

Yeah, sometimes I do hear people comment on having to spend more time on these activities, rather than our core activity which is teaching, especially when we're about to hold a major event ... a larger portion of our time will have to be spent on that activities sometimes to the extent that we have to defer marking the papers. (Lili, li. 588-592)

The institutional documents provided a context for the event discussed above. The institution's *Report on Quality Day 29th of May 2009* revealed that the ICV sketch presented by the ICV committee members described by Orked, took place among other activities such as certificate and award presentations of "Quality Environment", "MS ISO9001:2008", "Chancellor Quality Awards" and various competitions held during the course of the Quality Month (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009c, p. 1). Staff involvement was also widespread. On "Quality Day" day, a total of 597 UGG staff members (71.41%) were present, both at the main and the branch campus (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009c, p. 3). Although the event was held only once a year, it was not the only quality-related activity that took place in the year as evident in Table 5.3: Cross-functional unit platforms (marked **). Orked succinctly summed up the issue with quality-related activities in relation to teaching. *"I think, no matter how simple, you still need time to do this"* (Orked, li.541).

Another commitment to gaining quality recognitions that requires teachers' deep involvement, discussed by four teachers, was preparation for quality assessors' visits from within and outside

the institution. Two teachers discussed their direct involvement in preparing the documents before and after the visits.

Like the ISO, I'm the secretary. So, I have to coordinate and call for meetings, have to do audit, have to come up with the audit report just now, the findings, you have to go through (the files) one by one. (Orked, li. 543-545)

Noor also referred to the amount of time it took to complete this document preparation.

More than 50% of the time, daily or weekly is dedicated to the quality process. I can say sometimes up to 60% to 70% of the time. (Noor, li. 1298-1319)

For teachers who were not directly involved in audit preparation, audit visits by quality assessors was enough to interrupt their daily work flow especially with teaching-related responsibilities. Two teachers used the word “stress” to describe their feelings when students’ assessments were interrupted by frequent quality assessors’ visits (Fahrie, li. 1875; Lili, li. 865). Fahrie added,

It is a constraint to good teaching. It is a constraint for us to be good teachers, wanting to satisfy other people. (Fahrie, li. 1893-1897)

Three teachers also mentioned cancelled classes (Lili, li. 886-893; Adda, li. 983-984; Noor, li. 1368-1369). Although cancelled classes were typically replaced, Noor described the disruption caused by teacher’s obligations to quality initiatives.

...normally I do replace [missed classes]... But if it's the case that sometimes in the semester we have a lot of public holiday, sometimes I do need to re-schedule [classes] outside the normal class timetable. But if it's ad hoc, then I have to ask my colleague to announce and put a class notice (Noor, li. 1368-1378).

The following table shows benchmarking activities mostly related to the quality initiative Quality Environment. Table 5.4 illustrates how frequent quality-related visits were in 2009. This year is highlighted because it immediately preceded the period of interviews with the teachers. The table shows the frequent occurrence of quality-related activities. Although some of them might have only involved staff members from the relevant committees, the activities would affect those who also had teaching responsibilities. To highlight the growing number of quality activities, the period between the month of March and May 2009 (shaded grey) shows a high concentration of quality-related activities. There were different types of quality activities comprising a committee meeting (7), benchmarking visits to other places (7, 8, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 27), benchmarking visits by others coming to the institution (14), pre-

audit sessions (10 and 13), re-certification (16 and 17), big events that occurred one month apart like “Big Cleaning Day”, Quality Environment competition assessments and Quality Day (25, 27, 28). Actual audit assessments are marked with * in the table.

Table 5.4: Quality Environment (QE) milestones and activities 2009

	2009	Dates
1	QE benchmarking : Politeknik Merlimau Melaka	12 Jan 2009
2	Quality visit from E-MAS, KLIA	22 Jan 2009
3	Effective File & Record Management Training	4–5 Feb 2009
4	QE benchmarking : Majlis Perbandaran Kuantan	12 Feb 2009
5	“Improving Efficiency Through the KAIZEN Method course”	25-26 Feb 2009
6	QE benchmarking : Universiti Malaysia Pahang	4 Mar 2009
7	QE Steering Committee Meeting	6 Mar 2009
8	QE benchmarking : ILIM, Bangi	10 Mar 2009
9	Internal Audit *	12 Mar 2009
10	Pre-Audit QE (Main campus) *	18 Mar 2009
11	QE benchmarking : PSMB	25 Mar 2009
12	QE benchmarking : TNB-Transmission	26 Mar 2009
13	Pre-Audit QE (Branch campus) *	27 Mar 2009
14	QE benchmarking visit from MBSA	30 Mar 2009
15	Big Cleaning Day – 4/HOD- QE Walk	3 Apr 2009
16	QE Re-certification Audit (Main Campus) *	6 Apr 2009
17	QE Re-certification Audit (Branch campus) *	7 Apr 2009
18	QE benchmarking : UPSI	10 Apr 2009
19	QE benchmarking : PERDA	10 Apr 2009
20	QE benchmarking : Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara WPKL	21 Apr 2009
21	QE benchmarking : Politeknik Sultan Idris Shah	28 Apr 2009
22	QE benchmarking : Ministry of National Resources & Energy	30 Apr 2009
23	QE benchmarking : Ministry of Finance: Department of Housing Loan	11 May 2009
24	QE benchmarking : Jabatan PERHILITAN Kedah	15 May 2009
25	QE Competition Assessment (Main Campus)	19-20 May 2009
26	QE benchmarking : TNB Generation Cameron Highland	21 May 2009
27	QE Competition Assessment (Branch campus)	27 May 2009
28	“Hari Kemuncak Bulan Kualiti” : Q-Day	29 May 2009

Adapted from Department of Quality Assurance (2009e). *Quality Environment Report 2009 (Slides Presentation)*. Undisclosed: Universiti Gading Gemilang, slides 33-37.

It is evident from the documents that the staff members at UGG were not only involved in dealing with the quality assessors but might also be involved in quality-related visits to other places, if they were part of the related committee. Teachers were likely to be involved in all four quality events between April and May as these events required participation from all academic staffs (See Table 5.3).

One teacher raised an interesting issue of the use of personal time outside working hours to complete work-related tasks. Luqman was managing several project reports at one time,

...my [consultancy] project is due tomorrow! So in fact I was still writing my report which was due tomorrow. So, this will affect the quality of my [UGG

quality audit] report which is also due tomorrow evening. So, I have to stay up at night or spend less time with my family (Luqman, li.1209-1216).

Although the use of personal time at home was only mentioned by one teacher, the finding that the other teachers were also trying to cope with managing a variety of administrative obligations which could take up to 70% of their time at work, may imply similar issues of having to take work home. The issue of having to manage various administrative obligations and teaching responsibilities at one time was discussed with one institutional manager. Manager 4 had a formula to calculate how much time the teachers spend on teaching and its preparation out of the 41 hours a week they have at work. Based on his formula, every credit hour of a new course that one teaches, deserves three hours' preparation, while every credit hour of an old course that one teaches, deserves two hours' preparation. Using this formula, when a teacher calculates his/her teaching load per semester multiplied by the given hours of preparation time, he/she would have a remaining six to eight hours per week at work which is "more than enough for you to do other things" (Manager 4, li.1853). With regards to going beyond working hours to complete all academic responsibilities, the following conversation with Manager 4 (li. 1974-1982) represents the institution's work ethics. This conversation took place within the context of the formula calculation just described.

Researcher: *Three credit hours times three hours of preparation, meaning nine. Right? But that is just teaching itself... but we are not talking about quality teaching, because each lecturer has five key performance indicators? Research, teaching and services and publication, so... I'm not just talking about teaching here. There are four others that they need to put time aside for. So...*

Manager: *It is possible. The forty-one hours is only calculated during the office hours.*

Researcher: *You're talking about non-office hours for them to do [office work]... at home?*

Manager: *It's non-office hours.*

(Manager 4, li. 1974-1982)

The conversation above is an example of the kind of commitment that was expected from the teachers by the institution in the midst of various institutional quality initiatives which is to go beyond working hours to accomplish given tasks. Evidently, the teachers' grievances about lacking time to focus on teaching due to commitments to quality initiatives are supported by document evidence and discussion with an institutional manager.

Contrary to the barriers identified thus far, there were also positive comments regarding the institution's quality initiatives. Some comments revealed that not all teachers were deeply involved in the quality efforts. In the context of cancelled classes, three teachers denied having to miss scheduled classes to make way for quality-related obligations (Eddie, li. 1462-1464;

Fahrie, li. 1859-1860; Lili, li. 877) perhaps, due to playing small or no roles at all in the committee taskforces as suggested by Eddie. Other comments suggested that some teachers were being empathetic about the need or importance of co-operating to attain quality accreditations despite the multiple work demands placed on them (Eddie, li, 1238-1241; Lili, li. 912-915; Noor, li. 1306). Lili commented

In terms of updates, I think UGG is quite up-to-date to strive for the accreditation because we have so many higher learning institutions in Malaysia. So we have to have something, in order to compete well with these other institutions. So having accreditations is one of the ways to be able to compete, to attract more students (Lili, li. 1326; li. 912-915).

Noor's comment illustrates a wish for a better future with the institution's invested effort.

the system is just being established. So, there's a lot of overhead going into the documentation and setting up the system. But, hopefully, I foresee that in the future once (the system is) there it's not that hard to maintain (Noor, li. 1303-1306)

Still on a positive note, further conversation with Manager 4 revealed a deliberate strategy that helped the institution and the teachers cope with multiple quality initiatives it was pursuing. The following dialogue is a continuation from the discussion of the formula to calculate the amount of time teachers spend on teaching-related tasks.

Researcher : *If there is a formula to calculate how much time they put aside for teaching, is there a formula to calculate how much time they put aside for quality in...?*

Manager : *You can estimate. You cannot have pre-determined hours for everybody.*

Researcher : *But then if the activities are never-ending and overlapping? So, how do you calculate that in a week for each lecturer?*

Manager : *No. [I]t will not happen every week [Silence]. It will not happen every week. Because the ISO certification is seasonal. The "Anugerah Kualiti Presiden" (AKP/Presidential Quality Awards) is seasonal.*

Researcher : *But when you put them all together, they become continuous?*

Manager : *No! No. Because you have three hundred academic staff, you don't get all three hundred academic staff involved in every activity. You have three hundred academic staff, probably 50 involved in this, 50 involved in this. And another 50 involved in this. So they're not going to be bogged down with all these initiatives.*

(Manager 4, li.2000-2032)

The conversation shows the manager's intention for the quality-related obligations to be equally distributed among the institution's employees. The cross-functional team approach as reported in the earlier section may warrant the manager's plan for this. However, as revealed in the findings reported thus far, some teachers were involved in one or more task forces at one

time while many more reported having teaching and its preparation disrupted and its quality affected. Comments by two teachers indicate the root of the problem. Lili said, “*to me the problem arise when the implementation is not properly planned*” (Lili, li.859-860) while Noor’s main concern is that notifications for committee meetings and visitors’ appointments “*happen at the last minute. This interrupts*” (Noor, li. 1295).

In relation to the teachers’ sense of empathy in and understanding of the nature of the quality activities, Manager 4 expressed that the quality initiatives will not subside. He said,

quality is a journey... a continuous cycle. So, as long as I’m the head here, I think positive, I work positively. Whatever negative perception, I just leave it to the person who perceive it negatively (Manager 4, li.2055-2066).

ii) class size

The theme on class size was mentioned by ten teachers. The number of students per class taught by the interviewed teachers ranged from five to over 60 students. The issues with big classes were raised by those who were teaching up to and over 60 students in a class. Five teachers discussed the impact of large classes on teaching and learning.

One of the problems with large classes is meeting students’ learning needs. Lindan illustrated this saying,

(I could have taught better if) the number of students in a class is reduced. Up to 60 is quite big for me ... there are different types of behaviour, different levels. (There is a) gap... good students ask for more rather than the less perform students [sic]. Sometimes they can’t focus because of the class size (Lindan, li. 1029-1030).

Two teachers, Lindan and Fahrie, talked about the difficulty in managing too many groups in a class activity or coursework project. Fahrie described it as “very tiring” (li. 398). Lindan illustrated further saying,

There has to be six to seven members (in a group) because I can’t handle a lot of groups. I think some of them will be passive learners, free riders because we can’t focus on all of them (Lindan, li. 1048-1049).

Another issue relates to marking students’ coursework and returning feedback discussed by Fahrie and Noor (li. 1397).

...whatever we give to the students, we have to test and we have to mark, and give them the feedback! There’s the complete cycle, there. But when there’s a large group of students, it’s quite difficult to do that every week! It’s just impossible... we mark and maybe a month later or two weeks later... they get the feedback (Fahrie, li. 426-430).

Other problems with large classes are students falling asleep in lecture halls when the lights were dimmed for slides presentation (Eddie, li. 1196) and developing teacher-student rapport (Noor, li. 1397). Further, there is evidence that the already large class size at 60 was sometimes extended, with students enrolled beyond the official class limit. This issue was raised by Azlan as he was especially concerned with the large class size of a postgraduate course. The following quotation is taken from a telephone conversation between Azlan and his colleague, recorded with permission. The quotation includes the impact of large classes on teaching.

...The [online registration] system has actually a capacity of 60 students maximum And then we open it up again, because many students still wanted to register. I got 67, you know? I raise up my voice without microphone, very difficult. If I raise up too high, then I start coughing. So that is a dilemma now, you see? (Azlan's colleague cited in Azlan, li. 1964-1991)

With regards to the affected class being a postgraduate course, Azlan described its impact on teaching and learning. He said,

What we're trying to do is to have good interpersonal relationship with them... working on dissertation and projects... have good collegial relationship" (Azlan, li. 1894-1897).

In contrast, a class of 60 is not an issue for Luqman and Noor (li. 798; li. 1391). On the other hand, 30 was felt to be the optimum number for a class according to two teachers. It enabled a one-to-one guidance in learning (Amin, li. 447) and ensured close teacher-student interaction (Razak, li. 786-787).

There was a suggestion for lab classes to be reduced to less than 30 for practical reasons.

I think the number of students should be reduced to maybe 15, 20 because you want to demonstrate, you want to focus to all. Not everybody can follow you. Maybe their capability is different... (Sobrie, li. 673-676).

Document analysis did not reveal any statements on class size and/or capacity or evidence that can verify these issues.

iii) quality of students

Eight teachers identified poor student quality as a constraint on quality teaching. The teachers' issues with student quality include low proficiency in the language medium and poor self-motivation.

Poor English language proficiency was mentioned by three teachers. Azlan described his students' level of English as "horrendous" (li. 959) saying,

[i]f you don't master the language, how do you expect them to master the subject? ...You have students who are not fully competent to be there in the first place! You see, in the first place, you want to be a good chef, you can have a fantastic recipe. But you cannot cook well if the raw material that comes in are rotten (Azlan, li. 994-1042; li. 1103-1105)

April expressed a similar concern saying,

If you use even mid-level level English, it's a problem for the students, not only for the local students, foreign students also!... Words like 'articulate' for example, they don't understand. We have to explain. You know, use low level English for the students, even for postgraduate level (April, li. 151-154).

Referring to communication problems with international students, Sobrie shared the same predicament and suggested international students be given more English language courses (Sobrie, li. 1126-1127).

As well as impacting on classroom teaching and learning, the students' weak English proficiency eventually impacted on their assessment results and raised the issue of grading and maintaining institutional standards. Azlan showed some of his post graduate students' final exam scripts. They were under-performing with total marks at as low as 12%. This in turn, raised issues with students' acceptance of their assessment results. Azlan described his international students' reactions to the poor assessment outcomes. Also found in his comment is the idea that in order to teach well in a particular course, the international students need to have met the necessary entry requirements.

And some say, "I don't know why I'm accepted here in the first place! If you think I'm no good, then don't accept me in the first place!" That kind of attitude ... It's a dilemma with them as well, because remember, in order to have quality teaching, you must have quality students too! It takes two to tango. (Azlan, li. 1253-1393)

Two other teachers shared the same dilemma. They talked about the pressure teachers faced in ensuring that the percentage of students who scored the letter grade "C-minus" and lower, did not exceed 20% of the total class or course population because if it did, the teachers would have to "massage the results" (i.e. alter some students' grades in order to achieve a normal curve for the graph of overall course results) (Lindan, li. 989). Lindan's comment illustrates her dilemma in satisfying the institution's standard and giving good grades to undeserving students.

We know the level of our students, right? Their capabilities, but sometimes, they (the institution) want, that 20% C minus, but we know the level of our students. I can't afford to do it (alter the grades). (Lindan, li. 970-974)

Another teacher's comment illustrates further the kind of pressure teachers had to deal with in presenting good results at the end of the course. Contrary to Lindan's dilemma, April described his relief in achieving the institutional grades standard.

The grade C minus and below, less than 20% , ... without moderation! I'm pleased with the results, every semester. The standard benchmark for UGG, isn't it? If your C minus and below is greater than 20% then, there is something wrong with the class. (April, li. 448-459)

The institution's policy for grade distributions in student assessments was not found in the institutional documents. However, evidence related to English language being the major language medium at the institution was sighted. The documents revealed that all courses at UGG were conducted in English (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B4.11). Further, as claimed by the teachers, evidence in the documents did indeed show English language entry level requirements that are questionable. Four types of English language qualifications were described in *UGG Code of Practice for Internal Audit (COPIA) 2009 Report*. Table 5.5 outlines the English language requirements for applications to study at UGG.

Table 5.5 shows the minimum requirements for the local exams SPM, MUET and the international exams, IELTS and TOEFL for different levels of study. The different levels of entrance requirements between local and international students are also shown. It is evident that the IELTS and TOEFL minimum requirements for international students are lower compared to requirements for local students, indicating a lower standard of expectation for the international students. This may support the teachers' complaints regarding miscommunication in class and poor assessment results mainly associated with international students. Pointed out is the additional information for postgraduate intake of international students (marked "*"). The table shows that if an international student does not have any of the said qualifications, "they can choose to follow the Intensive English Programme for International Students (IEP) and complete level 2 with minimum CGPA of 2.0". Despite this provision, the interview findings have revealed teaching and learning issues with postgraduate students who could not speak or write well in English and teachers like Sobrie who felt that the students needed more English courses.

Table 5.5: English language requirements for applications to study at UGG

Level	English language requirements for local students	Departments responsible for selection	English language requirements for international students	Departments responsible for selection
Foundation	SPM minimum credit 6	Enrolment unit, Registrar office	IELTS minimum band 5.0 or TOEFL minimum point 520 or GCE- O-Level minimum grade C.	Marketing & International Relations Centre
Undergraduate	SPM minimum credit 6 (C6) + additional requirements MUET pass or IELTS minimum band 6.0 or TOEFL minimum point 550.		Requirements set by Malaysian Qualifications Agency or Ministry of Education.	
Postgraduate	SPM minimum credit 6 (C6) + additional requirements: MUET band 2 or 3, IELTS minimum band 6.0 or TOEFL minimum point 550 or equivalent score of any of the above from a university recognised by the institution. *Or equivalent score of any of the above obtained at undergraduate level at a recognised university.	Faculty of Graduate Studies	Requirements set by Malaysian Qualifications Agency or Ministry of Education. * If any international student applicants do not have any of the above, they can choose to follow the Intensive English Programme for International Students (IEP) and complete level 2 with minimum CGPA of 2.0.	Faculty of Graduate Studies

Note: SPM = Malaysian Certificate of Education, a national examination taken by fifth-year secondary school students = British GCSE.
 MUET= Malaysian Universities English Test, largely for admissions into local universities.
 IELTS= International English Language Testing System for admissions into many foreign universities
 TOEFL= Test of English as a Foreign Language for non-native speakers going into American universities

Adapted from Department of Quality Assurance (2009b). *COPIA Report 2009 (Report)*. Undisclosed: Universiti Gading Gemilang, pp. B4.1-B4.11)

Also noteworthy is the statement for local postgraduate student intake which, in the case of lack of the said qualifications, an “equivalent score of any of the above (English language exams) obtained at undergraduate level at a recognised university” is allowed. This may provide room for human judgment and compromise during the selection process which was handled by different authorities at different levels of intake, as well as between local and international applicants.

With regards to the minimum standard of requirements in general, descriptions of some assessment bands reveal a relatively low standard of expectation. MUET and IELTS band descriptions are cited as illustrative examples while postgraduate entry is discussed as the

highest level of study. As stated in Table 5.5, the minimum requirement for MUET for postgraduate entry is band 2 or 3 which by description, are “limited” and “modest users” (Kaur & Jonas, 2012). Taking the lower band of limited user, the user’s communicative ability is described as “not fluent; inappropriate use of language; very frequent grammatical errors” and his or task performance written as “limited ability to function in the language” (Kaur & Jonas, 2012, p. iv). With these descriptions, having students of such minimal standard can pose a problem especially in written English at postgraduate level.

As for IELTS minimum band 6.0 – competent user for local students, the description reads, “has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations” (*Cambridge IELTS 3: Examination papers from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate*, 2002). Compared to MUET, the IELTS minimum band set by the institution is of a higher standard; MUET band 3 being “modest user” and IELTS band 6.0, “competent user”. This highlights inconsistencies in set standards. Secondly, the requirement for international students at band 5.0 is lower than the local students. The description for band 5.0 reads, “has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field” (*Cambridge IELTS 3: Examination papers from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate*, 2002, p. 4). Admitting international students who are “most likely to make many mistakes” and handle only “basic communication in own field” at postgraduate level would most likely result in the level of performance exposed in Azlan’s students’ final exam scripts.

This issue is exacerbated with the growing number of international students at the institution. Document analysis revealed that international student enrolment in 2009 was 10.10% of the enrolment at the institution. Further, the enrolment had also increased by more than three times between the years 2007 and 2009, from 274 to 867 students (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009a, p. 207). With this document evidence, the teachers’ complaints of poor student quality and weak command of English are justified.

Students’ poor learning response, mentioned by four teachers, is another sub-theme related to poor student quality. Issues in this sub-theme comprise passivity in learning or lack of self-initiative and classroom misconduct and tardiness. The issue with passivity and poor self-initiative was raised by three teachers. One teacher’s classroom situation was described as lacking communicative responses which is attributed to not paying attention in class.

*I have a problem with making the students pay attention in class because (*name of a course) is a reading subject... I try to start a discussion, asking opinions. "So, what do you think about (*a concept)" Nobody actually say a word... You see, this is the problem with our students. Very quiet! Very quiet... A certain percentage of the students are not actually paying attention. I don't know why! (A) study should be made, why it is so difficult for students to pay attention in class? (April, li. 188-418)*

Another classroom situation was described as failure to perform in classroom learning activities. Also contained in the statement is the exposure that some students had failed to learn.

There are students who give up. They do not understand the questions at all. ... They will just give up. Because you see, a lot of students, they don't understand the fundamentals. They got the basics wrong. (Eddie, li. 759-816)

Failure to complete given tasks was also experienced by Mahmud who blamed it on students' lack of motivation and laziness (Mahmud, li. 348-349). Failing to learn was also described by Lili who stressed the teachers' role in monitoring students' progress.

when we notice something which is not right, we have to take action. Ask them to come and see us, and advise accordingly because sometimes when we expect them to say "Oh, I don't understand this particular thing", but most of the time they will say "I don't understand everything." So we have to start explaining all over again (Lili, li. 365-373).

The above situations show that some teachers have been having problems with seeing evidence of learning on the students' part. The students' lack of desirable learning responses was puzzling to the teachers as they could not understand the kind of reaction they were getting despite putting in their best effort to teach. April suggested his role as a facilitator rather than a teacher.

I have tried a lot of things, you know? Self-discovery, learning by doing, debate, because I don't want be a teacher, you know. I want to be a facilitator as well, facilitate them to learn, guide them to learn. (April, li. 440-443)

April and Eddie attributed the lack of students' learning responses to the lack of interest in the subject or the course they were taking (April, li. 419; Eddie, li. 831). As a result, the students reportedly copied friends' work, showed little creativity in their own work or did not bother to ask for help at all (Eddie, li. 860). Some also failed to complete tutorial exercises (Mahmud, li. 349). Coping strategies taken by two of the teachers include asking students to sit in fundamental classes (Eddie, li. 792-794) or to read up on problem topics and return to the teacher with specific questions (Lili, li. 389-390). Lili described one case:

I have to tell them, "You have to do some reading. You have to be specific which particular topic you don't understand so that I can concentrate explaining on that topic." They say "Okay, okay." But they go back, they don't come back. You can see that maybe they don't do the reading (Lili, li. 388-392).

Complaints of students' poor learning response reportedly affect teaching. Mahmud described,

...during my lecture, when I look at some students their face very bored, maybe not focus. Some of them play with their hand phone, talk with their friend... Of course, it will affect my motivation and my mood of course. (Mahmud, li.380-383)

Eddie described a more severe experience of students' lack of respect which included feeling 'invisible' to the students' eyes.

When you try to give a lecture, people at the back there talking. They're not interested to listen to you. They don't bother. They come for the attendance. Just to show that they come to class. For them I'm just invisible. They hold no significant value towards me (Eddie, li. 1102-1104; li 1154; li. 1106-1107).

Poor learning response is a constraint to teaching as evident in the above. With concern for quality teaching, reasons behind this deserves discussion.

iv) Material provision

Five teacher interviewees discussed poor material provision as a constraint on teaching. Issues with poor material provisions include inadequate multimedia resources and science lab facilities. With regards to multimedia resources, four teachers wished for more classrooms to be equipped with multimedia projectors,

I hope there is improvement in technology. I hope that every classroom will have a hooked-up projector so that it's easy for me to do the presentation (Orked, li. 898-900).

The lack of it has caused several problems in teaching particularly with those that use Power Point slide presentations. As a result, the teachers had to either make reservations to use the projectors or to use multimedia labs which are also of limited number. With reference to the building he was based at, a teacher described how an inadequate number of portable projectors has impacted on the teaching of IT-related subjects. Referring to his work base, Mahmud commented,

...for this building we just have five (computer projectors and computer notebooks) only. So of course all the lecturers will use the LCD and notebook. So because of lack facility of course some lecturer will just use

the OHP. Maybe for certain subjects, IT application, ... maybe we want to show the component of hardware. So, how can we show using the overhead transparencies? (Mahmud, li. 458-462)

Comments from two other teachers relate to losing teaching/learning time because of moving classes in order to make use of the multimedia lab (Orked, li. 909) and spending time putting together and dismantling multimedia equipment before and after use (Amin, li. 1140-1141).

Two other teachers discussed technical issues and poor maintenance.

Sometimes the projector is not working so we have to ask for replacement, and that will normally take away some 20 minutes maybe from our lecture time. (Lili, li. 459-460)

Another teacher's comment illustrates a more serious impact on teaching IT-related subjects which depend on multimedia technology for technological demonstrations. As a result, learning is impaired.

...those teaching multimedia, the sound (of the intended output) is not correct. It's too much base or too much treble... (the) speaker is old. Sometimes the projector colour is not correct because in (computer) programming, orange colour denotes something else, blue colour denotes something else, red colour means error (Eddie, li. 1042-1046).

Document analysis revealed that the institution recognises the teachers' needs for multimedia tools as teaching aid. However, there is no recognition of it as an area in need of improvement.

Currently not all classrooms are equipped with projectors. As a result, lecturers have to share and lease mobile projectors for their use (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B6.11).

The use of multimedia teaching aids may be crucial for those teaching IT-related subjects but is not a major concern for others, although having it can help enhance teaching. For two of the teachers, despite having some issues with multimedia facilities for teaching, they were not crucial to the courses they were teaching (Lili, li. 478-479; Orked, li. 910). Referring to broken equipment, Lili said,

I can straight away switch to whiteboard and marker. It's not a problem to me (Lili, li.478-479).

Meanwhile, another teacher said, "I prefer to use the whiteboard so I don't really care if there's no multimedia" (Noor, li.1101-1102).

Related to material provision is an ill-equipped science laboratory. This issue appears to be minor as it was mentioned by only one teacher. However, it was a serious concern for the

affected teacher and may signal problems with other teachers who also use the science labs. The teacher explained that with a class of 30, the students' lab experiments were conducted in groups. Due to insufficient lab equipment, the groups had been taking turns using lab equipment in different lab sessions. Consequently, their lab results were affected by varying factors such as temperature and weather changes. Sobrie said,

I'm thinking if they can do it parallel; one lab, five groups. All the groups in all the same lab, maybe they can compare the results. So, in the same situation, same condition, same climate, same temperature, why (are the results) different, more analyses... (Sobrie, li. 700-703)

Rotational use of the lab also meant that the earlier groups could share their experiment results with friends, which influenced the other students' experiment results and lab reports. "*I don't want that influence*" (Sobrie, li. 714). Document evidence showed that the institution did not see lab provisions as inadequate. The document states,

[*The name of a faculty] has twenty one (21) engineering labs catering to the needs of [all departments]. They are fully equipped to facilitate practical work of students. In addition, students have access to facilities equipped with power stations, electricity distribution simulators, power system equipment, machining and workshop facilities belonging to [the training institute] and also access to a high voltage laboratory belonging to [the parent company]. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B6.11)

Although the documents in print claim that the labs were fully-equipped, the issue, as pointed out by Sobrie, was to do with effective teaching/learning rather than with students' ability to do practical work only.

The above section has presented teachers' perceptions of factors in their teaching environment that impede teaching. The following section presents the teachers' perceptions of things in their teaching context that have helped support teaching. Also presented also are the kinds of support that could be enhanced or provided.

5.1.2. Institutional support for quality teaching

This section presents the findings to *Research Question 2: What kinds of existing support for teaching do the teachers find helpful in delivering quality teaching?* As before, the emerged themes are based on findings from the teacher interviews, supported or otherwise by document analysis and manager interviews where appropriate. The themes are:

- i) Teacher development programmes
- ii) Evaluation of teaching
- iii) Formal avenues for teaching and learning discussion

- iv) Collegial support
- v) Outcome-Based Education
- vi) Recently-introduced support for teachers

i) Teacher development programmes

The most frequently mentioned existing support for teaching is teacher development programmes (11 teachers). The teacher interviews revealed that these programmes catered mainly for beginner teachers. Feedback on these courses was mixed. The findings also exposed that these programmes were given by different units which resulted in inconsistencies and overlapping provision.

Three teachers gave positive feedback about the beginner teacher courses they attended. The courses were “inspiring” (Mahmud, li. 656), “helpful” (Noor, li. 1183) and “useful” (Lili, li. 132). Lili’s comment exemplifies an untrained teacher’s reaction at being exposed to pedagogical concepts. Referring to an induction teacher course she attended when she was first employed, she said,

at that time it was very useful because I’ve just joined the university without any teaching background... sometimes we tend to think about teaching based on our experience. Based on our experience, we learn like this. Then, we have to teach our students like that also. But actually there are many other things that we have to consider. (Lili, li. 132-139)

Two teachers spoke about mock teaching as a part of the workshop they have enjoyed or found useful (Mahmud, li. 674-679; Lili, li. 137-142). Mahmud described a fun approach taken by his department. Mock teaching was turned into a competition with a panel of judges who commented on different aspects of the teacher’s teaching performance. The following dialogue illustrates his enthusiasm.

Teacher: *we have two or three persons for the judges. And then they will give us the (comment), advice... the language that we use... body language... skills, so we have the feedback... Basically this is a competition for newcomers. The judge will give the rank.*

Researcher: *Did you enjoy the mock teaching?*

Teacher: *Yeah, of course!... because I got the second rank. (Mahmud, li.674-679)*

The providers of the teaching courses these teachers had attended varied between their own departments and/or faculties and two units that were then not formally recognised – a quality unit and a teaching and learning unit.

While these courses have been helpful for beginner teachers, the focus on this group of teachers had given the impression to the more experienced ones that they did not need support in teaching. Two teachers felt that the courses were designed for beginner teachers and were irrelevant to experienced teachers. Referring to the offer to participate in teacher training courses, Azlan said,

So far I have not taken up the offer because looking at the course objective I think I don't need it. I think it's more for people who are new to the place... At the moment, I think I know enough to be able to disseminate the information and knowledge and skills to the students... (Azlan, li.2126-2134)

Bahar spoke of programme organisers.

They tend to give priorities to new staffs. I think the tendency is to think that those older lecturers don't have to be re-taught or re-trained on these teaching skills. We are already experts. (Bahar, li. 1391-1400)

Another teacher's comment suggests that the teacher development programmes were offered to teachers of all levels of experience but that the experienced teachers' attitude towards re-training was similar to the above – uninterested. However, for this teacher, he could be convinced to participate.

The university occasionally request for lecturers to undergo pedagogical training. I think the Teaching and Learning unit has conducted a few. It's open to every colleges, everybody as a lecturer. But personally, I'm quite lazy to attend those courses. Probably I thought I know a lot already, probably there's a lot more than I know that they can offer... may be one of these days. (April, li. 730-737)

With regards to teacher development courses other than those designed for beginner teachers, feedback has been less than positive. When some teachers were asked about what they could recall of the teaching courses they attended, one of them said, “not much” (Amin, li. 1203) while another, Bahar described them as “not specific to teaching” but rather “bits and pieces” that directly or indirectly helped him to teach (Bahar, li.1316). These comments suggest that some teacher training programmes did not have enough impact on teaching for the teachers to talk about. Eddie provides some explanation why the teaching courses lacked impact.

All these short training, you're telling me that, if you go to (a) five days course you'll change, you're talking and teaching and everything it will help?... It gives me a lot of new exposures, new knowledge, new things. But! It does not necessarily contribute to the betterment of you (Eddie, li. 1631-1644).

A review of the institutional records revealed that over the years, the organisers of teacher training programmes came mainly from the Department of Human Resource (DHR) and the recently-established Department of Pedagogical Training (DPT). The Staff Training and Development Unit of DHR is responsible for overseeing the development of teaching skills of new staff members “*in line with current trends in pedagogy, curriculum design, instructional materials and assessment*” (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.28). The following statement shows the institutional support for staff training specific to teaching and learning.

All new lecturers have to undergo talks, workshops and seminars on general pedagogy, class management, skills to teach, techniques on student assessment and development of good material designs in order to enhance their integrity and credibility as academics to benefit students (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.28)

The Department of Pedagogical Training (DPT) was established “*to enhance the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning at UGG*” (Universiti Gading Gemilang, 2010a). DPT was set up under one of the faculties in the institution “*to look into innovative approaches & methods of teaching*” through intellectual discourse in seminars, talks and dialogues by local and international experts (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 143; Universiti Gading Gemilang, 2010a, p. 143). Its website further states that the department works “*in partnership with academic units and faculty members*” by providing a range of educational development services under its Teacher Support Programme (Universiti Gading Gemilang, 2010a). Alongside DHR’s staff-training efforts, DPT was recognised as one of the major providers of teacher development programmes for the institution (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 156). It is sometimes hard to distinguish between courses provided by DPT or other units, as some of the interviewed teachers could not specifically identify the providers of programmes they have participated in. Provisions by respective faculties or by the Quality unit were not found in printed records.

With courses specifically provided by DPT, two interviewed teachers gave positive feedback. Fahrie thought that the courses were “nice” and “revealing” (Fahrie, li. 1125; 1613). Speaking of other teachers’ responses towards DPT courses, Fahrie said,

Oh! Everybody’s looking forward and everybody says, “Can we have another sort of course on communication?” The feedback is very-very good. They want some more, they want some more, they want some more. (Fahrie, li.1712-1714)

Another teacher’s comment exemplifies feedback from a teacher with no formal teaching background. Her feedback indicates interest in learning more and the need to customise the courses to their level. In talking about a problem-based learning talk she attended, Adda said,

It was very interesting but it was very short! So, a lot of the big terms and concepts, I cannot comprehend fully because I don't have teacher training background. So, a lot of technical, pedagogy term which I don't understand! (Adda, li. 182-185)

On the contrary, evidence of lukewarm response towards DPT courses raises an important issue. Having had the chance to work closely with DPT, Fahrie described poor uptake which is attributed to other institutional activities that coincide. Her comment brings to mind the constraint of quality-related activities reported earlier.

...the thing is in this college there're sooo many things (going on)! For example, you organise a talk, and we hope that (Faculty A) and (Faculty B) will come.. but in the end you just have about what, twenty people... Everybody's busy! There're too many things going on! (Fahrie, li. 1662-1669)

Fahrie's comment reiterates the findings on poor attitude towards teacher development courses displayed by the more experienced teachers. In addition to thinking that teacher development courses were meant for beginner teachers, two teachers admitted to being too busy to participate (Bahar, li. 1387) and having more important things to do (April, li. 710). The following conversation with Fahrie illustrates poor teacher attitudes and low priority given towards teacher development programmes provided by DPT.

Researcher: *The attendance, has it just been new lecturers or...?*
Teacher: *Yeah... it's always the new lecturers [almost whispering].*
Researcher: *What about the experienced ones?*
Teacher: *I don't know where they go [still in a whispering tone].*
Researcher: *It's not compulsory, is it?*
Teacher: *Of course it's compulsory!! ... I think it's up the individual's sense of urgency. Whether they see the need for it, or not? Like when we say, "Oh, Dr. X! She's very experienced. Okay, I want to learn as much as I can from her." Right? We have to have that attitude. But some people say, "Aaahh... I don't think I need this." Everybody's busy! But whether you prioritise that, or not? That's all. (Fahrie, li.1769-1810)*

Comment from one institutional manager confirms the idea that the teachers were too busy being engaged in other institutional activities resulting in poor uptake of DPT programmes. Speaking in the context of DPT courses that had to be re-scheduled, Manager 2 said,

So, many of the lecturers are involved in [other institutional] activities. So sometimes when we have already put in a tender (a business tender to run a DPT course), we have to make way for other more urgent activities deemed necessary by the management. (Manager 2, li. 415-417)

The manager's comment brings to the fore yet again, the issue of excessive quality activities reported earlier as one of the constraints to quality teaching.

The opportunity to present papers at seminars, conferences and workshops were regarded as part of academic staff development programme by UGG. It was discussed by three teachers as existing support for teaching. Unfortunately, their comments revealed support that is inadequate due to small budget allocation (Eddie, li. 169-218; Amin, li. 1012-1017; Fahrie, li. 1722). One teacher's comment provides the background details.

*they limit us to RM1,000 per year, per lecturer in (*name of faculty). So, I don't think you can find a good course if you're limited to this amount. Conferences are also like that, very selective conferences... you can only go to low value conferences. We can never go overseas. We can go to international conferences but in Malaysia (Amin, li. 1012-1017; li. 1041-1054.)*

Amin further expressed regret in this restriction as he felt that opportunity to have "added value" for lecturers were missed (li. 1033) while Fahrie referred to conference participation as "fertilizers" to nurture lecturers which the management was not providing adequately (li. 1735).

Document analysis shows that that UGG provides "encouragement and space" for its academic staff to "increase knowledge and skill value in respective expertise field" (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.29). For this, teachers are encouraged to present papers at seminars, courses or conferences with provisions for fees, accommodation (subject to staff eligibility), internal transport, flight costs and food (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.29). Further document evidence reports strong institutional support with regards to academic staff's intellectual growth.

Intellectual capital is viewed by DHR as a strategic investment rather than simply a cost to be minimised. In order to assist new academic staff to develop their teaching skills, besides the budgetary allocations, this unit plays an important role to map out all the needs, trainings and development for the academic staff... (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.28)

The above document shows institutional support that is empathetic towards teachers' needs for skills and intellectual development particularly to participate in conferences. In reality, as described by the teachers, there were more restrictions than were found in print. Further, UGG Department of Human Resource circular entitled "Procedures for awarding training grant..." stated that the maximum amount of grant to support conference fee is RM1000 and that staff are encouraged to do local conferences (Department of Human Resource, 2008, p. 3), confirming Amin's report.

Comments from one institutional manager provide further evidence. Two types of grants for participating in professional development programmes were described: “training grants” (local programmes), and “external grants” (international programmes). With the external grant, full support is guaranteed if the academic staff member is able to secure one but with the “training grant”, its allocation was admitted to be insufficient. It confirms the teachers’ complaints that the institutional provision for conference participation was far from adequate.

All types of training, including conference, DPT courses, those other courses, just x hundred thousand. X hundred thousand is so limited. So, we encourage people to do local... to find international conference but inside the country (Manager 1, li. 962-976).

Another type of existing support under teacher development programmes is UGG’s own annual “UGG Conference on Teaching and Learning” (UGG CTL) which was first organised in 2008 (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2008). This type of support was mentioned by four teachers with two of them being involved (Sobrie, li. 763; Azlan, li. 2423-2429) while two others were instructed to participate but could not make it (Amin, li. 1089; Lindan, li. 1142). Although this recent type of support should be applauded, Azlan’s comment suggests that there are a lot of issues still to be resolved.

When you look at the conference objectives, the rationale for doing all the conferences, make a lot of sense, but then still at the end of the day, what we get out of it. I wonder whether we have achieved what we’re trying to achieve, which is to improve teaching and learning? Based on what we have discussed so far, I think I’m doubtful that (the conference) has brought much improvement. (Azlan, li. 2450-2458)

On the contrary, comment from one manager was positive and hopeful.

I would say it was a success as this was the first conference on teacher learning in the university and we have managed to get about 50 full papers and 60 over presentations. We managed to get keynote speakers from people who are reputable in their respective fields (Manager 2, li. 538-542).

ii) Evaluation of teaching

Another support for teaching is the evaluation of teaching, discussed by 10 teachers. Two types of teaching evaluations emerged in the interviews: peer review of teaching and student evaluation of teachers.

Peer review of teaching was discussed with nine teacher interviewees. One of the few teachers who first mentioned this type of support described the peer review processes at her faculty. Her comment illustrates a less than established practice, indicating a trial-and-error procedure.

(Peer review) is like a pair but actually it's not formalised because it's only (been conducted for) two semesters. So during the first semester it was like a pair thing. The second semester, we keep it open. So you can choose your own reviewer. (Noor, li. 765-767)

Comments from other teachers suggest that this type of teaching evaluation was not an institution-wide practice but was an option. Three teachers indicated that they knew about peer review of teaching but had not seen it materialise in their respective faculties or departments. The information they got about peer review processes varied. One teacher claimed that the idea was being discussed and implementation was only a matter of time (Razak, li. 608-616), two teachers had heard about it but were still waiting for it to happen (Lili, li. 662-64; Lindan, li. 778).

Reactions towards this type of teaching support were mixed. Two comments signalled negative reaction with words like “sceptical” (Razak, li. 620) and feeling “uncomfortable” (Amin, li. 887). Amin described some resistance at his department which may have led to its delayed implementation. Also contained in the statement is an indication of Amin’s own reluctance in seeing the peer review of teaching materialise.

... comments from the lecturer is that they don't feel comfortable, and now (it is) still pending... in discussion... because I think the senior lecturer didn't find it beneficial for them, they don't want to be observed by their peers. That is their comment... I think that different lecturers have different ways. And I don't want to say that they are wrong and I'm right. (Amin, li.906-929)

Although this type of support was not widely practiced and was somewhat controversial, comments from two teachers who have undergone the peer review process described the need for a more serious and structured implementation. One teacher talked about reviewers who tried to beat the system.

sometimes people view this, you know, as something we have to do... just come in for a few minutes... people who are not physically there. (Noor, li. 727-728)

Two comments illustrate the lack of follow-up to the peer review processes. One teacher revealed that the results were kept by the committee in charge instead of being reviewed individually. Luqman’s comment illustrates his disappointment in the lack of proper implementation of the peer review processes.

Teacher: *We have this peer review every semester when the colleague will come into your class and review your teaching. But what after that, totally God knows. We don't see the review sheet. We've not been told to*

improve further. It's just done for show. It's just to show the world that we're quality-based, we have all these documentations, you know. We review the lectures but... do we actually give the feedback? Do we actually check the feedback?

Researcher: *So you have not heard anything about how you have been reviewed?*

Teacher: *Nope.*

Researcher: *Is there any discussion, informal discussion after your class?*

Teacher: *Nothing. (Luqman, 1304-1329)*

Document evidence provides little background information on peer review of teaching. In the context of support available to assist new academic staff to develop teaching skills, UGG *Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA) 2009* stated,

... peer review is also implemented in colleges with the objective for the lecturer to be assessed in terms of teaching skills and receive comments and advice on how to improve it further (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.28)

Other document evidence revealed that peer review of teaching had only been implemented in one faculty at the time of data collection (Department of Organisational Planning, 2007; Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d). No further evidence was found in print regarding plans for implementation or details on its processes and procedures. It thus appears that what the teachers heard were ideas that were not well-planned and structured in print. It does not appear to be a mandated support for teaching but rather was recommended. The decision to carry out peer review of teaching as well as details in its implementation and approaches were at a faculty's discretion. With lack of structured planning, this type of support is open to resistance and abuse.

On a positive note, some teachers welcome peer review of teaching. Two teachers felt that peer review gives the opportunity for gaining another teacher's feedback on one's teaching performance, whether the person is being "too technical" or not (Sobrie, li. 652) and basically to improve teaching (Eddie, li. 1673). Noor felt that it is a type of teaching support that should be continued if one of the reasons for teacher's resistance is addressed.

Objections will only be in terms of convenience. Sometimes it's not that easy for you to arrange for someone to come into your class, especially those who are very busy... But if you take this seriously as a spirit for progress and improving yourself then, I think this is something which should be continued. (Noor, li. 857-867)

Student evaluation of teachers is another form of teaching evaluation discussed by six teachers. Document analysis shows that it has long been a standard practice at the institution and is

commonly referred to by teachers in the institution as “*the OMR*” (objective multiple response) or “SEQ” (student evaluation questionnaire) as used in the institutional documents. SEQ is a “*discrete-point questionnaire*” which provides student feedback on the effectiveness of a teacher’s teaching delivery and approaches in class (*Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.29*).

On the whole, the teachers’ feedback on SEQ used as tool for teaching evaluation was less than positive. Several teachers expressed that SEQ had not contributed towards improving teaching mainly because the results were in numerical score which did not mean much to them except that they were placed in categories like “excellent” or “above average” (Lindan, li. 813; Eddie, li. 805; Fahrie, li. 613-614). Eddie said, “*you just know that you did a good job*” (li. 1760).

Another teacher described how she had not found SEQ helpful to improve teaching.

The students’ evaluation about me is positive. I managed to get above average, although it’s not excellent. But that just gives me good motivation, and I feel happy that nobody hates me. But I don’t know whether it is because of my teaching, or because I’m very kind to the students? I don’t know why they are evaluating me positively. So, I don’t think that evaluation can improve my teaching (Adda, li. 788-805).

Comments from another teacher highlight two main issues with SEQ. The first issue is the lack of feedback on SEQ results.

...the OMR, I don’t see it. You have 20 over questions there, some things of course I’m lacking in. I would like to know. I don’t see it until I’ve got to fill in my (year-end appraisal) form, that is in August every year, when I need the data, then I go hunt for it. (Luqman, li. 1334-1337)

The second issue is the lack of open-ended section in SEQ. Reportedly, the section used to be part of the institution’s SEQ but had been removed much to the teacher’s disappointment because without it, there is little opportunity for meaningful feedback.

(In) early 2001, 2002 (SEQ) forms (we used to have) computer-based, the shading one and the other one is where students give (written) input. I like those!... Because that sheet, I get back every semester. From that sheet, I gauge what needs to be improved further. But along the line, that sheet went missing. That whole section’s is gone! It’s wiped out. You don’t get it anymore... Now it’s totally computer. (Luqman, li. 1332-1347)

Despite the lack of meaningful results, good SEQ scores could provide teachers with motivation as already reported by Adda. It was also satisfying for another teacher. Referring to high scores he had been getting, one teacher said,

I'm pleased with (the SEQ results). (It) excites my satisfaction for being a lecturer. Job satisfaction. (April, li. 465-469)

Responses regarding the evaluation of teaching were mixed with issues to rectify such as better handling of peer review and meaningful feedback of SEQ.

iii) *Formal avenues for the discussion of teaching and learning issues*

Six teachers revealed the existence of three formal avenues established to enable the discussion of teaching/learning issues. They were faculty level teaching/learning team or person-in-charge, Annual Programme Review and mentor programme.

Comment from one teacher revealed the existence of a faculty level teaching and learning committee. It includes student representatives but the opportunity for discussion of pedagogical issues was not mentioned. The teacher said,

We have (Teaching and Learning Committee) at the university level, now we have the college level... we have student reps. So students will also be part of the committee to give inputs... perhaps things can be improved with multimedia...(Razak, li. 644-658).

Comment from another teacher revealed a faculty structure that includes the faculty's own person in charge to oversee the development of teaching skills.

we have two Deputy Deans.... basically (name) is in charge more on the teaching workshops and for research workshops, under (the) Deputy Dean of research. (Lindan, li. 613-614)

Evidence of faculty level teaching and learning committees was not found in the institutional documents. However, teachers like Mahmud and Noor reported that the teaching-related courses they attended were provided at faculty level. The existence of representatives or committees in charge of overseeing teaching and learning processes at the faculty level indicate that some faculties were taking their own initiatives and designing their own teacher development programmes. This may lead to two issues. One, the teachers might be engaged in faculty's own teacher development activities, therefore, were too busy to participate in university level teacher-development programmes. Two, faculty level teacher development programmes might be similar and overlapping with what were provided at the university level, again resulting in lack of interest and poor participation of the centralised teaching activities. This can especially affect participation in DPT programmes, including UGG Teaching and Learning Conference.

Annual programme review (APR) is another type of formal platform suggested to be available for the discussion of teaching and learning issues mentioned by two teachers. As the person in charge of a student-and-staff committee at his department, Sobrie described using his position to share teaching and learning issues conveyed to him. His comments illustrate the kind of issues that were discussed through this committee in APR.

some lecturers come late to the class... I think one of the problem is also with the congestion of the lab. Some (student) projects have really have, you know this long, big products... I also deliver the comments from the lecturer... Last month I think, we have a programme review. They gave me slot for the student activity and the students' feedback. (Sobrie, li.854-888)

Sobrie's idea of teaching/learning issues, similar to Razak's report regarding the Teaching and Learning Committee at his college, were little to do with pedagogical discussions. Rather, they heavily incline towards students' feedback on surface level teaching/learning matters.

Conversely, Luqman did not find APR a helpful platform for discussing teaching/learning issues. He described what was discussed in APR at his department and what he wished could be discussed. Again, this comment illustrates the teacher's idea that teaching/learning issues are to do with the general running of teaching and curriculum delivery.

Teacher: *(APR) is usually a two-day thing, and there's a lot to discuss. So, we usually don't really end up discussing about teaching and learning.*

Researcher: *So what do you end up discussing?*

Teacher: *Mainly on OBE (Outcome-Based Education)...ISO and accreditations and so on.*

Researcher: *So, teaching is not dealt with, you feel?*

Teacher: *Yeah. For example, in the States,.. every semester they discuss what's supposed to be given, which course should teach certain things, you know. (At UGG), we don't work in silos... In (*name of institution) when I was there, Course A is taught by Professor A, but everybody else knows what's happening and it's all linked. It's like they have a master plan.... I think that's the way it should be done here. We don't do it. (Luqman, li. 862-880)*

Document analysis revealed that the annual programme review is an avenue to discuss all academic programmes conducted in one financial year at the faculty level. It mainly dealt with curriculum monitoring and review to be presented to the Faculty Academic Committee and the Senate (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, pp. B7.1-2) and was managed by the institution's Academic Quality Assurance Committee (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 95).

Further, the student-staff committee described by Sobrie was evident in *UGG COPIA Report 2009*. The statement confirms that the above platforms for teaching/learning discussions were provided to discuss problems that impede the smooth running of programme delivery “in order to achieve excellent business results” rather than to address issues to do with quality and pedagogy.

The quality of academic core and academic support processes are constantly reviewed and improved in order to achieve excellent business results. Each college, department and unit in UGG constantly reviews its processes by conducting regular meetings, seminar and workshops. Through these activities, the members of the respective committee in charge of the process discuss the problems that arise and brainstorm on how to remove these blockers (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B9.1).

Mentoring is another type of support that fits into formal platform for teaching/learning discussions mentioned by two teachers. One teacher described mentoring as a programme for beginner teachers which she participated in when she first entered the institution, approximately a decade prior to data collection for this research. The programme was described as more on “*chatting about students*” and “*sharing opinions*”, rather than about how to improve teaching (*Lili, li. 1011-1012*). She did not find it helpful as she did not see the need to make use of her mentor.

[I]f I discover something that needs to be improved in my way of teaching I won't go to the mentor for solution. I will look for other solutions. Maybe reading, not going straight away... Because we know other people are also busy (Lili, li. 1086).

The programme has reportedly phased out quietly. “*Don't know what happened*” (*Lili, 1035*).

Another teacher talked about a more recent mentor programme she participated in. The programme was described as using a team-teaching approach in which two teachers were assigned to teach the same class; one beginner and the other one more senior. A beginner teacher described how mentoring processes were carried out in her department.

...the seniors supervise and also teach the same class so that she can monitor what I've been doing - what sort of assignments I assign to the students... The mid-term, the final, all will be done by the senior lecturer. I contributed for few questions maybe. My mentor arranged that she would teach the two hours classes and I teach the one hour classes, every week. So we go hand-in-hand until the end of semester. So, that's how teacher training is being done here in (faculty) (Adda, li. 492-500).

Unlike Lili, Adda found mentoring helpful as teaching support.

(The mentor programme was) very helpful. Whenever I have any confusion or clarification needed, I always go to my senior lecturer and ask... she's very helpful. ... I can always go back to her rather than handling one single topic, class or subject alone... So, I like this team-teaching mentor. (Adda, li. 518-528)

The contrasting feedback on two different mentor programmes is interesting. The findings that one worked and one did not, have raised issues of weaknesses of the programme and how it can be improved. Adda's comment illustrates a mentor programme that worked for both her and her mentor. Compared to Lili's, the running of Adda's mentor programme appears to be better organised with close monitoring and structured implementation. Adda understood the protege role she played in the mentor-protege relationship such as teaching fewer hours and contributing to a small part of the final examination paper, but was playing an active role, nonetheless. Most importantly, Adda felt comfortable in approaching her mentor for any kind of help and felt happy with close "hand-in-hand" guidance. On the contrary, Lili's descriptions of her mentor programme were more casual suggested by the words "chatting" and "sharing" of opinions. Compared to purposeful meetings and contact between Adda and her mentor, a casual arrangement for Lili may have failed to bridge the mentor-protege gap. As a result, Lili was reluctant to seek help for fear of interrupting her mentor's "busy" schedule.

Document analysis has shown that the programme phased out in Lili's time, has recently been revived and is recognised in print as an important practice at UGG. Document evidence suggests that this type of support should be provided for beginner teachers for a period of time upon employment.

Mentoring and guidance for new academic staff is undeniably an important practice for aligning the capabilities of teaching for new academic staff. In UGG all new academic staff with no experiences in teaching will be assigned to senior lecturer mentoring them. This process will take between six (6) months to one (1) year depending on capabilities of the new academic staff [sic]. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.28)

Its strong focus on new teaching staff is reiterated in another institutional document that states, "[Faculties] should develop a strong mentor-mentee system to guide their new staff adapting to the academia" (Department of Organisational Planning, 2007, p. 104). The two different approaches undertaken by different departments/faculties as seen in Lili's and Adda's cases suggest implementations that were not standardised though strongly recommended. What is thus lacking in a mentor programme that did not work is thoughtful planning and structured implementation, focusing on purposeful mentor-protege relationship.

iv) *Collegial support*

Another type of support for teaching mentioned by 11 teachers was to do with moral support from the people around them. Ten teachers discussed support for teaching from immediate managers and the institutional management team, as well as colleagues.

With regards to the immediate managers and the institutional management team support, the teachers' views were mixed. Seven teachers gave positive comments. They spoke of openness and cooperation by their immediate managers such as the head of department and the Dean, as well as from the institutional management as a whole. The immediate heads were described as being "supportive" (Orked, li. 661), "responsive" (Eddie, li. 961), giving compliments for jobs well done (Fahrie, li. 2044), being open to suggestions (Amin, li. 966; Sobrie, li. 734), and being approachable for teachers to share problems (Mahmud, li. 830). Noor summarised all the teacher's comments saying,

The system and the management [are] there and it does help in improving the teaching" (Noor, li. 1122-1124).

In contrast, negative comments regarding the lack of management support were expressed by two teachers. Luqman illustrated his frustrations in the way issues were dealt with at his faculty. He also acknowledged the idea that he was a vocal member of the faculty. Referring to faculty meeting and his attempt to raise an issue, he said,

Whenever there is a college meeting, whenever I open my voice, they will say, "There goes Luqman again." You know? So, it enters into the right ear, and then out the left ear... maybe I'm too vocal... (Luqman, li. 960-961)

Azlan described several issues he was unhappy with at the institution and had tried to rectify, including class size and low quality student intake presented in constraints to teaching. Most of the issues were unresolved because his attempts to highlight these issues were not taken up by the management.

people here also are not willing to listen to criticism! Constructive criticism! Here, you see, "we do things the way we want to" (translated). That's their attitude. (Azlan, li. 1311-1316)

Document evidence has shown that the institution recognises the importance of support from the institutional management with regards to issues in teaching and learning. A statement in *UGG COPIA Report 2009* reads,

In terms of other support, in the department, if there are any issues that requires explanation related to academic and teaching and learning, they

can approach the Head of Units, Head of Department, Deputy Dean for Academic and Quality Assurance and also Dean [sic]. (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.29)

Despite acknowledging the importance of management support, comments from Luqman and Azlan show that the institution is less receptive to ideas from teachers who perhaps are more expressive or critical than others. This indicates that in terms of management support, there is a need for it to be more open to ideas that are less aligned with the management's ideas of running the organisation. These more radical ideas or 'constructive criticism' as put by Azlan, may work to an advantage if given serious consideration.

Support from colleagues is another type of collegial support quoted by three teachers. This type of support was not viewed very positively in the sense that there is lack of structured planning for interaction and active sharing of teaching/learning ideas. Two teachers cited casual chats "over breakfast" or in chance meetings and the topics would be about problem students or the use of textbooks (Lindan, li. 891-893; Orked, li. 163-165). Other than chance meetings, formal course meetings were cited as the platform to discuss such issues (Orked, li. 212). For another teacher, the opportunity to discuss teaching/learning issues with colleagues was nil. The following conversation with the teacher exemplifies this.

Researcher: *How do you find the opportunity to discuss your teaching issues?*

Teacher: *Zero. None. You don't do that in UGG at least in my department.*

Researcher: *Why not?*

Teacher: *I don't see them putting teaching as emphasis. There is no encouragement to have discussions between the lecturers in a certain course. To me the lecturers' in a certain course should meet up once in every two or three weeks, to compare notes, to exchange the notes, to plan together. We don't do that. We only meet once a semester that is to set the exams or mid-term, and to discuss our problems in teaching - nothing. There's no venue or room for us to discuss... (Luqman, li. 831-846)*

The two different scenarios in collegial support seen in the above suggest that relationships and the level of interaction between teaching staffs vary in different faculties. Evident in Luqman's comment, in faculties where the communication level is low, there is little opportunity to share teaching ideas or issues. Further, with faculties that enable casual chats, discussions on problem students can be turned into deeper and more productive discussions of reasons behind the issues and ways to improve the teaching/learning situations. Given adequate focus and proper planning, scheduled formal meetings that promote these types of discussions could take the teachers to higher levels of thinking about teaching/learning.

v) ***Outcome-Based Education***

A type of existing support for teaching that emerged unexpectedly was the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach to teaching and learning adopted by some faculties at UGG and mentioned by eight teachers. Two teachers saw it as support for teaching, four others indirectly implied that they knew about OBE implementation in parts of the institution, while two had an inkling of its upcoming implementation at their faculties. This revealed that at the time of data collection, the institution was undergoing a process of curriculum transformation.

One teacher talked about OBE in-depth. She had found OBE to be a helpful support for teaching particularly because she did not have a teaching qualification.

When I was first exposed to OBE, it gave me a clear picture on how I can put myself in delivering content or the knowledge to the students... I can see how important OBE is in helping us to view the education itself. So, because of that, I'm motivated to learn some techniques or to think of how to improve my teaching (Noor, 194-196; li. 1112-1115).

OBE has also been a helpful teaching support for another teacher who felt that teaching without it would be “unguided” (Sobrie, li. 630).

Among aspects of teaching that OBE has helped Noor with were how to formulate course objectives and learning outcomes (li. 1494), delivery methods (li. 228), how to make things measurable (li. 647) and how to design the assessments (li. 648). For Sobrie, the virtue of “continuous quality improvement” in OBE is what he appreciated the most (li. 589). He described how continuous quality improvement was carried out in the programme review or what he termed as ‘closing the loop’. It is these review practices that had given him ideas on how to improve his teaching.

When we try closing the loop with the peer assessment, with the lab technician's assessment, with the OMR student's assessments, so we know (for that subject) what's the students' problem?... Maybe ... some of them are not really involved so I try to create a situation that everybody can involve, we should create an alternative way to make sure (lack of student participation) is not happening in the next semester (Sobrie, li. 522-557).

There was also evidence that OBE had provided one of the teachers with a wider picture of the curriculum. Noor suggested that through OBE, she had a better understanding of the course overview and how each of her lectures had to contribute to the intended course outcomes.

to have a clear view of what to give is very important ... as I mentioned again and again (if you have) the outcome's clearly laid out, you will know how to link ... each lecture and everything so you can design each

particular lecture to be something that will contribute to the overall learning... (Noor, li. 227-247)

Bloom's Taxonomy is another guiding principle of OBE which, according to Noor, has helped make learning measurable and to design assessments (li. 646-648). Four other teachers mentioned Bloom's Taxonomy during the teacher interviews (Adda, li. 679; Razak, li. 476; Luqman, li. 364 and Mahmud, li. 655). This indicates that they knew about this assessment principle and had, most likely, heard about it in relation to OBE. Further, already reported in the perceptions of quality teaching, one institutional manager quoted OBE as her definition of quality teaching because it is a "*comprehensive approach*" and that "*the outcomes are guided by Blooms Taxonomy (Manager 3, DOP, li. 435).*"

Further discussion with Manager 3 revealed that the OBE approach had actually been adopted by the institution as a desirable teaching/learning approach. She said the approach was being introduced throughout the institution, faculty by faculty. The management had decided to take this approach to teaching and learning "*because we think it's good*" (Manager 3, DOP, li. 582).

Comments from two teachers indicate that in faculties where OBE was yet to be implemented, some were aware of its impending approach. The teachers spoke of preparing a course syllabus according to OBE format (Lindan, li. 856-861), as well as increased quality assessors' visits in relation to IET accreditation and (Lili, li. 850).

Evidence in the institutional documents confirmed the manager's information and the teachers' guesses about OBE's institution-wide implementation. The following statement from *UGG COPIA Report 2009* provides a description of its rate of implementation at various faculties.

At the point of writing, OBE framework is fully implementational at [faculty x]. The framework will be implemented at [faculty y] in this upcoming semester of Semester 1, 2009/10. As of the same semester, [faculty z] will be implementing a pilot programme of the framework in a few selected courses (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B1.9).

The above excerpt shows that at the time of data collection, the institution was undergoing a transformation process in adopting the OBE approach to teaching and learning at three out of its five faculties. At one faculty, its implementation was described as a 'pilot programme' suggesting a period of trial-and-error. Two teachers who have experienced teaching in the OBE curriculum saw it as a support for teaching. Although the other teachers did not imply clear positive or negative opinions towards OBE's implementation at their respective faculties, mention of Bloom's Taxonomy implies awareness, though it may also be possible that their awareness was not related to OBE.

Also highlighted are the institution's industry-driven goals with regards to OBE. The teaching/learning goals are expressed in OBE terms that include programme educational objectives (PEO).

The learning outcomes and educational goals of UGG are supported through the use of Outcome Based Education (OBE) ... the PEO must be responsive to the expressed interest of various groups of program stakeholders ... the University, Industries and parent company) (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B1.9; B1.11).

Further evidence shows involvement of the industry panel during programme review.

UGG learning outcome and educational framework are designed with the involvement of stakeholders in the refinement and review of the learning outcomes, educational goals, expected graduates competency. In doing so, UGG has also elicited valuable inputs from other stakeholders which includes Industrial Advisory Panels (IAP), accreditation and professional bodies (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B1.13).

The institution's industry-oriented teaching/learning goals would have implications for the teachers' perceptions of teaching, as well as their classroom practices. An industry focus would shape the kinds of guidance and support teachers were receiving. This is already apparent in one teacher's comments on OBE programme review which suggest that teaching/learning should satisfy industry requirements and that teaching/learning issues are mainly to do with students' learning.

In OBE, when we want to close the loop we also assess for the stakeholder which is from industry, IAP (Industrial Advisory Panel)... we know what's the students' problem? From the ... OMR (student evaluation of teaching), they will state how we teach, how they are understanding. (Sobrie, li. 260; li. 524-540)

vi) Recently-introduced support relevant to teaching

Finally, there are several types of support that emerged as minor findings discussed by three teachers and an institutional manager. These suggest that most of these types of support were recently introduced. Although these findings were minor, they deserve to be reported as these types of teaching support might have been unnoticed by many teachers.

Industry attachment was mentioned by two teachers. Although these teachers have not taken up the offer, they described how it works, suggesting that they were aware of its availability (Lindan, li. 497-499; Sobrie, li. 197-198). According to Lindan, teachers who take up the offer would be away from work for a maximum period of two months on full pay, as well as having provision for allowance. The end-product, according to Lindan is some kind of a written report

(li. 489-554) about what had been learned out of the experience. Lindan commented on why she did not take up the offer.

I tried applying at several companies. Out of three, two of the companies didn't give the feedback. Only one (did) and they said that, we don't have any project recently. (Lindan, li. 503-506)

Similar to Sobrie's comment, Lindan's industry-oriented perception of teaching is apparent in her views on industry experience and the opportunity for industry attachment. Speaking in the context of good teaching, she quoted industry experience as a necessary advantage. She then implied regret in not having any.

Good teaching? For me, it's when we are able to relate the theories and practice. I have no experience in industry, that's my problem actually, that's the constraint ...because I think that the class will be more interesting if we could describe the real situation (Lindan, li. 118-123; li. 247).

Sobrie also sees industry attachment as support for teaching.

I think all lecturers have the feeling that they should update themselves what is in the real life because (subject) itself keeps on changing. (Sobrie, li. 211-212)

Document analysis revealed further information on the institution's offer for industry attachment. A Department of Human Resource circular entitled "*Application for Industrial Attachment at Selected Organisations for Malaysian Academic Staff who are Currently Employed at UGG*", stated that priority for industry attachment is given to "young" teachers who have not had experience in the industry. The period of 'attachment' is between one to three months, which must be conducted during the special semester. The major purpose of industry attachment is to help "develop academic staff's knowledge, expertise and competence in their respective knowledge fields in line with industry advancement in the institution's specialised fields" (Department of Human Resource, 2009, p. 1).

One form of research recognised by the institution is for teachers to "conduct research and/or collect data in knowledge fields related to his or her teaching or to his or her area of future research" (Department of Human Resource, 2009, p. 2). It is thus evident that industry attachment is a recently introduced support for teaching provided by the institution to help update teachers' knowledge, expertise and competence which will subsequently help improve the quality of teaching. The teachers' understanding of it is in line with the document statements although they have not had the opportunity to take up the offer.

“Inbound-Outbound Teaching Collaboration” is a two-way programme that involves sending teachers to teach at a university abroad and/or vice versa for one full semester. The main purpose of this programme is to “*increase international collaboration for teaching and research*” (Manager 1, li. 1281-1283). It is a Department of Human Resource’s initiative that has only been recently developed. Therefore, the formal procedures and its guidelines were yet to be formalised and were not ready to be circulated and publicised at the time of the interview.

Since the interview with Manager 1 only took place towards the end of the teacher interviews, the teachers’ opinion was elicited with only one teacher. The teacher had not heard of the initiative prior to the interview but his reaction was positive and supportive. Speaking of his perceived value in this type of support, Azlan said,

the value of that I would see is that getting experience teaching and dealing and interacting with students that are different from what you have had so far. And also probably learn a new type of technology that the university might have, and then also to learn from the peer and the superior. I think that would be great (Azlan, li. 2183-2196).

The types of existing support reported by the teacher interviewees were a mixture of old and new. Most of the well-established types of support were inadequate with areas of improvement highlighted and discussed. With regards to the more recently-introduced support, positive changes that promote good teaching should be applauded. However, there are areas for enhancement. Some of these initiatives did not have standardised procedures for implementation which had resulted in poor implementation. Some faculties had their own units or person-in-charge to look into teacher development programmes, resulting in overlapping activities and poor uptake of what were offered. Most of the types of support provided assistance with problems in teaching and learning with heavy emphasis on students and meeting industry needs.

The following section presents the kinds of support that the interviewees wanted and needed.

5.1.3. Needed support for quality teaching

This section presents findings to *Research Question 4: What kinds of support for teaching do the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided?* Some of the issues in this section have emerged elsewhere in earlier sections. In the following, they were elaborated on by the teachers as needed support for teaching.

Four types of support for teaching that need to be enhanced or provided were identified in the interviews: (i) teacher development programmes that are better provided; (ii) increase in

teacher morale; (iii) enhanced opportunities for teachers to do research; and (iv) clearer expectations of teacher roles.

i) Teacher development programmes that are better provided

Teacher development programmes face several issues. Firstly, is the finding that some faculties have units or people responsible for teacher development programmes. This has resulted in overlapping forms of support and poor uptake. Secondly, it was discovered that some programmes related to teacher development, such as peer review of teaching and mentor programmes, did not have a standard procedure for implementation therefore, resulting in different levels of success. Further, even where programmes had been successful, ideas for better implementation were suggested.

The following briefly outlines additional teacher suggestions for support or better provision of teacher development programmes.

Beginner teachers

Although induction courses for beginner teachers were already provided, they need to be provided at the start of beginner teachers' careers (Mahmud, li. 947-948). Despite the fact that support for beginner teachers was provided through programmes like mentor and induction courses, the teachers reported wanting to observe models of good teaching. The teachers also wanted to be observed and to be told whether they were teaching well (Adda, li. 817-847; Orked, li. 855).

Very experienced teachers

Very experienced teachers said that they wanted to participate in teacher development courses as they admit the need to be updated with the latest innovations in teaching (Bahar, li. 1395-1408; April, li. 705-707). However, given administrative tasks and bigger responsibilities at their level, these teachers say it is difficult to find the time. Bahar would also like to contribute to teacher development programmes and be involved in projects where he can be exposed to "new ways of doing things". (Bahar, li. 1430) April suggested developing self-access materials for senior teachers to browse through in their own time (April, li. 741-743).

Consistent with what the teachers suggested, document analysis showed that the institution was aware of the role the senior teachers could play in contributing to teacher development programmes.

Senior Lecturers are expected to exercise leadership roles in partnership with their senior and junior academic colleagues both in organisation and in the conduct of teaching programmes (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2009, p. 15).

The general teacher population

With general teacher development courses that were already provided, the teachers reported wanting the courses to be customised according to teachers' levels of experience. This should provide guidance for teachers who do not have pedagogical basics including practical teaching (Adda, li. 676-678). Also suggested is the design of a systematically planned, qualification-awarding, comprehensive course, akin to a Diploma in Education for other than beginner teachers (Amin, li. 1217-1222, Orked, li. 842).

Support for this idea is evident. An institutional manager revealed that there was a plan to develop a postgraduate certificate in teaching which was awaiting approval from the relevant authorities.

The initial plan is to have another series of workshops, the continuation of the first induction workshop and after completing a few series, the hours are equivalent to getting a postgraduate certificate (Manager 1, li. 892-894).

Organisers of teacher development programmes

The organisers of teacher development programmes reported not having the opportunity to participate in such courses themselves due to being too busy organising (identities concealed). It was suggested by one of them, for DPT roles to be centralised or to be integrated into the university administration so that DPT teachers can be spared from administrative work and can better commit themselves to academic roles.

This idea too was supported by one manager.

(HR) wants to ask (the management) so that there is one centre for teaching and learning. We want to lobby for... one dedicated centre, so that teaching-learning must be focused, centralised, managed by specialists in teaching and learning. We are still in the middle of lobbying this. We have started discussing it actually. The only thing is we want to lobby to (parent company) (Manager 1, li. 1801-1814).

ii) increase in teacher morale

Another type of needed support reported by four teachers was help to boost their morale. The issues comprise the lack of autonomy and the lack of freedom of expression.

The lack of teacher autonomy that surfaced in the findings was to do with assessment grading. Three teachers identified the institution's control over students' final grades. One teacher had the impression that if more than 20% of the students in one class scored the grade C-minus and below, "*then there is something wrong with your class*" (April, li. 452-453). Another teacher's disappointment in the institution's control over students' grades was expressed as the following,

they don't have to push the lecturers. Massage the results and things like that? It shouldn't be an issue (Lindan, li. 985-987).

Azlan's comment suggested that the reason behind the institution's control over the students' final grades is to achieve its performance goals. Implied in his statement is also the dilemma the teachers were facing with poor student performance and the pressure to award them good grades in order to achieve institutional goals.

the problem here, we want to be the university that we want to be. You will look very bad if you have, 50% of the students being failed! (Azlan, li. 1003-1007).

A case in point is a student's change of final grades after appeal which was increased "*not from C+ to B-, but instead to one full grade*" (Azlan, li. 1559).

Document evidence on grade distributions in the final student assessment have not been found. However, report in *The Teaching and Learning Policy* shows an emphasis on "fair assessment" but with opportunities for grades adjustments as described by the teachers. The policy stated "in cases of plurality, (the grade) is subject to moderation by the co-ordinator" (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2009, p. 11). Another document revealed that in the process of finalising students' grades, adjustments could occur at various levels: the head of department, the course co-ordinator, various examiners teaching the same subject, the college academic committee (CAC), and finally the Senate (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B3.11). Although this may be part of a typical process of finalising examination results, the major concern for the teachers is that the adjustments had been too far and that the students were not deserving of them, leaving the teachers feeling frustrated.

The lack of freedom of expression was raised by two teachers with strong opinions that refer to effects on staff appraisal and chances for promotion. Azlan's comment depicts the lack of institutional support in expressing honest opinions which can result in "hurtful" consequences. His comment also refers to his failure to fit in for being critical-minded and trying to do things differently. According to him, expressing honest opinions was taken as trying to challenge the status quo.

I've learned a lot of things. That if you try to tell the truth, people don't like it. And I've observed people getting hurt ...when people say, "I want you to start thinking out of the box", what they're trying to say is basically, from my perspective, "Think outside your box, but come into my box (Azlan, li. 727-729; li. 1304-1305).

Comments from another teacher clearly reveal views withheld for fear of having his chances of promotion affected. In reference to excessive administrative tasks given to him and his attempt to decline some of them, Luqman said,

if I [say] so many "nos" to them, they might take revenge on my promotion. So, I just have to bite the bullet and take the task (Luqman, li. 1237-1239).

The lack of freedom of expression did have a direct effect on the quality of teaching as reported by these teachers. Talking about 'not fitting in' the management's ways of doing things, Azlan, stated,

[i]t has got a direct effect! When you are not motivated, when your morale is low, it does affect our teaching, isn't it? (Azlan, li.1491-1492)

The following conversation with Luqman shows the effect on his motivation level and how he wished for the institution to provide support.

- Researcher:** *These frustrations, does it affect teaching quality do you think?*
- Teacher:** *Yah, it does. My motivation has dropped, the zest in me, the drive in me... When I first came in I was always looking forward to the next class. But now (teaching) is just another chore ... So each time when I go to class, (it is) because of the students. They are paying the fees and I like them, so that gives me life in class.*
- Researcher:** *So how do you wish the university could put back that zest in you?*
- Teacher:** *By having a management team who actually understands what is an academic institution. What is required from academicians. (Luqman, li. 1054-1070)*

In contrast to the issues expressed by the teachers, the institutional documents reported staff satisfaction at the workplace through a survey called the "Employee Engagement Survey". The survey was conducted in the year 2009 in order to "better understand what employees think and feel about the university and the various aspects of their jobs" (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 176). The results of the survey read as follow,

The results of the Employee Engagement Survey 2009 indicated that 76.6% of our workforce is found to be happy working in UGG compared to 61% in year 2007... This indicated that they were willing to contribute

significantly to UGG business success. This is indeed a promising start.
(Department of Quality Assurance, 2009b, p. 176)

The above findings raise two issues. First is the institution's interpretation that satisfying results and satisfied employees mean that the employees were willing to contribute to the institution's success. Depending on what was asked in the survey, these results as well as the survey have failed to elicit or to highlight the variety of issues expressed by the teachers. Second, for the remaining 23.4% of the staff population, their feelings about working at the institution were not reported. This percentage is close to one-quarter which is quite a big group of under-represented opinions in the report.

iii) Enhanced opportunities for teachers to do research

As reported in the perceptions of quality teaching, doing research was seen by four teachers as a contributing factor to quality teaching. Three teachers raised the need for opportunity to do research to aid teaching.

You see, if you're doing your research in line with your teaching, over the time, you are getting more information to more new knowledge, new technologies, new findings which later can be translated back into your teaching (Luqman, li. 1149-1152).

Another said,

I think it would be a bit sad if a lecturer in the university environment doesn't consider research." (Razak, li. 231-232).

The kinds of support expected from the institution were: (i) to allow teachers more time to carry out their major academic roles, which are teaching and doing research. This was in reference to extensive quality-related administrative tasks reported in constraints to quality teaching, (ii) allow teachers to have flexible working hours. Luqman, "[a]cademicians are a special breed of people. They shouldn't be disturbed... there should be ample room for us to go in research and to do research. We need ample time (li. 1193; li. 1612-1614), (iii) guide beginner teachers who are new to the profession to cope with doing research (Fahrie, li. 2189) and (iv) guide non teacher-trained teachers to do research in education. (Lindan, li. 1160-1163)

Analysis of the institutional documents revealed that the institution did recognise the importance of research to teachers and teaching. In line with the teachers' opinions regarding the relations between doing research and effective teaching, *UGG COPIA Report 2009* states,

[r]esearch, [c]onsultancy and scholarly activities is given top priority because these activities not only develop knowledge but also contribute towards more effective teaching. (Department of Quality Assurance,

2009d, p. B5.3)

Further analysis revealed that under its quality initiatives, the institution was already taking measures to provide research support to teachers at various levels with regards to seeking opportunity for collaborative research and senior-junior partnership.

[The] university trains academic staff members to do collaborative research and seek research funds from established R&D grant providers ... [s]enior academic staff members guide new staff members to do research papers and on how to get their papers published (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.3).

Clearly, the institution recognised the teachers' research needs and promoted senior-junior teacher collaboration when it comes to doing research. Nevertheless, the fact that Luqman could not find ample time to do research, Lindan did not feel confident about doing educational research in her field, and Fahrie was overwhelmed with the "new culture" show that the institution's initiatives to encourage collaborative research need to be taken further.

Evidence from the documents revealed that the institution recognised the teachers' need for time to do research to a certain extent. Academic job descriptions clearly define teachers' responsibilities. The document states that professors, associate professors and principal lecturers are expected to "lead and conduct research projects". They are also expected to produce "[p]ublication of quality research papers in high impact factors journals, international journals and national journals" (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, p. B5.4). This is in line with the teachers' acknowledgement of the importance of doing research and their need for time for it.

However, with regards to administrative duties and quality activities, the institution documented its expectations of teachers based on their teacher status. The following guide for administrative duties revealed that the beginner teachers' and the more experienced teachers' complaints regarding excessive administrative tasks may be reasonable. Teachers' expected contribution to administrative duties is:

- "Professors, associate professor and principal lecturers: to contribute high level administrative functions and play a major role in planning or committee work.
- Lecturers: have a range of academic functions with a majority connected with units or subject areas in which the academic staff teaches.
- Tutors and assistant lecturers: administrative duties are limited administrative functions primarily connected with units in which the academic staff teaches" (Department of Quality Assurance, 2009d, pp. B5.4-5.6).

The above guide shows that the average lecturer's job scope was supposed to be focused on the subjects and courses they were teaching while the tutors, assistant lecturers or beginner teachers were supposed to have limited administrative functions. The teacher interviews showed otherwise. Evidence presented show that what the documents stated and what the manager intended for the teachers were clearly not what was happening at the institution at the time of the research. In the teachers' perceptions, they were still struggling to find the time to do research, as well as time for quality teaching preparation.

iv) clearer expectations of teacher roles

Unclear expectations of teacher roles surfaced with only one teacher which may make it a minor finding. However, this complaint is related to several other issues. Unclear expectations of teacher roles are to do with extensive administrative tasks, the lack of time for adequate preparation of teaching and to do research, and heavy emphasis on quality efforts. Luqman had a strong opinion on this.

... frankly, we [the institution] don't know what we want!"... the staffs are confused. [Do you want us to be] excellent in teaching, excellent in research, or be excellent in ISO, AKP, and all these other things? So, the staffs are actually quite confused, where are we heading to? You know, at times we talk about research universities, then we talk about ISO... and so on. So, we do not know what we want, actually. (Luqman, li. 914-918).

A review of the institutional statements of vision and mission could reveal the institutional goals and directions. This could clarify the institution's expectations of teachers' roles. Here references to words or phrases in the vision/mission are made instead of revealing full statements in order to protect the institution's identity. The vision statement contained the word "premier" to describe the institution's ultimate goal. The word "premier" is translated in the institutional records as "having a position in the lead in the education industry" (Department of Organisational Planning, 2007, p. 64); the words "education" and "industry" are highlighted as they suggest the perception that education is a commercial arena for mass production of manufactured products.

In the mission statement, reference to teaching is implied through focus on students' experience in learning. This suggests emphasis on students and learning processes rather than on teaching and teaching processes. In the same sentence, reference to research follows students' experiences in learning. It is thus apparent that UGG places equal emphasis on students' learning, rather than teaching, as well as on research. This institutional view may open opportunities for different views on teaching and the teachers' role. However, given the backdrop of Outcome-Based Education, it brings to mind the institution's industry-driven

goals of teaching which might have influenced the way the teachers perceive teaching and its improvement efforts. Equal emphasis on research and student learning reiterates the point regarding teachers' perceptions of research as an aid to effective teaching. What is lacking in the vision/mission statement is direct reference to teaching. Further document evidence shows how teaching is undervalued (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: UGG key performance indicators (KPI) for financial year 2008/2009

Categories	KPI goals	KPI measures
Customer	Improve customer service	Employability rate
	Improve availability	% of graduates with CGPA more than 3.0
	High customer satisfaction	Improve customer satisfaction
Finance	Optimise operations productivity	Productivity ratio; Revenue per employee
	Consultancy	Increase external source of revenue
Learning and growth	Increased efforts towards conducive and quality teaching and learning environment	No. of publications; % of staff with PhD
	Continuous development of human capital	Improve competency index
	Ensure Succession Readiness & Sustainability Through Effective Human Capital Planning, Effective Succession Management and Enhance Staff Engagement	Improve employee engagement score
Process	Achieve Operational Excellence	Improve procedures and processes; audit report corrective action; schedule adherence
	Increase staff involvement in research and consultancy	Research grant

Adapted from Department of Vice Chancellor (2009). *Quality Assurance manual (Manual)*. Undisclosed: Universiti Gading Gemilang

Table 5.6 shows how teaching and research are integrated under one category called “learning and growth”. In the table, quality teaching and learning environment is defined as one of the KPI goals while the teachers' number of publication is defined as its measure. Further, teaching and research are combined and given one single category while customer focus (e.g. graduates referred) and emphasis on operational processes (e.g. audit report referred) are each given their own KPI categories.

The institution's goals do not acknowledge teaching as of equal importance to the customers (students) and to research. The emphasis seems to be managerial rather than pedagogical. In measures of institutional achievement (key performance indicators), teaching performance is not evident in the quality framework. Enhancing quality teaching does not appear to be one of the institution's main foci for institutional goals and measures of success. This partly explains the teachers' perceptions of lack of adequate support in teaching well.

5.2. Quantitative findings

This section provides supplementary findings from the teacher survey. The report follows the sequence of questions that appear in the survey. However, respondents' written comments are reported as directly relevant to the respective themes rather than in section sequence. This is because some comments were not directly related to the question items.

5.2.1 Constraints on quality teaching

Table 5.7 shows the results for constraints on quality teaching. The 5-point Likert scale is collapsed into three categories of "disagree", "neutral" and "agree" in order to identify positive, negative or ambivalent attitudes held by the teachers, also for better comparison of the overall results. The results are arranged in descending order based on results in the "agree" column. For this particular section of the questionnaire, items were structured around themes, therefore the results discussion takes a thematic approach. It enables a more meaningful interpretation of results. The themes are colour-coded. The sequence of discussion follows the order of appearance of the first item of each theme.

The top ranking constraint in Table 5.7 is committee tasks (orange theme: workload). This relates to the teachers' use of time at work and was also the top ranking constraint reported in the teacher interviews. Committee tasks have an agree percentage (65.8%) far higher than the other constraints. Worth noting is the fact that none of the teachers felt that the constraint is "not applicable" to them, suggesting that all the teachers who answered this section were affected by committee tasks in some ways. Time for research projects (9) and consultancy work (12) were also seen as constraints on teaching quality (42.5% and 35.4% of teachers respectively). Another result related to this theme is heavy teaching load (14). While it has low rank more than one-third of the teachers felt that teaching load is a constraint on quality teaching (34.2%), suggesting it is an issue to be looked into.

A survey respondent's comment lent further support to committee tasks as a constraint on quality teaching, saying, *"The lecturers are hired for teaching and they should always be focused on improving, interacting, communicating, advising and teaching effectively and cannot be burdened with the works that are not much related to teaching responsibilities."* (Survey respondent 32, Q.19) Another comment emphasised the lack of time to focus on teaching: *"I can hardly find the time to read on my research interests, how would I have the time to read on teaching techniques?"* (Survey respondent 51, Q.16)

Table 5.7: Teachers’ perceptions of the types of constraints on quality teaching

Q15.0 Based on your experience teaching at this university, to what extent do you agree with the following possible barriers to quality teaching? (Note: Please think about your most recent teaching context.)						
Ranked position	<i>n</i> = 90	Valid percent (%)				Freq. (F)
		D	N	A	NA	
1	Committee tasks take precious time off responsibilities related to teaching (15.14).	17.7	16.5	65.8	0.0	11
2	Lab facilities need to be improved (15.06).	7.5	17.5	58.8	16.3	10
3	The university quality activities do not place enough emphasis on the improvement of teaching (15.18).	13.8	28.8	55.0	2.5	10
4	Class capacity in the course that I currently teach is too large (15.01).	23.5	22.2	53.1	1.2	9
5	Classroom arrangements hamper effective teaching (15.05).	26.3	20.0	51.3	2.5	10
6	Students in my courses do not match the expected entry standards to take up the course (15.03).	23.8	25.0	48.8	2.5	10
7	The library resources are inadequate (15.07).	26.3	25.0	47.5	1.3	10
8	Multimedia facilities are inadequate (15.04).	29.1	20.3	46.8	3.8	11
9	Research projects take time off responsibilities related to teaching (15.15).	35.0	21.3	42.5	1.3	10
10.5	The feedback of teacher evaluation form has not done much to help me improve my teaching (15.10).	30.0	31.3	36.3	2.5	10
10.5	I have not been able to attend RELEVANT training courses that can help me improve my knowledge and expertise in my subject area (15.11).	37.5	22.5	36.3	3.8	10
12	Consultancy work takes time off responsibilities related to teaching. (15.16).	27.8	27.8	35.4	8.9	11
13	I have not been able to attend QUALITY training courses that can help me improve my knowledge and expertise in my subject area (15.12).	31.3	31.3	35.0	2.5	10
14	My teaching load is too much for me to deliver quality teaching (15.17).	36.7	29.1	34.2	0.0	11
15	I have not been able to attend quality TEACHER DEVELOPMENT courses (15.13).	36.7	29.1	32.9	1.3	11
16	I have been asked to teach courses that are beyond my area of specialisation (15.02).	50.0	18.8	26.3	5.0	10
17	The university’s expectation of me as a teacher is unclear to me (15.19).	41.0	30.8	25.6	2.6	12
18	I have not had the chance to contribute my ideas in the design of the courses I teach (15.08).	57.5	26.3	13.8	2.5	10
19	I have not received any feedback from the teacher evaluation form. (15.09).	72.5	13.8	10.0	3.8	10

Note: D= “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree”; N= “Neutral”; A= “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”; NA= “not applicable”

The number in the brackets represents the item number in the questionnaire.

The colour-coded themes are as follows:

■ Teachers’ workload; ■ Teaching/ learning facilities and resources; ■ Institutional quality goals and expectations on teachers; ■ Classroom and teaching/learning contexts; ■ Teacher development courses; ■ Evaluation of teaching

The second ranked constraint on quality teaching is lab facilities that need to be improved (yellow theme: teaching/learning facilities and resources). This theme was reported earlier in

the teacher interviews under material provision. Despite the result that many teachers did not find lab issues relevant to them (NA: 16.3%), the high percentage of agree (58.8%) strengthens the suggestion that inadequate lab facilities is a constraint for those who use labs. Other university facilities used in teaching that were seen as posing barriers were library resources (7th) and multimedia facilities (8th), with just under half the teachers (47.5%-46.8% respectively) finding them constraints. However, library resources and multimedia facilities rank in the middle of the results, suggesting these constraints affect quality teaching.

Four teachers reiterated the need for additional multi-media support for teaching. Comments include the provision of internet service in all classrooms, LCD projector, proper labs and adequate technical support, and improvement of multimedia provision in general (Survey respondents 2, 8, 26 and 66 respectively).

The third ranked constraint on quality teaching is quality activities that do not place enough emphasis on teaching (blue theme: institutional quality goals and expectations on teachers). This constraint relates to institutional ethos that may have affected teaching directly or indirectly. More than half of the teachers (55.0%) agreed that institutional quality activities did not focus enough on improving teaching. That one-quarter (28.8%) held ambivalent or unsure attitudes, more than disagreeing (13.8%) is noteworthy. It shows that other than those who agreed, a large portion of the teachers held unclear opinions with regards to whether the institution's quality activities helped to improve teaching. Other related constraints are that teachers were asked to teach beyond their area of specialisation (16th) and university expectations that are unclear (17th). These two constraints ranked low suggesting that they are not major issues. Nevertheless, the fact that one-quarter of the teachers did find teaching beyond area of specialisation and unclear expectations of teacher roles as constraints indicate issues that cannot be ignored.

Three survey respondents suggested the need for more focused and concerted effort in improving quality teaching. One respondent commented on the inappropriate focus of quality initiatives and the burden it places on teachers.

The university perceives quality as in quality environment and not in quality education. How do we achieve our vision? If this survey is genuine to help the university to improve in quality of teaching and quality of education for our future generation, something has to be done to stop this unnecessary burden and stress to the academic staff in UGG. (Survey respondent 40, Q.19)

Also related is a comment that the university should “prioritize teaching before the so-called quality measures that exist on paper only” (Survey respondent 26, Q. 18). Further, there is a

comment on the lack of whole-institution's synchronised effort in developing and sustaining quality teaching. This comment relates to the execution of the daily tasks, not only the academic staff, but of every employee in the institution.

Every employee of the whole university MUST understand and be committed in their respective tasks and work in concert to ensure that quality teaching is adhered to at all times until this mode becomes UGG's way of life! [emphasis as in original] (Survey respondent 46, Q. 15).

The fourth ranked constraint on quality teaching is to do with large class size already reported in the teacher interviews as the second constraint on quality teaching (green theme: classroom and teaching/learning contexts). That more than half (53.1%) the teachers agreed that class size is a constraint on teaching indicates that it is one of the major issues for UGG. Other than those who agreed, opinions are mixed between disagree and neutral (23.5% and 22.2% respectively). Other constraints related to teaching contexts are classroom arrangements that hamper effective teaching (5th) and students that do not match the expected entry standards (6th). It is interesting to observe that these three constraints follow one after the other, suggesting that classroom arrangements and student quality are also major issues after class size. The issue of student quality is the third major theme reported in the teacher interviews. Disagree and neutral opinions are again mixed within a range of one-fifth to one-quarter of the surveyed teachers (20.0% to 26.3%). Related, but rated only 18th (13.8%) is the constraint of not having the chance to contribute ideas in the courses the teachers taught.

With regards to poor student quality, further support is found in three survey respondents' comments (Survey respondents 1 and 46, Q.18, Survey respondent 51, Q.11). One suggested that student quality should reflect the institutional goal to be "premier".

There's no point having good and well-trained/experienced teachers when you enrol sub-standard students and by the large numbers. It's better to have highly/fully qualified ones and that'll be complementary with good teaching and learning and better and faster means of achieving the university's vision and mission - to be a world-class institute of higher learning. (Survey respondent 46, Q.18)

Another comment referred to lack of desirable students' learning response, reflecting interview data that students who were "too quiet", misbehaved while the teachers were teaching, or did not understand a large part of the course they were taking. The respondent described how the students were passive and lacked self-initiative. Also stressed is the reciprocal relationship in teaching/learning,

With the kind of students I've been having, I get the idea that students don't understand what they may or may not expect from their teachers. It's

as if they want their teachers to GIVE, GIVE and GIVE some more. I think the relationship between a student and teacher should be GIVE and TAKE to be fruitful. I give you a bit of my knowledge, you think about it and tell me what you've gained, I give you some more knowledge, etc... Students are very passive now [emphasis as in original] (Survey respondent 51, Q.11).

The next constraint is that feedback on teacher evaluations did little to improve teaching (10.5th) (pink theme: evaluation of teaching). It is important to note the almost even distribution of opinions among agree, neutral and disagree scales (36.3%, 31.3% and 30.0% respectively), indicating mixed opinions towards teaching evaluation. Related, and ranked in the lowest position (19th), is the constraint of not receiving any feedback at all on teaching evaluations. Only 10.0% agreed that they have not received any feedback on their teaching evaluation while 72.5% disagreed. This shows that a majority of them had actually been receiving some feedback on their teaching evaluation but whether the feedback had been helpful enough to improve teaching remains unclear.

With regards to student evaluation of teachers, one respondent suggested the possibility of inaccurate student feedback. The respondent's use of the word "effective" to refer to the students' feedback may signal concern that the feedback could impact on the teacher's personal and/or professional standing.

... there were students who did not give their answers truthfully ... in that semester, I did not postpone or cancel even a single class ... Nevertheless, there was one student whose answer effectively means that I did postpone or cancel classes more times than what was acceptable to him (Survey respondent 51, Q.15).

The final theme on constraints on quality teaching (purple theme: teacher development courses) is to do with professional development programmes comprising courses/seminars/workshop/conferences in specific disciplinary areas (referred to as training courses) and courses/seminars/workshops/conferences to do with teaching and learning (referred to as teacher development courses). More than a third of respondents agreed that not being able to attend relevant training courses (position 10.5th), or quality training courses (ranked 13th) that can help improve teachers' knowledge and expertise in their subject area, and not being able to attend quality teacher development courses (15th), acted as constraints on quality teaching. For these teachers constraints on training related to their discipline were more important than constraints on teaching related courses. Also noteworthy is the even distribution of opinions among agree, neutral and disagree for quality training courses (13th) (35.0%, 31.3% and 31.3% respectively), indicating mixed opinions with regards to the quality of discipline-specific training courses. As a whole, these results suggest that the teachers (a) prioritised professional

development in disciplinary areas before pedagogical skills, and/or (b) felt that the teacher development courses they have attended were more satisfactory than the discipline specific training courses they attended.

5.2.2 Existing support for quality teaching

Table 5.8 presents the results for existing support for quality teaching. The ranked positions are arranged in descending order based on the “agree” results.

Table 5.8: Existing support for quality teaching

Q16 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding EXISTING support for teaching at this university?					
Ranked position	<i>n</i> = 90	Valid percent (%)			Freq. (F)
		D	N	A	
1 I have ample opportunity to discuss with other teachers of my subject, what they are doing in their class (16.05).		13.6	22.2	64.2	9
2 I have ample support to develop as an academic (16.01).		16.0	22.2	61.7	9
3 I have ample opportunity to be told whether I am teaching well (16.04).		19.8	33.3	46.9	9
4 I have ample support in learning how to teach (16.02).		25.9	28.4	45.7	9
5 I have ample opportunity to learn effective ways to teach in my subject area (16.06).		23.5	33.3	43.2	9
6 I have ample support in learning how to design exam questions (16.03).		28.4	32.1	39.5	9

Note: D= “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree”; N= “Neutral”; A= “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”

The findings from Table 5.8 are presented in ranked order, relating the analysis with other relevant results where appropriate. The top most result shows that almost two-thirds of the teachers surveyed (64.2%) agreed that they had ample opportunity to discuss teaching/learning issues with other same-subject teachers. This result can be compared with having ample opportunity to learn effective ways to teach in specific subject areas (ranked 5th; 43.2% agree). Discussing with other same-subject teachers is more informal than learning effective ways to teach, indicating the teachers’ satisfaction with casual collegial assistance as opposed to formal training. At the 2nd ranked position is ample support to develop as an academic (61.7% agree) which can be compared with the 4th position, ample support in learning how to teach (45.7% agree). It appears that the teachers perceived their academic role as wider than just teaching and that they were receiving better help in developing these roles more than the help they were getting with their teaching role.

Related is the 3rd position, opportunity to be told whether the teachers were teaching well (46.9% agree) which is to do with teaching evaluation. Although the teachers had ample help in developing their academic roles, they were not receiving as much help with learning to teach

and finding out about their teaching performance through teaching evaluation. Finally, the lowest perceived support for teaching is help in designing exam questions (39.5% agree) which highlights the need for support in this area. Overall, only the top two types of support had more than half of the teachers agreeing that they were getting sufficient support. This highlights the need to provide better support for teaching in terms of learning effective ways to teach, to prepare exam questions and to be told whether they were teaching well.

The one-third neutral results are also noted for three types of support to do with teaching evaluation (3), subject-specific teacher training (5) and designing exam questions (6). As well as perceiving that these types of support were inadequate, many were also unsure or held ambivalent attitudes.

5.2.3 Needed support for quality teaching

The following table presents additional information on existing support provided by the university, sorted by agree results in descending ranked order. In the survey, these types of support were categorised as “needed support” since some were new and were implied in the teacher and manager interviews as needing publicity and enhancement. Because of this, the “never heard before” (NHB) response option was felt necessary. Some items like 17.08, 17.07 and 17.09 are long existing types of support but were put in “needed support” section as they were reported by the interviewed teachers to be inadequate and needing improvement. Also, this section elicits teacher responses to more specific institutional mechanisms compared to the previous section, enhancing the findings. In the following analysis, these items are referred to as support for teaching.

Table 5.9 shows teachers’ responses to needed support for quality teaching arranged in descending ranking order based on “agree” results.

The highest ranked support for teaching is the Annual Programme Review (1) which is to do with Outcome-Based Education (OBE) curriculum approach as decided by the institution, with 72.5% of teachers agreeing that this provided good opportunities to discuss teaching issues. At position two (63.8%) is support from immediate superiors who responded well to teaching issues expressed by the teachers. The “agree” result is also relatively high in comparison to the other types of support. However, 13.8% of the teachers disagreed, bringing to mind some negative comments revealed in the teacher interviews.

Table 5.9: Needed support for quality teaching

Q.17 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding NEEDED support for teaching at this university?						
Ranked position	<i>n</i> = 90	Valid percent (%)				Missing
		D	N	A	NHB	
1 I believe that the "Annual Programme Review" has been a good avenue to discuss teaching issues (17.02)		8.8	17.5	72.5	1.3	10
2 My immediate superior responds well to teaching issues I express (17.08).		13.8	22.5	63.8	0.0	10
3 The university's annual "Conference of Teaching and Learning" has been a good avenue to enhance teaching ideas (17.03).		6.3	35.0	56.3	2.5	10
4 The university provides ample support for academic staff to further studies (17.07).		16.5	26.6	55.7	1.3	11
5 I believe that "Peer Review of Teaching" should be continued (17.01).		18.8	27.5	53.8	0.0	10
6 The university provides ample support for industrial attachment (17.05).		16.3	26.3	52.5	5.0	10
7 The university's "Inbound-Outbound Teaching Collaboration" programme provides ample support for gaining teaching experiences outside of the country (17.04).		5.0	21.3	51.3	22.5	10
8 The university provides ample support for sabbatical leave (17.06).		16.5	32.9	48.1	2.5	11
9 The university provides helpful teacher development courses (17.09).		18.8	38.8	40.0	2.5	10

Note: D= "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree"; N= "Neutral"; A= "Agree"; "Strongly Agree"; NHB= "Never heard before"

Further, comments from the respondents enhance the findings on immediate superiors' support on teaching issues. The comments depict the teachers' sense of empathy for the managers' busy schedule, which may be due to obligations to the overall university goals. Writing about various issues raised with his/her immediate manager, one respondent used the word "overwhelmed" to describe the manager's workload:

I have raised some issues to my IM but nothing much came out of it, but I know that my IMs were overwhelmed with work themselves. (Survey respondent 51, Q. 17)

Another comment refers to the lack of management support to help teachers improve teaching which is "lacking, understandably because (the people in the management) are extremely busy". (Survey, respondent 59, Q.18)

The next five types of support have close "agree" results ranging between 51.3% and 56.3%. In ranking order, they are to do with the university's Conference on Teaching and Learning (3), support for furthering studies (4), "Peer Review of Teaching" (5), support for industrial attachment (6) and "Inbound/Outbound Teaching Collaboration" (7). For all these types of support, more than half of the teachers agreed that they are needed and should be continued, indicating positive attitudes towards these recently introduced types of support. There are

several points to note in this range of results. Firstly, the percentages of “neutral” for support (3), (4), (5) and (6) are high, between one-quarter to more than one-third (26.3% - 35.0%). Further, the percentages of “never heard before” are generally low indicating that most of the teachers were familiar with these types of support. An exception is the “Inbound-Outbound Teaching Collaboration” which 22.5% had not heard of. That more than half agreed it was needed support suggests positive opinions towards this institutional support mechanism. However, one respondent disagreed. This comment may be minor but nevertheless, suggests that UGG should develop its own ideas of quality teaching and quality education as opposed to learning from foreign countries.

I think Inbound/Outbound Teaching Collaboration (and our ideas about studying "overseas", in general) is a relic of colonial times ... It's high time we stop modelling ourselves on the West (or Japanese), start developing our own universities and show that we are not dependent on foreigners for a quality education. (Survey respondent 54, Q.17)

The types of support in positions (3), (5), (6) and (7) were recently introduced as reported in the qualitative findings section. Results in the survey showed that the majority held positive opinions towards these types of support.

Finally, the last two types of support have weak “agree” results of less than 50%. They are to do with ample support for sabbatical leave (8) and helpful teacher development courses (9). As well as low “agree” results for these types of support, the “neutral” results were also the highest when compared across the table (32.9% and 38.8% respectively). Further, the “neutral” result for teacher development courses (38.8%) is almost equivalent to “agree” (40.0%) suggesting teacher perceptions that the teacher development courses are not needed perhaps in their current form. That some of the teachers chose to be neutral rather than disagreeing suggests that the teachers did find the teacher development courses necessary but were not helpful enough. This highlights the need to look into teacher development courses in particular.

Three teachers made suggestions for improvements of teacher development courses. They include inviting professional and highly-qualified guest speakers and helping teachers to help students deal with adult issues (Survey respondent 14, Q.18), offering a workshop in designing exam questions (Survey respondent 60, Q.18), helping teachers to help students deal with adult issues and promoting team-teaching (Survey respondent 67, Q.18).

Two other comments reveal strong opinions related to teachers’ lack of motivation, expressing the need for “better treatment” of the academics by the institution. As reported in earlier findings, low teacher motivation was caused by lack of autonomy and freedom of expression and, had direct effect on teaching. One comment emphasises another earlier findings to do with

teachers being overwhelmed with quality-related duties that had little to do with teaching. Another teacher referred to the lack of opportunity for personal growth.

Generally, I don't think the academicians are being treated fairly. We are expected to do EVERYTHING and be involved in all kinds of quality-related initiatives of the university, even when it is inconvenient for us to do so ... Even in the special semester, when we had hoped to get a breather and catch up with research, we end up doing things for the university and not for our own individual growth. (Survey respondent 51, Q.18)

The following comment depicts a sense of lack of autonomy, freedom and security that echoes earlier findings through the case of grades adjustments and challenging the status quo. Also reiterated in the comment is the point about the academics deserving of better treatment and the teacher's low perception of overall institutional support. The lack of autonomy, freedom and security mentioned in the following statement might contribute to the teacher's overall sense of self-esteem as was reported in the interviews. Low teacher morale did impact on the quality of teaching as reported earlier by Luqman and Azlan.

In principle, (teachers) should be treated as academics, not as typical office employees or factory workers. This implies a certain level of autonomy, freedom and security not found in the traditional work environment ... Just look at how academics in the world's top universities are treated. It is not a "right" they have to earn. It's just the way a good university should be run. (Survey respondent 54, Q.18)

In the final section of the survey, the teachers' opinions about their contribution to institutional goals were elicited through question 19, "The university's ultimate goal in the year 2020 is to be a "world premier university". As a teacher at this university, how do you contribute to this goal?" This was to find out their perceptions of the institutional quality goals and, if their perceptions were aligned with the institution's. The comments were coded into themes by counting the number of mentions per respondent (Merriam, 1998). Although one respondent mentioned the same word three times in his/her comment, the words were counted as one mention since they occur in one topic or context. It was found that the words "teaching", "research" and "students" were most frequently cited among others. Table 5.10 shows the coded themes and the number of respondents who mentioned them.

Table 5.10: The teachers' perceptions of their contribution to institutional goals

Theme	The teachers would contribute to the institutional goal in being a "world premier university" by:	Number of respondents who mentioned them
Contribution through teaching	Delivering content/knowledge, providing quality/effective/excellent /innovative teaching, improve teaching methods, varying teaching techniques, becoming a "world premier teacher".	34
Contribution through research	Being productive/active/expert in doing research, producing excellent/quality/meaningful research, publishing research in high impact journals, producing more, obtaining research grants, generating, disseminating and preserving knowledge.	29
Doing things in the best interest of students	Supervising/caring for/inspiring/advising students, meeting students' needs, producing competent/employable/quality/academically- and spiritually-sound graduates, helping to raise students' professional standards, inculcating good values in students, ensuring students' achievement, focusing on students' response, doing teachers' best in the students' interest, giving the best value to core customer i.e. student, providing a good foundation in students' chosen area.	23
Giving strong commitments within university's strategic framework	Doing one's best/giving 100% commitment to achieve university goals, being actively involved in activities designed to achieve university goal.	7
Helping the university gain respect	Helping the university to promote its name/ to become a point of reference for research/to obtain international recognition	3

In Table 5.10, it can be seen that references to teaching are the most frequent. It is acknowledged that the teachers' perceptions may have been influenced by the quality teaching survey context. The findings contrast with the institutional goals discussed previously which put students and research in the foreground and teaching in the background. It shows that the teachers did recognise quality teaching as one of the ways to contribute to institutional goals and is a part of educational excellence.

Further, there is evidence that research is seen as more important than teaching although, references to research were fewer.

(I contribute to the university goals by) promoting the name of the university, inspiring the students, being care for the students and teaching. Doing research, research and research. (Survey respondent 5, Q.19)

(I contribute to the university goals by doing) effective teaching. However, being world premier is more focused on research excellence and contribution to the world in general rather than teaching excellence. (Survey respondent 9, Q.19)

Giving commitment to achieve university goals in the best interest of students was the third way to contribute to university goals. This shows that students are also one of the teachers' main foci in achieving university goals. Interesting points to highlight are the mentions of graduate employability and qualifying students as "core customers". These references are related to outcome-based education and industry-oriented perceptions of teaching reported previously.

Compared to teaching, research and acting in the best interests of students, far fewer respondents indicated a strong commitment to the institutional goal through its strategic framework. Expressions of support shows aligned perceptions of university excellence (not necessarily teaching excellence). Conversely, it may also suggest uncritical or forced acceptance of institutional directions. This idea can be seen in negative comments made by four respondents who were against the idea of quality environment, instead of quality education (Survey respondent 40), did not care about the university directions (Survey respondent 51), did not think that his or her opinions had any bearing on the university goals (Survey respondent 54) and who felt that the safe way to go was to obey orders (Survey respondent 80).

All the comments suggest one thing about these teachers' perceptions of their contributions to becoming a world-premier university: that they could not see the purpose in the enhancement initiatives they were engaged in (teaching-related included) but co-operated regardless. Comments that show an uncaring attitude depict half-hearted obedience towards the institution's enhancement activities, as well as low teacher motivation with regards to the teacher's own professional/ personal growth (expressed as "my work") with the university.

I can't care less where the university wants to be in what year ... Whatever my IM tells me to do, I do it. It doesn't matter to me what goals my work actually support. That's the job of post-holders to figure out. (Survey respondent 51, Q.19)

Just obey order, keep opinions to oneself, do not challenge or question a Dean's actions. (Survey respondent 80, Q.19)

The above comments reveal an overall sense of dissatisfaction towards the institution's quality initiatives and instructions received from immediate managers. As reported by some teacher interviewees, such dissatisfaction can impact on the quality of teaching as the teachers lose 'zest' in what they do. It is important that the institutional goals and all the support for teaching discussed thus far be made relevant, meaningful and helpful to the teachers.

5.3. Summary of qualitative and quantitative findings

The following table brings together, qualitative and quantitative findings about constraints on quality teaching, existing institutional support and needed support. Consistent with the qualitative dominant research design the summary follows the sequence of themes that emerged in the qualitative findings. Additional themes found in the survey are also presented.

Table 5.11: Summary of existing constraints, existing support and needed support for quality teaching at UGG

EXISTING CONSTRAINTS				
		Extent of helpfulness/ (+) ve feedback	Needed improvement/enhancement/ (-) ve feedback	Document evidence
1	Institutional quality related activities (Committee tasks, audit reports)	-	Reduced time for teaching preparation and related responsibilities, less focus on teaching, committee tasks take time off teaching (1/19) , research projects take time off teaching (9/19) , consultancy work take time off teaching (12/19) , teaching load is too much (14/19)	5 major quality initiatives, 30 different committees/taskforces, various activities that involve all departments and faculties, various levels of audit sessions and quality events which were close in time.
2	Class size	-	Difficulty in meeting learning needs, doing group work and marking course work, class capacity is too large (4/19) ,	-
3	Quality of students	-	Student intake (especially international students) with poor English proficiency resulting in poor student performance and undesirable learning response, students do not match expected entry standard (6/19) . More English courses for international students. 1 surveyed teacher suggested for admission of highly-qualified students, 1 surveyed teacher commented that students were passive and lacked self-initiative.	Low and inconsistent standards of minimum requirement for English language. Provision of Intensive English programme.
4	Material provision		Classroom arrangement hampers teaching (5/19) , library resource is inadequate (7/19)	
	- Multimedia facilities	-	Inadequate number of LCD projectors, poor maintenance, multimedia facilities is inadequate (8/19)	Inadequate provision acknowledged.
	- Lab facilities	-	Inadequate equipments for effective teaching, class size to reduce to 20, lab facilities need improvement (2/19) .	Lab facilities acknowledged as adequate.

EXISTING SUPPORT				
		Extent of helpfulness	Needed improvement/enhancement	Document evidence
1	Teacher development programme			
	- Teaching related courses	Helpful for beginner teachers, interested to learn more, the university provides helpful teacher development courses (9/9)	Need to be appropriate to level, poor uptake due to busy schedule. Also, need to develop a standardised procedure for implementation, design a proper structure for implementation, centralise provision, provide induction course at the start of employment, include observation of good teaching, include observation of beginner teachers teaching, let experienced teachers share expertise, develop self-access materials, customise provision to levels of teaching experience, develop a systematic and comprehensive programme that awards teaching qualification, provide opportunity for teacher organisers to attend courses and to develop teaching and research roles, centralise the Department of Pedagogical Training, teachers have not been able to attend quality teacher-development courses (15/19)	Teachers (especially beginner teachers) encouraged to improve, enhance and update teaching skills. Induction course for beginner teachers are provided.
	- Seminars/ workshops/ conferences	-	Limited budget, teachers have not been able to attend relevant training courses (10.5/19), teachers have not been able to attend quality training courses (13/19)	Provision for fees, food, accommodation, transport. Budget restrictions acknowledged.
	- UGG Conference on Teaching and Learning	UGG Conference on Teaching and Learning has been a good avenue to enhance teaching ideas (3/9)	A lot of teaching/learning issues to be discussed and resolve.	The first UGG Conference for Teaching and Learning in 2008
2	Collegial support			
	- Immediate managers	Supportive, responsive, compliments for job well done, open to suggestions, immediate superiors respond well to teaching issues expressed (2/9)	Issues expressed were not received well, not open to constructive criticism, teachers have not had the chance to contribute ideas in the courses they teach (18/19)	Encourage support from immediate managers.
	- Colleagues	Teachers had ample opportunity to discuss with other same-subject teachers regarding teaching of the subject (1/6)	Casual chats about teaching/learning but no discussion of deeper issues.	

3	Evaluation of teaching - Teachers had ample opportunity to be told whether they were teaching well (2/6)			
	- Peer review of teaching	Helpful in the spirit of teaching improvement, peer review of teaching should be continued (5/9)	Not taken seriously, no follow-up, controversial and pending implementation	Recommended peer review of teaching to improve teaching skills.
	- Student evaluation of teaching	Good scores are motivating	Surface level feedback from numerical scores, does not help improve teaching, no feedback, student evaluation of teaching has not done much to improve teaching (10.5/19), teachers have not received any feedback of the teacher evaluation (19/19). 1 surveyed teacher commented that students could give misleading feedback that could affect teacher's professional standing.	Has statement as established practice to evaluate teaching performance.
4	Outcome-Based Education	Helps teacher develop teaching objectives, teaching methods, assessments, course structure	-	Statement of full-implementation at one faculty, two more faculties to implement in upcoming semester.
5	Formal avenue to discuss T/L matters - Teachers had ample support in learning how to teach (4/6), Teachers had ample opportunity to learn effective ways to teach in subject area (5/6), teachers had ample support to learn to design exam questions (6/6)			
	- Annual Programme Review	Opportunity to discuss the general running of curriculum, teaching/learning, the Annual Programme Review has been a good avenue to discuss teaching issues (1/9)	No opportunity to discuss teaching/learning issues	Has statement as annual review of programmes that mainly deals with curriculum monitoring.
	- Mentor	Helpful with close monitoring, purposeful mentor-protége contacts and same-subject relationship.	Unhelpful with casual mentor-protége arrangement	Statement of provision for beginner teachers between 6 months to 1 year upon employment.
6	Recently introduced support - Teachers had ample support to develop as academics (2/6), the university provides ample support to further studies (4/9), 1 surveyed teacher expressed unhelpful support of the following and reported receiving harmful advice to further studies.			
	- Industry attachment	Necessary for teachers to share industry experiences with students, keeps teacher updated with what's current in real life, the university provides ample support for industry attachment (6/9)	Limited opportunity when no companies are available for the taking.	Provision for allowance and time off-work.

	- Sabbatical leave	The university provides ample support for sabbatical leave (8/9)	Few takers	Provision for conducting research, doing PhD, conducting academic/science visits, writing up a book.
	- Inbound/outbound collaboration	Has added value in terms of getting experience in teaching in a different setting, learning new technology, learning from foreign colleagues, the Inbound/Outbound Teaching collaboration provides support for gaining teaching experience outside the country (7/9, 22.5% have never heard before)	1 surveyed teacher commented that modelling teaching on foreign countries is a relic of colonial times; start developing UGG's own idea of good teaching.	No document evidence.
NEEDED SUPPORT				
		Extent of helpfulness	Needed improvement/enhancement	Document evidence
1	Teacher development programme	-	(As contained in existing support: teaching-related courses)	
2	Increase in teacher morale	-	Provide teacher autonomy in students' assessment grading. Provide teachers with freedom of expression that does not affect professional standing or chances for promotion. 2 survey respondents suggest better treatment of teachers.	Has statement of grades adjustments as part of the institutional policy. Reported teachers as satisfied working at UGG and were willing to contribute to business excellence.
3	Enhanced opportunities to do research	-	Allow teachers more time to do research, allow flexible working hours, guide beginner teachers to cope with research, guide non-teacher trained teachers to do research in education, research projects take time off teaching (9/19),	Statement of top priority for research/scholarly activities for teachers to develop knowledge and contribute to effective teaching. Promotes collaborative research, seeking research fund and establishing senior-junior guide in publishing research.

4	Clearer expectations of teacher roles	<p>In sequence order, teachers perceived their contributions to university goals/expectations of their roles (i) through teaching well (ii) being actively involved in research, (iii) by doing things in the best interest of the students, (iv) by giving strong commitments within the institutional goal framework, (v) by helping the university gain respect.</p>	<p>Teachers were confused with priorities between excellent teaching, research or services, quality activities do not place emphasis on teaching (3/19), teachers have been asked to teach beyond area of specialisation (16/19), the university expectation of a teacher is unclear (17/19).</p> <p>3 surveyed teachers commented that the university should give more focus on and develop a concerted effort to improve quality teaching.</p> <p>4 surveyed teachers commented that they did not see the purpose of the enhancement activities they were engaged in.</p>	<p>Institutional goals in vision/mission statements and key performance indicators show priorities on research, students as customers and services; teaching is integrated into research.</p>
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Note: - Black fonts represent qualitative findings; red fonts represent quantitative findings.
- Survey results are presented by displaying the item's ranked position within the question section (e.g. 2/19 means the second position out of 19 questionnaire items of the particular section. There were 19 constraints, 6 existing support and 9 needed support in the questionnaire)

5.4. Chapter summary

This chapter has reported findings on UGG teachers' perceptions of existing constraints on, existing support and needed support for quality teaching. Findings from the teacher interviews, manager interviews and document evidence have provided the basis by which to compare the supplementary findings from the teacher survey. Unlike the previous chapter, where it was difficult to conclude whether qualitative and quantitative results converge or diverge, findings for this section are more straightforward as the two sets of data show similarities. The survey results confirmed findings in the teacher interviews. Pointed out are major findings that the institutional quality activities were excessive and did take teachers' time and focus off teaching, that the quality activities did not place enough emphasis on improving teaching, that the institutional goals showed priority for research and a student-as-customer focus (not teaching), and that some teachers prioritised research over teaching.

The complex nature of teachers' perceptions of teaching found in the previous chapter is re-emphasised here. In addition to the teachers' mixed perspectives on teaching, research and industry experiences reported in the previous chapter, this chapter has revealed institutional goals that focused less on teaching but more on research and learning experiences. These goals may have most likely shaped teachers' perceptions on teaching. This will be explored in-depth in the following chapter. With regards to all other types of support, positive feedback was reported. On the other hand, there is room for improvement. The following chapter puts all the findings together and explores these issues in-depth.

Chapter 6 DISCUSSION

6.0 Introduction

This chapter synthesises the findings on teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, as well as institutional constraints on and support for it. The discussion is organised in terms of a number of themes arising from the findings and is informed by the current literature. The need to adapt these predominantly Western ideas in the literature to suit national goals and local contexts is explored in the final section.

6.1 Quality teaching

This section discusses the findings for research question one: *How do teachers in the case study institution perceive quality teaching?* The major themes are identified and constraints on and support for quality teaching are referred to where relevant.

6.1.1 Teachers perceived themselves as being responsible for quality teaching and felt that they have taught well

Within teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, there is an over-arching idea that they are responsible for quality teaching. Firstly, they felt responsible for knowledge. Interview data showed that a quality teacher is well-equipped with knowledge which included preparation of teaching materials and ensuring a good grasp of the materials before teaching students. Knowing the subject well enough to answer students' questions was ranked high in the survey too. In order to be well-versed with their subject content, the interviewed teachers felt it necessary to have industry experience so that they would be able to relate real-life examples when teaching. They also thought it important to do research so that they have more knowledge to share with the students.

Secondly, being responsible for quality teaching is seen through emphasis on delivering knowledge well. This was evident in both the teacher interviews and the survey data. It includes the idea that good teaching is structured and organised. Frequently mentioned, in both the interviews and survey, was the use of technology as a teaching tool (with particular reference to Power Point slides). Thirdly, there is evidence that the teachers saw teaching as a performance to be done well to keep students interested and motivated. There were references to teachers having "good body language" to "influence audience", using the whiteboard to feel "more alive" and teaching actively. Raising and maintaining students' interest were also found to be common themes in both the interviews and the survey.

There is an overall sense that in ensuring quality teaching, some teachers were focused on what they were doing in teaching more than what the students were doing in learning. This links to the theories of university teaching discussed in the Literature Review chapter, which combined Ramsden's (2003) "University Teachers' Theories of Teaching" and Biggs and Tang's (2007) "Levels of Thinking About Teaching". Described thus far are perceptions at level one of the theories. At this level, teaching is described by the authors to be transmission-type where the teachers transmit knowledge and the students are passive recipients. The teachers saw themselves as the "expected custodians of knowledge" (Bartram & Bailey, 2009, p. 181), the "sage on stage" (Biggs & Tang, 2007, p. 17) or the "source of undistorted information" (Ramsden, 2003, p. 108). The teachers felt that they needed to be knowledge experts and the students' point of reference. The knowledge they have needed to be passed to the students in a neat package – as complete, as accurate and as updated as possible. Further to being knowledge experts, the teachers felt accountable for passing knowledge accurately and clearly to students, seeing themselves as presenters of information or the "transmitter of authoritative content" (Ramsden, 2003, p. 108) - the major channel through which students access knowledge, thus lecturing needs to be done well. Using technology to aid structured teaching, the teachers focused on communicating knowledge smoothly.

Biggs and Tang (2007) and Ramsden (2003) do not disregard lectures as one of the recognised approaches to quality teaching. However, compared to the second and the third levels of teaching, the teacher-as-transmitter view runs the risk of treating students as passive recipients. Unless the lecture is extremely inspiring or engaging, teacher-talk can dominate the whole lecture. Student listening can become a passive activity that typically involves low-level cognitive processing such as memorising and note-taking (Biggs & Tang, 2007). Of interest here are the reports of students being "too quiet" – unresponsive to the teacher's attempt to start a discussion, and "passive" - teachers were expected to give while the students only received. There were also reports of students being reluctant to complete given tasks and failing to learn altogether. These are evidence that learning had not occurred as intended.

The link between teaching and learning was established in the Chapter Two. "We cannot teach better unless we are able to see what we are doing from (the students') point of view" (Ramsden, 2003, p. 84). It has been argued that teaching methods related to students' orientation in learning and their level of engagement (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). Level one transmission teaching or "Information Transfer/Teacher-Focused" teaching (Trigwell et al., 1994), is likely to promote low level student engagement and surface learning approaches like memorising and note-taking. At the other end of the continuum, level three conceptual-change type of teaching or "Conceptual Change/Student-Focused" teaching has been found to

promote higher level student engagement and deep learning approaches that involve analysing, applying and theorising (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003).

Deep learning approaches lead to meaningful learning because the students have a deep-seated need to know (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). This is what was lacking in the teacher interviewees' descriptions of low students' interest and poor motivation to learn. When deep learning did not occur, the teachers attributed this to students' lack of interest in the subject, poor attitude and poor motivation giving rise to "blame-the student theory" which often occurs at level one teaching (Biggs & Tang, 2007). The teachers gave poor student quality as one reason given for undesirable learning responses. However, there may be deeper underlying issues to do with teaching/learning processes.

There is a possibility that the teachers had not prepared a learning environment conducive for deep learning. The constructivist view of teaching and learning might help explain why deep learning did not occur (Fosnot, 2005; Killen, 2007; Phillips, 2000; Slavin, 2012; St. George & Bourke, 2008). Within the constructivist view, knowledge is constructed by the learners more than by teachers. This entails exploratory and interpretive learning processes, often in the form of challenging problem-solving tasks that require the use of what the students already know in order to solve the task at hand. In the exploratory and interpretive process, the learners would reconceptualise and reformulate their ideas about how the world works, thus meaningful learning occurs. Have the teacher participants engaged their students in such meaningful learning?

There is evidence of student-centred perceptions of teaching. Some interviewed teachers showed concern for meaningful learning and attempts at achieving students' understanding. This was done by asking the students to read course materials in conjunction with lectures, encouraging students to explain results of lab experiments or justify the decisions they made in problem solving tasks. The learning goals described were to develop critical and analytical thinking as well as relating theories to real-life practices akin to level two and three teaching theories (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). There were also expressed intentions of letting students do independent learning like letting them read some materials or solve some mathematical problems on their own. These attempts at student-directed learning do not guarantee deep understanding unless they are followed through with application activities and feedback discussions. Described in the interview following students' self-study was class quizzes. There was no mention of application activities or feedback discussions.

Further, although incorporating group activities and group projects were highly ranked in the survey, making the students explain their experiment results and justify their solutions in group

problem-solution tasks might not fully guarantee that meaningful learning had occurred. Social constructivism (Slavin, 2012) suggests several questions. Has every student in the group had the chance to experience exploratory and investigative learning processes? Class size was one of the teachers' constraints on teaching and large group projects (5-6 students per group) were reported to have resulted in "free riders". In such cases, close teacher supervision and facilitation were important to ensure every student's involvement, and to make certain that they were learning well from and with each other. There is also a question of whether the activities were within the students' "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978 in Slavin, 2012). Although the student-centred constructivist approach advocated in this study entails giving the students challenging tasks in a social setting, "scaffolding" is also emphasised. The role of the teacher as a mediator is important. It is important that the teacher provides enough help in the form of directions for use of students' prior skills and knowledge. How had the researched teachers facilitated learning in the student-centred learning activities? This was not pursued in the investigation and remained unclear. What was prevalent was transmission-type teaching as many teachers emphasised structured and organised lecture. The use of Power Point presentations for lecture was often cited.

Phillips (2000) noted that constructivist teaching should not be taken as the "One Best Way" of teaching because teachers need to use multiple approaches when faced with different types of learners and learning contexts (p. 327). Hence, transmission-type teaching and the use of Power Point slides are not looked down upon as 'bad teaching' by the researcher. In fact, didactic lecture such as this may be quite appropriate in science and mathematics discipline (Jarvis-Selinger, Collins, & Pratt, 2007). Varying teaching techniques, and using them effectively and expertly as appropriate to a given context is emphasised here. Didactic lecture and Power Point slides are not appropriate in all learning situations and do not work all the time. Even when they are interleaved with group discussions and collaborative projects, using them expertly means to ensure that these strategies are used selectively. Lecturing can be done to introduce students to new concepts but once basic principles have been established, their existing knowledge can be applied in group discussions and collaborative projects, which, as discussed above still needs teacher facilitation.

Ramsden (2003) also reminded us that "any teaching method... is only as good as the person who interprets it" (p. 155). The use of Power Point slides and graphic simulations should be used effectively to bring about meaningful learning. There were interview reports of students falling asleep in lessons that used Power Point slides. The survey too, showed that technology in teaching was used more for clear teaching and less to make lessons interesting. The use of technology in teaching is not confined to teaching presentations as found in these data but can

also be used for students' creative exploration in hands-on activities. This can stimulate active imaginations and foster student engagement.

6.1.2 Teachers had discordant teaching perspectives

A section of the survey was devoted to exploring multiple teacher perspectives using Pratt's (1998) *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education*. These five alternative frames of understanding teaching offer lenses through which we can view teachers' perspectives, in our effort to understand their beliefs and intentions that justify actions. The researcher's main objective in this study was to explore teacher thinking rather than teaching practices. Investigating teacher beliefs and intentions had enabled us to understand and appreciate the values underlying what the teachers did. This is the point at which teaching enhancement efforts should take place. As argued earlier in this thesis, "fundamental changes to the quality of teaching and learning may only result from changes to conceptions of teaching" (Kember & Kwan, 2000, p. 489).

The data showed that, as a whole, strengths of preferences for all the perspectives shifted in different circumstances; between perceptions of teacher role, emphasis in teaching and ways to gauge learning. The shifting degree of preferences affirm the idea that one teacher typically holds more than one perspective because of the overlapping characteristics between different perspectives (Pratt, 2002). However, Pratt also noted that 90% of the teachers who had taken his "Teaching Perspectives Inventory" (TPI) held only one or two dominant perspectives. Although information on individual teacher preferences were not available (due to anonymity), the overall impression of teacher perspectives showed three to four recurring top perspective preferences: the facilitator, instructor and role model roles as university teacher and the instructor, role model, provocateur and facilitator perspectives in teaching. Although similar, the sequence of preferences was different. This indicates general inconsistencies between how the teachers perceived themselves as teachers and what they claimed they did in teaching. It confirms Pratt's (1998, p. 107) claim that discordance between teachers' espoused theory and theory-in-practice is commonplace. Exploring how these are played out in the findings can further enhance understanding of poor learning responses and ways to align teaching perspectives with teaching practices.

The *facilitator* teacher role/*developmental* perspective was the preferred role/view of teaching ; ranked at number one for role as university teacher and in gauging learning, but fourth in teaching emphasis. The mismatch of perception of self as facilitator but a non-facilitator emphasis in teaching is consistent with the discussion of the teachers' dominant transmission-type teaching. As discussed, student-centred teaching beliefs and intentions might not have

been followed through in practice. Data suggested that although the teachers intended to be facilitators or learning guides, in teaching, most of them held the instructor and role model teacher roles, emphasising students' strong grasp of subject content and learning situations that are close to their future job tasks, rather than the facilitator emphasis on learning activities that help them make sense of learning.

The overlapping characteristics among Pratt's (1998, 2002) teaching perspectives must be noted. Although facilitator teaching perspective was only the fourth preferred, the role model view that learning should mimic real-life tasks in the profession also imply students making sense of their learning experiences. Due to limited description of perspective characteristics in the survey, the teachers' perspectives appear as exclusive categories. Therefore, the teachers might be aware of the need to play a facilitator role but in practice, they did not make conscious choices to incorporate student activities. Instead, they saw the need to relate to real-life experiences, not necessarily in learning activities but perhaps by telling (since instructor and role model emphases in teaching shared the same ranking).

Both interview and survey data provided insights into how the facilitator role has not been implemented. Transmission teaching perceptions were evident and prevalent. Delivering knowledge in a neat package was a central theme as teachers tried to preserve knowledge accuracy in well-prepared lessons. A majority of the teachers in the survey felt that they should know the courses they taught well enough to be able to answer students' questions. Teacher-centred teaching runs counter to the constructivist tenet that lies behind the developmental view (Pratt, 2002).

According to Pratt (2002), the primary goal of education from the facilitator perspective is to help learners (i) reach a more complex level of reasoning and (ii) in incremental steps. Firstly, with emphasis on content in teaching, the tendency is to build the quantity of learners' knowledge rather than develop the quality of their cognitive abilities; in incremental steps but focused on knowledge addition rather than more complex reasoning. It is common for teachers to fall into the role of the "expert" and provide more answers rather than challenging students with questions (Pratt, 1998, p. 47). Secondly, incrementally developing complex reasoning skills means that the learners "construct their own understanding rather than reproduce the teachers' understanding" (Pratt, 2002, p. 8). Evidence in the data suggested reproduction of teachers' understanding. A majority of the surveyed teachers thought that their teaching notes should be useful for students' exam revision, emphasising accuracy and the construction of knowledge from the teachers' perspectives; little opportunity for students to develop their own sense-making.

To adopt the facilitator role more effectively, the teachers need to look at teaching and learning from the learners' point of view. The suggestion that learner-centred teaching ideas were not followed through in practice needs rectifying. It is important that the teachers empathise with the challenges learners face in learning; that is, to understand how learners' think and how they confront the material they are faced with (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Pratt, 2002; Ramsden, 2003). Concepts of surface and deep learning approaches and the inseparable link between teaching and learning should be emphasised. It is crucial that the teachers' understand the impact of what they do in teaching on students' learning approaches. The teachers need to understand ways to prepare a "fertile ground" for deep learning approaches to occur – that is to devise appropriate activities for plenty of sense-making opportunities offered by constructivist learning approaches (Slavin, 2012), more than by telling the students how what they learn are related to their future professions.

Regarding *facilitation* of learning, the teachers need to utilise students' prior knowledge and experience. Question-and-answer discussions need to be fine-tuned with "judicious use of effective questioning" (Pratt, 2002, p. 8), assisting learners to move from simple to more complex thinking instead of doing passive listening. On the practical side, existing attempts at student-centred activities like debate and group projects could be enhanced with stronger focus on developing complex reasoning. The teachers' role as learning mediators needs to be given attention; breaking down learning into manageable learning activities deserves proper training. The facilitator-type teachers at UGG need assistance with developing teaching/learning activities that promote reasoning skills.

The *instructor* teacher role/*transmission* perspective was the second perspective in the survey. It shows consistency in that the high preference for the instructor teacher role was complemented with a general majority preference for the instructor perspective in teaching that stressed content knowledge. This teacher-centred views, transmission-oriented teaching and focus on additive learning of content according to Pratt, "provides some of the most common examples of negative teaching"(Pratt, 2002, p. 8), due to the tendency for teacher-dominant lecture. On the other hand, multiple teaching perspectives are advocated by Pratt and are upheld in this study. In appreciation of the transmission teaching perspective, it could and should be made more effective. Lecture-type teaching and content-oriented perceptions at UGG might have been influenced by the teachers' maths and science disciplinary areas of specialisation. These disciplines have content that are "well-defined" and often involve "assumptions of single right or wrong answers" (Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2007, p. 74). Teachers from these disciplines tend to prefer delivering content in its authorised form.

To enhance transmission-type teaching, proper delivery of content must be complemented with proper receptivity by the learners. Data that revealed poor learning responses emphasises this need. In conjunction with structured and organised teaching (the use of technology included), the teachers need to recognise learner differences and diverse learner motivation (p. 64). It is important to avoid the common mistake of overwhelming the students with everything the teacher knows all of the time. Not all learners are receptive to didactic lectures or have the same level of listening skills. Teachers should be sensitive to student feedback and be ready to change the mode of teaching even within one lesson. Lecture-type teaching tends to promote passive listening unless the teacher is gifted with personal qualities that make their lecture memorable and leave a lasting impression (Axelrod, 2007; Ramsden, 2003).

The *role model* role/*apprenticeship* perspective was the third perspective in the teacher survey. It was the third as perceived role but most preferred in teaching emphasis, and the second for learning assessment. The primary focus of this perspective is on “situated learning”; the merging of context, content, process and product (Pratt, 1998, p. 87). Data shows awareness of situated learning. The interviewed teachers felt it important to help students relate the value of what was learned in class to the students’ future job situations. The importance of “tacit knowledge” as a learning outcome (p. 88) was also evident in the interview data. Many teachers expressed the need to have industry experience. In the survey, a high percentage indicated that good teaching is when a teacher is able to provide support in students’ job aspirations.

The challenge of the apprenticeship perspective, according to Pratt (1998), is in making “tacit knowing-in-practice” visible to learners (p. 94). It is not easy to relate to students discipline-specific skills and knowledge teachers have acquired in their industry experiences, or at least, in their academic and/or practical training. In the data, some teachers reported telling the students about their experiences in the relevant industries or challenging students to think critically in teacher-controlled discussions. Teaching as telling is not as effective as teaching as organising learning activities (Ramsden, 2003). To enhance the apprenticeship perspective, a teaching approach by one interviewed teacher is commended. The teacher emulated a real-life task of calculating car loan amortisation in an IT-application lesson which potentially promoted situated learning and the acquisition of tacit knowledge. The teacher incorporated learning content, real-life contexts, assisted learning processes and desirable lifelong skills in one well-planned student-centred task. It promoted active and meaningful learning. Evidently, it got the students “very much involved” (Razak, li. 296). This kind of apprenticeship teaching approach needs to be promoted at UGG.

The *provocateur* role/*social reform* perspective and the *friend* role/*nurturer* perspective had mixed outcomes in the interview and the survey. With the *social reform* perspective, despite low teacher perceptions of their role as to challenge thinking, in teaching, the teachers chose to focus on developing students' critical views of the subject discipline and how their views affect the surrounding community. The reader is reminded of the 'softened' social reform perspective to suit cultural contexts explained in Chapter Four; the *provocateur* role in the survey is portrayed as less than radical, focusing on challenging students' thoughts in relation to community contexts rather than promoting challenge of dogma (Pratt, 1998, p. 69) . The surveyed teachers chose to relate teaching to students' community contexts but were not aware that they were playing the *provocateur* role. Again, overlapping perspective characteristics are noted. That the teachers did not acknowledge their *provocateur* role does not mean that they did not attempt at challenging students to think during teaching/learning. Based on the interview data, less than one-third of the teachers reported challenging students to think by asking thought-provoking questions in class or by creating disequilibrium with unrealistic problem-solution results. Although the survey showed awareness, the interview data showed little evidence of *provocateur* practice.

Finally, the *friend* role/*nurturer* perspective show unexpected responses. It was the lowest preferred in teacher role and emphasis in teaching. This is in contrast with the interview data that showed strong perceptions of good teacher-student relationships and having genuine interest in teaching and learning; both themes mentioned by more than half of the interviewed teachers. These divergent responses will be discussed further in the following section.

Each of Pratt's (1998, 2002) five teaching perspectives is a legitimate view of looking at teaching but has its own shortcomings. The general impression of shifting preferences across the given circumstances - teacher roles, teaching emphasis and perceptions in gauging learning - signifies discordance between theories the teachers proclaimed and those they used. Making the teachers aware of their teaching perspectives and theories that underlie them can help align their thinking with what they do in class. Suggestions for enhancement of each perspective have implications for professional development initiatives at UGG, which will be further explored in themes that follow.

6.1.3 Relationships with students seems to be important in ensuring quality teaching

Relationships with students appear to be a very important aspect of quality teaching for both the interviewed and surveyed teachers. The reasons for developing good teacher-student relationships found in the interview data are to obtain students' feedback on their learning

experiences, to educate students with lessons in life and to appreciate human connection. Among the three reasons, only the first one directly benefits teaching and learning while the other two are to do with advantages outside the classroom. Survey data provides support. Most teachers felt that students should be able to approach teachers to discuss learning matters rather than to discuss personal matters or to have a social drink. No advantage of teacher-student relationships outside the classroom were found in the survey. This indicates strong preferences for teacher-student bonds for teaching/learning purposes.

Since teacher-student relationship was one of the strongest themes in the data, it would be interesting to explore how the purposes underlying them were played to good teaching/learning effects. Almost half of the interviewed teachers discussed lessons in life and human connection as purposes for developing good teacher-student relationship but this was not supported in the survey. Pratt's (1998) *nurturer* perspective/*friend* role is used to explore teacher thinking underlying this perspective. Based on Pratt, teachers who held this perspective would have the teacher and the learner as dominant elements and emphasise the relationship between the two.

Although emphasis on teacher-student relationships was found in the interviews, the important bond was played down in the survey. The friend role/*nurturer* perspective was the least preferred of the five teacher roles and in teaching emphasis. In the survey it was described as one who provides learning support. This was comparable with facilitator role/developmental perspective which were described as one who guides learning and was highly preferred. The teachers' marked preference for the description "learning guide" rather than "learning support" are interesting. The reason for this preference was explored. Other survey data illuminated. A majority of the teachers preferred to let students approach them to discuss learning problems far more than to discuss personal problems or to have social drink. Perhaps the difference between 'guide' and 'support' was that the latter was associated with more personal relationships beyond what learning necessitates. This is backed up by the nurturer perspective in teaching that stressed developing students' self-esteem and confidence; more personal support than emphasis on learning activities in the facilitator perspective. Finally, the category label of "friend" role may not fit well with many teachers compared to facilitator. Jarvis-Selinger et al. (2007) found that nurturer perspectives were preferred less by aspiring teachers in math/science; more by the language arts, home and technical sciences majors. This finding is consistent with UGG's context of science/math major areas of specialisation. UGG teachers' specialised areas might have influenced their teaching perspectives and what they placed as dominant elements in their teaching ideals.

Related is the interview theme of having genuine interest in students' learning, discussed by half of the interviewed teachers. The theme was associated with strong dedication and sense of commitment to teaching and learning which comprised thorough lesson planning, being ready to give time to students, and being sincere in wanting to see students develop. These are a mixture of characteristics between Pratt's transmission, nurturer and developmental perspectives which suggested that teacher-student relationships can be present in several perspectives but in varying degrees. Interestingly, the interviewed teachers who discussed these ideas came from various faculties. This further emphasised that the teachers themselves might hold more than one dominant view as characteristics overlap.

Genuine interest in students' learning enrich the teacher participants' notion of teacher-student relationship. They connect with Palmer's (2007) concept of the teacher's *heart*, "the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self" (p. 11). Good teachers, according to Palmer, have the capacity for *connectedness* – the ability to be the medium of connection between themselves, the students, the subject, as well as the world of the students' professions. Despite being uncomfortable with the label 'friend', there is evidence of wanting to teach from the heart; to open oneself to risks and tensions in teaching, perhaps driven by passion for subject or perhaps by genuine interest in seeing personal growth.

If the teachers did indeed see themselves as a medium of connection between the learner and the subject content, building teacher-student relationships was not a conscious choice but rather a necessary pre-requisite to help learners engage with learning. It suggests a perception of teachers as a 'bridging link' between the learners and the content. The idea of the teacher as the bridging link is a legitimate way of looking at teaching, essentially in the developmental perspective (Pratt, 1998). It has to do with "effective ways of representing the content for learners' understanding" (p. 119). However, the problem is when teachers saw themselves as *the* bridging link between learners and content, rather than one who *built* the bridge that links learners and content – the one who *develops* the means to get there; a mere "conduit" between knowledge and understanding (Entwistle, 2009, p. 79). In the data, the teachers might have seen themselves as students' *means* to knowledge access. In reality, as far as deep learning and constructivist learning approaches are concerned, the bridging link is ideally learning tasks or materials that connect students with new forms of understanding. The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning and not to bring knowledge to students. Teachers help move students from the state of not knowing to knowing. They should not be making the connections for students (Fosnot, 2005; Pratt, 1998; Slavin, 2012). The need to assist teachers with playing the mediator or conduit role effectively as already discussed is reiterated.

6.1.4 Outcome-based education (OBE) is the new definition of quality teaching

Data revealed that, at the time of data collection, the case study institution was in the period of curriculum transformation into Outcome-Based Education (OBE). The institution has opted for the OBE approach for the purposes of international accreditation of its academic programmes and as part of the university quality framework. Positive attitudes towards the OBE approach were found among the teachers and one institutional manager. Adoption of such curriculum transformation requires critical scrutiny, more so if it is done for the purposes of recognition rather than for sound pedagogical reasons.

For the few interviewed teachers who discussed OBE, as well as a majority of the survey participants, the curriculum approach was felt to be helpful in teaching. The development of structured learning outcomes has helped them manage the syllabus content, make lesson plans, develop teaching approaches and design course assessments. Given that approximately two-thirds of the surveyed teachers did not have any teaching-related experiences outside the university or were fresh graduates prior to being employed at UGG, the structured curriculum guide provided by OBE approach is understandably much appreciated. In Brady's (1996) words, it has helped the teachers "crystallise their real intentions" by making vague ideas more explicit (p. 12). The interviewed teachers saw it as an open door that led them into the world of teaching owing to a commonly cited guide - *Bloom's Taxonomy*. Although UGG's curriculum transformation was still underway at the time of research, the teachers' responses were encouraging. Such a positive OBE climate is commendable as curriculum transformation is an elaborate process twisted with complex and sometimes problematic processes and, in some cases received with teacher resistance (Aziz et al., 2005; Chan & Chan, 2009; Harden, 2007).

Criticisms of OBE include its outcome-oriented rather than process-oriented approach (Berlach, 2004; Hughes & Barrie, 2010; McKernan, 1993). OBE's "design-down" method from "culminating outcomes" (Spady & American Association of School Administrators, 1994, p. 10) has been a source of various pedagogical issues. Given that only a small proportion of the surveyed teachers were teacher-trained or had some teaching background, many might not be aware of pedagogical considerations involved when translating OBE principles into classroom practice. Beyond the encouraging teacher feedback suggested in the data, there is a need to be inquisitive about the teaching/learning processes that were taking place in the OBE classroom context. How are the teachers coping with the new curriculum approach? How are the prescribed learning outcomes dealt with? Have they been broken down into teachable learning materials, and employed in various strategies? How effective are teaching and learning? There were a myriad of questions that need exploring. OBE has added to the challenge of aligning

espoused theories and theory-in-practice discussed previously. However, for lack of information, the teaching/learning processes involved in the existing OBE classroom could not be discussed.

The situated nature of this study warrants reflection on UGG's national context. There is a need to be mindful of issues surrounding OBE in the literature and to reflect this against the Malaysian backdrop. This can illuminate issues relevant to UGG. One of the major issues in OBE is the *mile-wide/inch-deep* issue. OBE learning outcomes has been criticised by OBE opponents, to be vague and broad (Berlach, 2004; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Berlach & O'Neill, 2008; Brady, 1996; Donnelly, 2007). The argument is that there is a wide range of personal and professional skills to be developed in order to prepare graduates better for the challenges in the real world of work. The Malaysian context reveals these situations although there is lack of acknowledgement of them by existing studies on OBE by Malaysian researchers (for example, Mansor et al., 2008; Mohammad et al., 2008; Zaharim et al., 2006).

As points of reference, the Engineering Accreditation Council of Malaysia outlined 10 engineering graduate attributes while the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) listed seven learning outcomes on their websites (Board of Engineers Malaysia, 2010; Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2011). MQA's OBE training workshop conducted for higher education providers include a consideration of learning outcomes at different levels that are complex and inter-related. They include programme educational objectives (PEO), programme outcomes (PO), course outcomes (CO), the Ministry of Higher Education's prescription of soft skills (LOKI), and MQA's three academic learning domains (ALD) comprising Bloom's Taxonomy's cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning domains (Abdul Talib, 2012). Further, there are variations of OBE model frameworks as higher education institutions in Malaysia are given the liberty to innovate, giving rise to lack of streamlined practices. Indeed, the Malaysian scenario confirms what the critics have pointed out – that the OBE approach tries to cover too many learning outcomes which are all integrated and complex (Donnelly, 2007; Kennedy, 2011).

The recent *Tenth Malaysia Plan* report lack of graduate soft skills such as positive work ethics, communications, teamwork, decision making and leadership skills (Economic Planning Unit, 2010, p. 215). Similarly, numerous studies in other countries reported outcomes of OBE that lacked generic competencies such as communication skills, critical thinking, professional and ethical responsibilities and life skills (Chak, 2011; Chan & Chan, 2009; Collins, 2008; Lombard & Grosser, 2008; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007). However, instead of strengthening mechanisms to investigate the underlying pedagogical issues and enhance the quality of OBE

teaching and learning, the next step forward contained in the *Tenth Malaysia Plan*, as mentioned in Chapter One, was to strengthen vocational and technical skills, further emphasising focus on outcomes and industry training needs. Two major pedagogical issues need reflecting.

The mile-wide/inch-deep issue also concerns the lack of focus on deep knowledge exploration as it gives way to a broad area of micro-managed learning outcomes (Berlach, 2004; Brady, 1996). Going back to UGG contexts provides insights into possible teaching/learning dilemma. Teachers at UGG were found to be very concerned about content knowledge and effective communication of it, attributed to their science, mathematics and technical majors. The researcher empathises with the teachers' concerns as these discipline majors not only require the delivery of content in its authorised form (Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2007), but also has the potential for creative explorations and imaginative discoveries of conceptual transformations and applications (Berlach, 2004; Brady, 1996; Donnelly, 2007). The latter is what the teachers needed assistance with since their perspectives other than transmission-based had not been enhanced to great pedagogic effects. OBE added more teaching/learning issues to cope with.

The nature of OBE itself, that emphasises the development of both knowledge and personal skills, puts OBE at the crossroads between constructivist approaches and behaviourist pedagogy (Kennedy, 2011). How can the teachers at UGG, and at other higher learning institutions in Malaysia, be helped effectively with managing the tension between developing knowledge and personal skills? Collaborative group projects might provide answers for incidental development of personal skills (Walther & Radcliffe, 2007) but as found in the data, they lacked proper facilitation essential in the OBE setting (McGhie, 2008; Rompelman, 2000). The teachers have yet to embrace their teacher roles other than to transmit accurate knowledge. How can they be helped to move from content-focused teaching to more student-focused teaching (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003; Trigwell & Prosser, 2003; Trigwell et al., 1994; Trigwell et al., 1999)? MQA's and most Malaysian higher education websites displayed OBE training workshops and focus on student-centred learning theories and strategies (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2012; Universiti Teknologi MARA, 2012). The reality of the situation is that higher education institutions like UGG are still faced with pedagogical constraints like large classes, poor student quality and lack of teaching/learning facilities and resources (particularly with the use of technology in teaching). Teachers are inclined to resort to lecture-based teaching in such mass education contexts, especially if they are not equipped with a variety of teaching/learning strategies, as well as to use them strategically and effectively (Entwistle & Walker, 2002; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Trigwell & Prosser, 2003).

OBE assessment practices need discussion. Alignment between student-centred activities, assessment formats and intended learning outcomes is emphasized (Biggs & Tang, 2007). For lack of information, the questions remains, to what extent do the assessment practices at UGG reflect the intended learning outcomes? UGG teachers' discordant teaching perspectives shed some light on an institutional ethos that influences assessment practices /possible constraints in teaching and assessment practices. Although the teachers predominantly saw themselves as facilitators and instructors, in teaching, they placed equal emphasis on content and a role model emphasis on theory-practice relationships. Interestingly, in gauging learning, they held perspectives consistent to facilitator's and role model roles. They preferred a demonstration of skills and creativity on a variety of coursework projects and skills demonstration in application-type assessments like product-based projects. These findings are restricted to teachers' perceptions but do not shed light on actual implementation and the influence of institutional ethos. What can be deduced is that the teachers' perspectives on teaching and assessment are aligned with OBE requirements.

Criticisms of OBE assessment practices that evolve around deeper issues of innovative and effective assessment of graduate attributes (Hughes & Barrie, 2010; Kennedy, 2011; Rompelman, 2000) and broader concerns for systemic factors that impact on them (Hughes & Barrie, 2010; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007) need to be heeded. Malaysian research on OBE teaching/learning like Mansor et al.'s (2008) and Zaharim et al.'s (2006) are commended. However, it is necessary to take a more pedagogical perspective that critically reflects on pertinent issues in OBE teaching/learning practices discussed thus far. The current state of competency gap in Malaysia needs to be rectified in evidence-based pedagogical practices, beyond focus on graduate attributes and meeting stakeholders' interests. The following section discusses the role of the institutional context in enhancing quality teaching. References to OBE are made where appropriate.

6. 2 Constraints on and support for quality teaching

Constraints on quality teaching identified in the findings are academics' time constraints that are mainly attributed to quality assurance activities, poor student quality, physical conditions like large class sizes, and the lack of multimedia facilities. Support for quality teaching also exists, some recently introduced under the institutional quality assurance framework. These include OBE curriculum design, student evaluation of teaching, some formal and informal avenues for teaching and learning discussions, and staff development courses. More recently introduced support like Peer Observation of Teaching and Inbound/Outbound Teaching

Collaboration has yet to take root. Ways to remove existing constraints and to improve support are now discussed.

6.2.1 There is a need to provide a more supportive and conducive environment for quality teaching within the institutional quality systems

The teachers found time taken with institutional quality-related activities was the major constraint on quality teaching. The quality activities were influenced by the institutional pursuit for world class status. Therefore, the need for a more conducive environment that supports quality teaching is discussed with particular reference to quality-led changes at UGG.

The interviewed teachers reported that a big portion of their time and energy was spent on quality-related activities. This included being a member of various committees, preparing documents, entertaining reviewers' visits and participating in quality-related events or celebrations. Document analysis showed that many institutional quality initiatives and committees at UGG were running concurrently. The survey results confirmed this with committee tasks identified most frequently as a constraint on quality teaching. Benchmarking review visits and other events related to quality activities were frequent, and mostly required the involvement of all academic staff. Despite the institutional manager's good intentions to delegate administrative workload equally among the academics, this was not always the case and was not always manageable for some. Overall, the interviewed teachers felt that their time at work could have been better spent on preparations for teaching and quality, as well as doing research to improve teaching.

This situation echoes the experience of other countries and universities that had implemented quality assurance in higher education, particularly in the Western world. Quality assurance in higher education had been dubbed as a "culture of compliance", "bureaucratic", "managerial", and linked with control (Anderson, 2006; Blackmore, 2004; Harvey, 1998; Hodson & Thomas, 2003; Laughton, 2003). Similar situations were described where teachers were left with little choice but to become what Brennan and Shah (2000) called the "foot soldiers" in mobilising quality assurance efforts (p. 345). It "deflects academics away from time that could be better spent ironically, on teaching and researching" (Blackmore, 2004, pp. 390-391). Interview data revealed that administrative work could reach up to 70 percent of one teacher's working hours. The extent of commitment expected of the academics in fulfilling their multiple roles could sometimes go beyond working hours and encroach into family time. Blackmore (2004) noted this consequence of a quality-context institution,

Quality assurance has not only changed the rules of the games at work, it also alters work-home relations with its invasive demands on time and energy requiring the re-ordering of home life, where personal relationships came off second best (p. 391).

The above scenario is one of several sources of low teacher morale. Data revealed that low teacher morale can indirectly impact on the quality of one's teaching as his or her motivation in teaching is affected. As one teacher said, *"my motivation has dropped... the zest in me... Now [teaching] is just another chore"* (Luqman, li. 1056 – 1060). Other sources of low teacher morale are inconsistencies and autonomy in grading and the lack of freedom of expression. These issues could be linked to what Biggs (2001) called "distorted priorities" in quality-led institutions where imbalanced attention is given to various elements in the academic institution and practices (p. 234). The academics' time devoted to quality activities coupled with low teacher morale suggest that some academics are 'alienated' within the quality systems - that the institution prioritise quality compliance over academic welfare to the detriment of teaching motivation and teaching quality.

Data has also shown how the institution's key performance indicators place more emphasis on customer satisfaction and quality processes than teaching and research. As noted by one survey participant, *"We (the academic staff) are expected to do EVERYTHING... we end up doing things for the university and not for our own individual growth"* (Survey respondent 51, Q.18). It resulted in what Watty (2003) terms "role conflict" where a teacher is expected to play roles that are in conflict with his or her value systems and academic principles. As a result, the institution's well-meaning intentions in enhancing quality teaching through a systematised quality assurance framework are received with mixed reactions ranging from passive conforming to active resistance (Anderson, 2006; Laughton, 2003; Watty, 2003). This was also found in both the interview and the survey data. Some displayed an optimistic view; some were more reluctant to see the positive side, while some clearly expressed anger at the institution's over-emphasis on quality initiatives. These reactions are understandable since the teachers' primary concern for teaching and learning reportedly had to give in to quality activities to the point of cancelling and re-scheduling classes. With most of their time devoted to quality efforts, they were indirectly required to give teaching a lower priority.

Distorted priorities that did not do justice to teaching were also seen in other aspects of institutional contexts. Evidence in the survey show that research was seen as more important than teaching by some. Publications in high impact factor journals and obtaining research grants were often cited. The institutional goals and quality indicators placed more emphasis on research more than teaching. Further, the opportunity for quality teaching was also constrained by inadequate material provisions and physical conditions that included large class sizes, poor

student quality and lack of multimedia facilities. These constraints to teaching can be attributed to the massification of higher education as business industry, reduced expenditure, poor use of resources and profit-driven student expansion (Findlay & Tierney, 2010; Gnanam, 2002; Mok, 2000; Morshidi et al., 2010), referred to as an issue of “juggling competitive agendas” typically faced by a university facing the challenges of globalisation, international competition and quality assurance (M. Robertson, 2002, p. 273).

On a more positive note, there was a variety of support and opportunities to enhance quality teaching already incorporated into the quality systems. OBE had been identified as the curriculum approach that provided a structured framework for teaching. Student evaluation of teachers and peer observation of teaching were existing mechanisms to evaluate teaching. Professional development courses and workshops, and UGG Conference of Teaching and Learning were among the teacher development programmes provided to enhance teaching. Immediate managers’ support with matters pertaining to teaching was also reported.

Finally, the teachers’ and the institution’s perceptions overall quality directions were found to be similar although heavily inclined towards research development. Despite some teachers’ negative comments about the institution’s quality initiatives, most of them understood that the quality direction was heading towards realising its vision to become a “premier university”. Perceptions of OBE as the direction for quality teaching were also aligned. Although OBE was yet to be widely-implemented at the time of the research, many teachers at UGG already showed an understanding of quality teaching that needs to account for stakeholders’ needs and meeting national goals. Watty (2003) notes that aligned perceptions between the academics and the institutions was crucial to bring about “transformative potentials” (p. 213). UGG seemed to have established a consensus with its quality goals. However, voices of resistance cannot be ignored. Distorted priorities that failed to support quality teaching need to be rectified. The following discusses the need to integrate and align the above existing support.

6.2.2 There is a need to align support for quality teaching with OBE-based institutional goals

This section looks at how the institution’s OBE curriculum approach requires aligned support for quality teaching including mechanisms for evaluating teaching and provisions for professional development.

Student evaluation of teaching is discussed first. Both the survey and the interview data show that the teachers were not receiving feedback that is helpful enough to improve teaching. The standard student evaluation questionnaire only comprised multi-choice answers that produced

numeric results. There was no section for open-ended student feedback. This approach to evaluation of teaching reinforce the idea that teaching is an on-stage performance that can be reduced to a technical activity, failing to capture insightful feedback, as well as the multi-dimensional and complex nature of teaching (MacFarlane, 2007; Rowley, 2003; Skelton, 2005). Also, one interviewed teacher revealed, the teaching evaluation feedback was only returned to the teachers in his department during a staff appraisal exercise. Although this might have been an isolated case, the existence of such practice defeated the purpose of the evaluation itself which was supposed to help the teachers improve their teaching methods, rather than merely being a performance indicator for staff assessment. Roche and Marsh (2000) point out that outcomes of teaching evaluation can be damaging to teachers' self-concept if they are not assisted with the interpretation of results and directions for improvement. There needs to be constructive and prompt feedback. Follow-up programmes are necessary.

Peer observation of teaching, recently introduced, was not a standard practice across the university. Where practised, misuse and abuse of the system was reported. There was opportunity for teachers to take a shortcut by observing teaching for a period of time shorter than stipulated. Feedback discussion was not critically and genuinely dealt with. It was more of 'paying lip service' - a bureaucratic chore performed to adhere to the quality systems. Shortland (2004) reports that peer observation of teaching executed under a quality assurance framework could sometimes be a mere "knee-jerk response" (p. 277). After review sessions, this impetus for improvement fades away despite its tremendous potential. Reported in the interview was that when peer observation was suggested at UGG, reactions were mixed. Some welcomed the opportunity of having someone observe his or her teaching and genuinely discuss ways to enhance it, providing that the feedback was not used in staff appraisal. There was also resistance for fear of unfair judgment and unsettling invasion of personal teaching space. Indeed, peer observation of teaching can be highly judgmental and biased, making it hard to come to an agreement in feedback discussions (Courneya, Pratt, & Collins, 2008; Shortland, 2004, p. 224). In short, both of these mechanisms for evaluating teaching have their own shortcomings that need to be addressed.

Considerations for improvement also need to go to a deeper level. OBE elements should be reflected in the teaching evaluation tools. D'Andrea and Gosling's (2005) argue, "Innovation is not a good in itself. Change is not necessarily for the better" (p. 34). Higher education institutions need to recognise its teaching/learning philosophies that underpin efforts in educational enhancement. If OBE is the chosen curriculum model for quality enhancement of UGG's educational programmes, what values does the institution hold with regards to teaching/learning approaches and assessment methods? Data show a *Teaching and Learning*

Policy that contain 15 attributes of the academic staff related to effective teaching but only one contained obvious elements of OBE. It states that an effective academic staff “*demonstrates clearly the linkage between teaching, learning outcomes and student assessment*” (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2009, p. 6) but how this is supported and upheld is not apparent in the other attributes.

In addition, data show institutional goals that lack recognition of the importance of teaching. Instead, the vision/mission statements focus on learning and research. Key performance indicators for the institution show that customer satisfaction and quality processes take priority over research. This is an implicit institutional ethos that underlies the institution’s understanding of teaching excellence – that it takes lower priority to students, research and quality services. An institution’s implicit perception of teaching excellence manifests itself in its systems framework, which affects the way teaching is dealt with at the institution (D’Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Skelton, 2005; Tennant et al., 2010). Both the student evaluation of teachers and peer observation of teaching represented the institution’s underlying belief that teaching can be reduced to technical skills – “as if it were a craft rather than a profession and as if ‘best practice’ were unproblematic, simply a matter of following rules and prescriptions” (Tennant et al., 2010, p. 23). Such a view is performative (Skelton, 2007). It implies that teaching can be predicted, controlled and measured. With its numerical scores and shallow feedback, the existing teaching evaluation tools and practices at UGG neglect the need to broaden perspectives on teaching. The lack of open-ended student feedback and genuine peer review discussions suggests that these mechanisms have not captured the “supercomplexities” of teaching (Skelton, 2005) or even encouraged teachers to embrace “paradoxes” in day-to-day practice (Palmer, 2007).

The message the institution implies is that there are set standards to follow and that there is a correct way of teaching – the OBE way. Yet the OBE teaching/learning in classrooms is not investigated into in the student evaluation questionnaire as the questionnaire reportedly lacked OBE elements. A performative view of teaching misses the opportunity to acknowledge that there are no simple solutions to teaching problems and that teaching and learning processes comprise intangible concepts such as the quality of human interaction, the quality of student thinking or even the quality of learning students experienced. UGG might benefit from a more psychologised and sociological view of teaching excellence that focused on teaching/learning transactions and contextual considerations (Skelton, 2007). It would shift the focus away from the end product, i.e. OBE outcomes and stakeholders’ interests, and instead focus more on things that matter in the teaching/learning processes.

Another quality strategy that needs to be looked into is professional development. Professional development programmes attuned to OBE were not apparent in the findings. The major provider of professional development courses – the Department of Pedagogical Training – provided more generic teaching support aimed at beginner teachers. The survey shows mixed opinions with regards to relevant staff training and teacher development courses. Meanwhile, the few mentions of OBE workshops found in the interviews referred to faculty provision rather provision by a central unit. This further highlights the lack of aligned strategies. The fact that the teachers had issues with aligning their thinking with their teaching strategies calls for teacher development courses that focus on constructive alignment of the curriculum instruction (Biggs & Tang, 2007). There is a need for pedagogical experts in the Department of Pedagogical Training to expose teachers to pedagogical theories and concepts advocated in this study; to employ a variety of strategies that supported their multiple teaching perspectives.

OBE teaching is more than just about cross-matching various levels of graduate attributes, Bloom's academic learning domains and teaching/learning methods. It is about achieving all these in an integrative and incidental manner during the course of teaching and learning (Walther & Radcliffe, 2007). It requires a sophisticated conception of teaching that embraces learner-focused considerations in teaching, appreciates the impact of contextual factors and strategic teaching/learning decisions and celebrates the idea of various legitimate teaching perspectives. Last but not the least, it calls for systemic support that promotes quality teaching within these central themes (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005). The following section discusses the enhancement of professional development programmes that promotes the said themes.

6.2.3 There is a need to strengthen professional development

Interview data and document analysis revealed that professional development courses at UGG were provided by various sources and were not streamlined. At the time of research, the Department of Pedagogical Training (DPT) was a newly-form unit entrusted to provide professional development courses to the whole university. Apart from little recognition of OBE elements in DPT's programme design, its induction programme for beginner teachers were also found to be overlapping at faculty level. If what the faculties were providing was no different from or was better than what the central unit (DPT) was offering, then DPT programmes would be irrelevant.

Uptake of DPT courses was reported as poor. This was attributed to poor teacher attitude towards professional development evident in the interview findings. For the experienced teachers, their impression was that DPT courses were designed for beginner teachers. There were also other one-off courses provided for other teachers but these were not appealing

enough for many experienced teachers as the courses were too short to be effective. The survey revealed divided opinions about the opportunity to participate in *quality* courses that helped them develop disciplinary knowledge and expertise. Opinions on teacher training courses were also mixed. These findings indicate that the existing professional development courses might not have met the teachers' needs and wants. Also, general attitudes towards professional development as a method to improve teaching were poor. Teacher development courses and formal teacher training were the least preferred ways to improve teaching compared to having industry and teaching experience and doing research.

Poor uptake of DPT programmes was attributed to time constraints at work and meeting institutional demands for involvement in quality-related activities, apart from the lack of interest in one-off workshops. Indeed, academics' multiple roles and the need to prioritise had been acknowledged by some research writers (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Radloff, 2005). Chalmers and O'Brien (2005) note,

Academic staff are under great time and pressures to research, teach and carry out administrative duties and so while participating in development activities might be 'good to do', when time is scarce, these activities tend to be the first to be sacrificed (p. 61).

Therefore, there is a need to strengthen professional development at UGG in a way that makes the academics see the programmes as an important support for quality teaching that have a lot to offer. Ideally, they should see them as relevant to their needs and as worth the time spent on amidst their busy day-to-day schedules.

An over-arching theme that is central to this study is expanding teaching conceptions. It was argued in Chapter Two that developing a repertoire of teaching techniques and improving teacher thinking should go hand-in-hand. In UGG's context, the researcher argues that the immediate need is to influence teacher thinking before any methods could work (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Light & Calkins, 2008; Norton et al., 2005; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996, 2003). This is because a teacher's intentions, motives and deep seated beliefs influence their teaching approaches. The researcher argues that a well-developed understanding of teacher and learner roles, contextual influences, the nature of teacher-student relationships and the way knowledge was constructed can make substantial changes in teaching (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996). As highlighted by Trigwell, Prosser and Taylor (1994),

As long as teaching staff hold transmission intentions in teaching, suggesting student-focused strategies will be a futile and misunderstood pursuit (p. 83)

Research had proven that professional development that worked on changing conceptions sustained over a period of time was successful in changing teacher-focused teaching to student-focused teaching (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). One of the desirable aims of teaching was to promote deep approaches to learning argued to lead to learning that was more meaningful and made much better sense to students compared to mere understanding (Trigwell & Prosser, 2003, 2004). The aim of good teaching established earlier in this chapter was to make qualitative changes to students' thinking rather than quantitative addition of knowledge (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). This requires sophisticated conceptions and expanded awareness (Entwistle & Walker, 2002). Freeing the teachers' mind from the confinement of predominantly transmission teaching perspectives and enhancing their other potential perspectives should be immediate concerns for UGG professional developers. Programmes that were systematically-structured and sustained were the key (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Kanuka, 2010; Radloff, 2005). Taking into account existing support at UGG, it would be wise to begin from what the faculties and the teachers had and enhance the provisions in line with what they needed.

To start with, interview data revealed that courses provided for beginner teachers were to do with developing delivery techniques and personal image as a teacher – promoting surface level perceptions of teaching as teacher performance. Input and exposure provided to teachers at the beginning of their career was crucial and timely before they were assimilated into traditional ways of teaching (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). While varieties of teaching techniques and strategies are also necessary in teaching well (Eley, 2006; Hativa & Goodyear, 2002; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007), they should not be the only focus. From the start, beginner teachers at UGG need exposure to the interlocked concepts of teaching and learning (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). They need to understand the impact of what they do on students' learning experiences, approaches and outcomes. Then they can be exposed to the theories of levels of university teaching in order to understand what meaningful learning entailed. Constructivist approaches to teaching and learning can help develop a more student-focused conception of teaching/learning (Slavin, 2012). At the same time, they also need to appreciate multiple perspectives in teaching and learn how to enhance them to great pedagogical effects (Pratt, 1998, 2002).

The group at the other end of the experience scale were professors who generally did not see the major need to be trained. While there were evidence of awareness that student profile and higher education contexts have changed radically, these professors need to be convinced that their teaching experience alone does not necessarily make one a better teacher and is not enough to solve new problems (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Hattie, 2002; Marsh, 2007; Wolters

& Daugherty, 2007). Having established habits of the mind teaching conceptions for this group of teachers may be the hardest ones to influence. However, their involvement in professional development programmes is necessary so that they too can have the opportunity to renew or revise their understanding on teaching/learning and be exposed to new and novel ways to teach. To honour their academic positions UGG their contribution can involve the sharing of their knowledge, experiences and expertise while at the same time, giving them the chance to gain fresh perspectives from newer faculty members.

As for the teachers in the middle range of experience, their foregrounded concern was to know how well they had been teaching and what other experienced teachers thought of it. Improving and enhancing the pre-existing tools for teaching evaluation student evaluation of teaching and peer review of teaching are already discussed. Follow-up with the appropriate remedial programmes is essential because often, teachers are concerned about improving their teaching but do not know how to do so and where to begin (Budge et al., 2007; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). The needs outlined for beginner teachers could work just as well for the more experienced ones – targeted on enhancing teaching conceptions while simultaneously developing their repertoire of teaching techniques.

The role of DPT as a central unit in the institution is emphasised by the author of this study. At the time of research, DPT was a department bound to faculty jurisdictions. This resulted in overlapping provisions with other faculties, as well as divided focus between teaching and administrative work for DPT's staff. Findings from one of the institutional managers revealed plans for centralisation of the teaching and learning unit which is fully-supported by this researcher. The idea is apt and timely with UGG's needs to enhance quality teaching.

Professional development that is provided by a centralised unit is argued to be the most effective structure for the enhancement of teaching and learning (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005). This is because a central unit is in a better position to facilitate both top-down and bottom-up initiatives to teaching-learning enhancement; top-down in becoming a “dynamic conduit” to help mobilise institutional agenda at the grass root level, and bottom-up as in investigating and collecting grass root level information to feed into institutional improvement efforts (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005, p. 52). A central unit will be in a good position to work with the “all-powerful middle levels” (Kanuka, 2010, p. 76) such as faculty Deans who make decisions about teachers' activities, as well as related heads of non-academic departments who are in the position to compromise with professional development activities. If and when the idea materialises DPT as a central unit can have a “bird's-eye view” on matters and devise a more holistic approach (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Kanuka, 2010, p. 76). A decentralised approach

is no less useful. Teacher development programmes offered at faculty level are also encouraged for immediate relevance to faculty needs (Radloff, 2005). It is important that DPT work alongside these provisions, keeping track of what is offered outside the centre.

Often, a centralised professional development becomes ineffective due to disintegrated and short term strategies (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Fraser, 2005b). Kanuka's (2010) four characteristics of an effective teaching and learning centre are useful. Firstly, knowing how to be strategic is crucial. As an independent centre, it is important to recognise its own power to influence institutional policies and to make an impact of its work. Establishing relationships with stakeholders and the institutional management is important. Secondly, is to use a multi-layered approach or to make its activities "strategically embedded" (Wisker, 2006). It is important to create a web of linkages among the centre's activities and other institutional quality framework such as the evaluations of teaching, reward system for teaching and research programmes including funding for pedagogical research. A point of reference is a five-phase programme at Griffith University, Australia that combines teachers' self-evaluation, peer review of teaching, evidence of student learning and feedback of student experience and connects them with professional development (Smith, 2008).

Kanuka's (2010) third and fourth principle of an effective teaching centre are to know how to get work done and to be responsive to pressures and changing demands. The researcher stresses establishing the centre's presence. Given DPT's reputation as a department that operated far removed from faculty needs, establishing a long term and sustainable relationship with the academics is crucial. It is important to establish a collegial relationship with departments and faculties. This is so that the centre can provide consultation and advice in a friendly manner, establishing trust and consider being invited into the teachers' "private teaching spaces" (Budge et al., 2007; Kanuka, 2010, p. 8). Finally it is important to be responsive to constant forces of change (Kanuka, 2010, pp. 78-79). UGG's quality assurance contexts, market-oriented goals and heavy emphasis on research can undermine support for teaching. Professional developers must not lose faith in its programmes. Sustained provision is the key. In being responsive to changes, it is important to not fight against the current but to find ways to work alongside it.

Finally, teachers should be encouraged to reflect on and talk about teaching (Light & Calkins, 2008; Skelton, 2005). They need to play an active role in developing ideas on quality teaching. They need to become agents of change who actively seek better understanding of their own practices and find ways to improve them (Skelton, 2007). The following section discusses support for investigating teaching.

6.2.4 There is a need to address the imbalance between teaching and research and to recognise the worth of scholarly research

With regards to distorted priorities and unaligned strategies discussed in earlier sections, there is a serious imbalance at UGG among the three major academic functions: services, teaching and research. Involvement in quality-related activities was demanding teachers' major contribution of time towards services or quality-related administrative work although the teachers did not see them as important. With regards to teaching and research, whilst acknowledging their moral responsibility in teaching, the teachers' concern for doing research (mainly in the discipline) was also prominent in both the teacher interviews and the survey. Some teachers saw doing research as not only an opportunity but a necessity to update themselves with knowledge and keep up with current industry needs. To improve teaching, the surveyed teachers preferred doing research to participating in teacher development courses and formal teacher training. Further, the teachers' perceptions of research were very much discipline-based. In their contribution to the institutional goal to be a world premier university, they cited publications in high impact factor journals, obtaining research grants and generating as well as preserving knowledge. There was no indication of awareness for the need to research their teaching practices in the survey.

There may be a strong influence of institutional ethos and its underlying values inherent in the way these teachers conceived their academic roles, purposes and practices (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Skelton, 2005; Tennant et al., 2010). Differential status between teaching and research at UGG is implicit in the way it built its existing quality framework. In the UGG10 strategic work plan, teaching is placed under the "service excellence" theme while "research excellence" is a theme in its own right. It is telling evidence of the institution's emphasis on research compared to teaching. Further, teaching takes up a smaller proportion, compared to research, as one of the institution's sub-initiatives among its many strategic thrusts (Department of Organisational Planning, 2007). The implicit second-rate value placed on teaching is also evident in the institutional key performance indicator that place publication as a measure of a conducive teaching and learning environment. This is a typical scenario of a university in the globalised world that is in pursuit of world ranking (Biggs, 2001; Blackmore, 2004; J. Taylor, 2007). Coupled with quality assurance system as a mechanism to achieve world ranking, and combined with research productivity as a new-age commodity (Chapman & Austin, 2002) research is an observable measure of output for education excellence. It is an activity of "greater prestige" (Biggs, 2001, p. 234) while teaching remains undervalued and is treated as the "poor cousin of research" (Lim, 2001, p. 31; J. Taylor, 2007).

There is a need to redress existing imbalances so that teaching enhancement can find a considerable space in the teachers' academic functions and in the institutional quality context. In the teachers' contribution to institutional goals, although words related to teaching was mentioned slightly more, teaching was mentioned in relation to preparing students for the workforce. The students were referred to as "customers" and the teachers' job is to provide them with knowledge so that they can "make their mark in the industry" (Survey respondents 27 and 57, Q.18). It is noted that the focus on teaching might have been influenced by the survey context. Nevertheless, the findings illustrate the teachers' perceptions of teaching as to satisfy market needs while research is discipline and content-oriented. There is also an implicit suggestion that teaching is to provide service to students. The institution's strategic plan placed teaching under "service excellence" (Department of Organisational Planning, 2007).

The cause for concern here is that UGG's market-oriented perspective on teaching has the tendency to promote purposes of education that are far removed from human connections. Instead, it tends to promote teaching as any other business industries – to satisfy customers and that the teachers are merely providing a business service. Teaching is treated as an end in itself rather than a means to an end. Houston (2002) argues that such corporate orientation in university education fails to acknowledge a university's moral obligation to developing students' growth and serving the society at large. Writing from the perspective of New Zealand higher education, he states,

Universities are different and complex organisations. Uncritical impositions and acceptance of concepts from the corporate world poses a threat to the purpose and values of NZ universities and could have implications for academic quality (Houston, 2002, p. 4)

Teachers at UGG saw doing research as one of the important ways to improve teaching. By doing research, they felt that their deeper understanding of the subject-matter can be passed on to students through teaching. While this is true to a certain extent, it is possible to develop discipline-based research and knowledge in the field without developing teaching skills to teach the expanded knowledge effectively. There is a need to promote the investigation of teaching practices at UGG. The teachers' and the institution's high regard for research and its relation to teaching enhancement is a good starting point for which to develop research in teaching.

Currently, higher education institutions in the Western world are actively engaged in an ongoing debate on the scholarship of teaching (SoTL) – a meeting point that brings together teaching and research (Healey, 2000, 2005b; Healey & Jenkins, 2003). The scholarship of teaching is a discourse in its own merit and issues are many, including issues on institutionalising the concept and its impact on teaching excellence (Boshier, 2009; Haigh et al., 2011; Vardi & Quin, 2011).

Its mention here is not as a simple answer to help teachers cope with their multiple academic functions, neither is it a simple solution to address teaching-research imbalance. Rather, it could be considered by the professional development centre at UGG as a mechanism to help operationalise the idea of developing learner-focused teaching conceptions.

Many researchers have linked the development of learner-focused teaching conceptions with scholarly approach to professional development (Budge et al., 2007; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Light & Calkins, 2008). The essence of scholarly teaching highlighted here is its value in promoting reflection and inquiry into one's own teaching while at the same time, appreciating teachers' interest in their own disciplines. It is the author's view that one of the first things for the newly established professional development centre to consider is to develop the culture of reflecting and talking about teaching (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; MacKenzie et al., 2010). Interview data revealed that at UGG, teaching was taking place behind closed doors; not critically and seriously discussed except for casual chats about the course. It is a business too personal for some that peer observation of teaching was not welcomed. That some interviewed teachers were struggling to understand why their students were not learning well was a silent cry for help. It was important to help the teachers realise that other teachers had their teaching issues too and that their issues might very well be similar. Casual chats could be turned into critical reflections (Lueddeke, 2003).

It would be wise to begin with developing 'learning communities' where teachers remained in their discipline-based groups but were encouraged to talk about teaching issues and ideas specific to their areas of specialisation (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Fund, 2010; Healey, 2000, 2005b; Healey & Jenkins, 2003; MacKenzie et al., 2010). Crucial are theoretical and conceptual ideas in education in order to give them the language to talk about teaching (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005) and to provide them with "objects of critical reflection" when thinking about their own teaching contexts (Pratt, 2002, p. 14). Professional developers play a pivotal role in providing pedagogical perspectives and input, and at the same time encourage the teachers to give meaning to learning theories and concepts by situating them in their own context of practices (Prosser, 2008). The OBE context of teaching and learning should be recognised. As noted by Patrick and Lines (2005), "... whatever the discipline- and profession-shaped ways of conceptualising and speaking about teaching and learning are, they need to be noticed, respected and made visible in the practice of curriculum change (p. 45)". OBE provides an excellent base for scholarly explorations.

To further develop from talking about teaching, SoTL models practiced by other institutions might be borrowed and adapted to suit UGG context (Fund, 2010; MacKenzie et al., 2010;

Walker et al., 2008). To suit the purpose of reflecting and talking about teaching, it is sufficient that outcomes of scholarly investigations be disseminated within the institution boundary as a start. Local public medium such as institution-level online forums, faculty websites, news bulletins, as well as professional development workshops and internal publications are some potential platforms for sharing (Kreber, 2002).

Finally, UGG annual “Conference on Teaching Learning” revealed in the teacher and manager interviews is an excellent ready-made platform to complement scholarly research efforts. It allows a “trading zone among disciplines” (Huber & Morreale, 2002, p. 19) cited in (Walker et al., 2008, p. 185) and is a potential training ground for teaching scholarship. Some OBE-based investigations were identified in the conference book (Department of Pedagogical Training, 2008), while some other topics were heavily inclined towards disciplinary research. As previously mentioned, a more pedagogical perspective on OBE research is necessary to critically examine the lack of graduate competence in the Malaysian industry scenario. Professional developers play a vital role in maximising the opportunities for enhancing quality teaching provided by the existing support at UGG.

The author stresses that the main purpose of introducing scholarly teaching at UGG ought to be to develop a culture of talking seriously and critically about teaching. Considering the institution’s lack of emphasis on teaching enhancement in comparison to research, the focus of the scholarship of teaching at UGG should be to promote inquiry into and reflection on teaching, rather than to force scholarly publications to compete with disciplinary research for recognition of status. Change needs to be gradual. The impact of scholarship on teaching practice should not be expected in a short period of time. It is important that the culture of scholarship be built in an on-going manner; sustained for a period of time (Fraser, 2005b). Patrick and Lines (2005) note,

...the organisation needs to have a commitment to the kind of change it desires; it must not lose its nerve and demand that these changes happen too quickly or without the requisite investment of time for change to be initiated and take root and for its impact to be revealed. Pressure for fast results undermines the change process (p. 36).

Publications in high impact factor scholarly journals could follow suit once the culture of scholarly research was established. Funding and merits for scholarly research could be built into the institutional framework to promote its value (Vardi & Quin, 2011; Walker et al., 2008).

As a final thought to this section, teaching deserves more recognition than the status quo at UGG. A more pedagogical perspective at the management level would help ensure that quality

teaching is given a respectful position in the overall quality framework. A business-driven higher education institution that lacks genuine commitment to teaching and learning is unlikely to flourish as the academics' and the society's faith in its educational value may fade. As pointed out by Senge (1990, in Patrick & Lines, 2005), part of being committed to quality in education is to have a personal sense of care and to have one's own vision. "If you sign up for someone else's vision, you will get compliance and not commitment" (Senge, 1990 in Patrick & Lines, 2005, p. 34).

6.3 Challenges in coping with international trends and critical adaptation of Western ideas

Various issues in perceptions of quality teaching and UGG's institutional constraints on and support for it have been discussed. Since most of the theories, concepts and practices referred to in the study originate from the Western literature, their suitability to the Asian context is called into question. Issues in adopting Western ideas need to be recognised in order to critically examine to what extent the solutions discussed above are workable in the case context. Once these issues are identified, the extent to which these Western theories, concepts and practices are adaptable to local contexts can be explored. Further, the case study institution is bound to national policies and aspirations, as well as affected by higher education trends in the Asian region. These wider contexts are external forces that pose challenges for the institution when making institutional transformations. It is thus important to be sensitive to these wider contextual influences, in order to appreciate the institution's and the nation's struggle in striking a balance between making quality improvement efforts and meeting international market demands.

In Chapter One, the Malaysian higher education setting was illustrated with particular reference to national goals and world market forces. It was understood from the outset that the Malaysian higher education was undergoing rapid expansion in response to globalisation, namely internationalisation, massification, and diversification (Bloom, 2005; Jones et al., 2005; Scott, 2005; Singh, 2002; Tierney, 2010; Van Damme, 2002). Consequently, like many other countries, Malaysia has established a national quality assurance system for higher education in order to keep up with international standards and quality practices. One direct effect of international benchmarking standards is the positioning of the nation's higher education institutions among the top lists of university world ranking (Mok, 2000; Murdoch, 2005). However, with limited resources, expertise, and different values, such global competition can be a struggle for developing countries (Findlay & Tierney, 2010; Gnanam, 2002; Mok, 2000). The higher education sector in countries like Laos, Mongolia, China and Africa, were fighting continuous "fierce battles" to find the right balance between managing local resources and

meeting global demands (Chapman & Austin, 2002, p. 14) with many issues similar to Malaysia's.

One of the 'fierce battles' faced by the developing nation such as Malaysia is to compete in the world market when the nation itself is struggling to keep up with international standards. In Malaysia's aspiration to become a fully-industrialised country by the year 2020, developing and changing focus in its strategic plans demonstrate strong pressures to respond to foreign forces (Economic Planning Unit, 2006, 2010; Economic Planning Unit & The World Bank, 2007). As described in Chapter One, in the *Ninth Malaysia Plan*, the education focus was on developing holistic individuals through human capital development and emphasis on developing generic 'soft skills' throughout the education system (e.g. communication, teamwork, lifelong learning, etc.) (Economic Planning Unit, 2006) but in the *Tenth Malaysia Plan*, when the graduates were found to be lacking in soft skills and that approximately only one quarter of Malaysian jobs fit in the higher skilled bracket (Economic Planning Unit, 2010, p. 193), plans for higher education reform focused technical and vocational training (TVET). It marks an accelerated move towards industrialisation as the deadline of year 2020 draws near. The nation is pressured to keep up with international trends and maintaining the competitive edge.

The graduate competency gap reported in the economic plan echoes some studies in other countries (Chan & Chan, 2009; Collins, 2008; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007). Clearly, Malaysia is going through similar 'teething problems' of graduate competency discrepancies. However, studies in other countries recognise the need to look into what is going on in the institution and classroom practices (Au et al., 2009; Berlach & O'Neill, 2008; Engelbrecht & Harding, 2008). Recent Malaysian research on OBE implementation in various universities lack critical investigation into implementation issues. Some research reported vague results on teaching and learning success, and focused on recommendations for enhancement that evolve around funding and better support for programme review (Mansor et al., 2008; Mohammad et al., 2008; Noor et al., 2009). More importantly, the change of focus in the national education reform is concerning to this researcher. Absent, is the lack of national move to strengthen higher education quality systems and tertiary teacher training that move along with the accelerated pace. Focus on TVET strengthens the position of stakeholders as the object of focus for higher education training but ignores the role national plans could play in streamlining and strengthening higher education systems. Since higher education institutions are subjected to OBE prescriptions (Board of Engineers Malaysia, 2010), particular attention could be given to strengthening processes in OBE curriculum transformation. The researcher argues that there is a need to look into the reality of implementation situations, and whether there is system support in OBE practising institutions.

The existence of various OBE models in higher education institutions in the country and complex matching of intended learning outcomes at multiple levels found in these models (S. Ahmad, Ishak, Ismail, & Selamat, 2010; Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2011; Mohammad et al., 2008; Noor et al., 2009) reiterate universal issues in conceptualisation and implementation. Further, for Malaysian tertiary teachers, coping with new concepts and innovative teaching strategies is a challenge that needs to be empathised with and supported. Although training workshops accompany OBE curriculum reforms, critical adoption and adaptation of these new and foreign prescriptions are necessary to ensure practical and effective implementation.

The reality of Malaysian classroom setting needs to be recognised. The national state of higher education expansion, internationalisation and global competition has led to large classes, mass lecture, mixed student profile, as well as influx of international students (Findlay & Tierney, 2010). As convincing as they may seem, student-centred teaching strategies in OBE training workshops can be difficult to carry out in large classes and poor student quality illuminated by UGG case. Problems in executing group projects and problem-based discussions contained in the OBE curriculum include classroom management, student assessment and effective teaching and learning. Mass lecture and summative assessments are common shortcuts. Close teacher facilitation and monitoring recommended in OBE tasks (McGhie, 2008; Slavin, 2012) is a real issue in a Malaysian tertiary class that can reach up to 120 students per class.

Coping with innovative strategies and approaches require adaptation to new teacher/student roles. Constructivist perspectives and deep learning approaches advocated in this study require major transformation of some teaching and learning styles – far from what Malaysian teachers and learners are used to. That the teachers at UGG held predominantly teacher-centred and transmission teaching is hardly surprising. In school, didactic teaching is commonplace. Students sit behind rows of desks and listen for most part of the lesson. Teaching is exam-oriented and learning by memorising is usual. Although some teachers at UGG displayed awareness of student-centred learning, many did not move beyond lecture-type teaching. In a study of a “twinning” programme in Malaysia (where a local institution is affiliated to a parent institution in a Western country), Goh (2008) reports transmission-type teaching (e.g. reading from notes and teaching from books) despite teaching within a deep learning ideal. The teachers in his study lacked deep content knowledge to promote deep learning approaches. Self-directed learning was mistaken as depriving the able students of teacher attention. Whether or not the teachers were trained with teaching strategies to promote deep learning were not clear in the study. This stresses the need for proper teacher training. Although the introduction of student-centred strategies accompanies OBE curriculum transformations in

many Malaysian universities (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2010), acculturating appropriate practices require a paradigm shift in teacher thinking and practices.

On the students' part, advancing their thinking beyond understanding can be difficult. For Malaysian learners who are used to memorising, critical questioning and revising conceptual understanding advocated in the constructivist learning perspective can be far-reaching. Despite the new age and the expectation of students' versatility, evidence in this thesis data suggested passive learning styles that shied away from asking questions in class attributed to transmission-type teaching. We could take an optimistic view that exposure to OBE student-centred teaching strategies might be taking effect in some tertiary settings, but studies such as Malie and Akir's (2012) found that in one Malaysian tertiary setting, students still preferred lecture-type learning environment over small group tasks, practical workshops and individual research. Their preferred learning method was listening to explanations compared to reading materials and solving problems. These findings indicate Malaysian learners' dependency on lecturers for content knowledge. Goh's (2008) study, although unintentional, indicated student dependence on teachers as they expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of one correct answer in an open discussion. Coping with new teacher/student roles is a challenge.

Also advocated in this study is appreciating multiple teaching perspectives and enhancing conventional teaching/learning strategies (Pratt, 1998). Current professional development initiatives in many higher education institutions in Malaysia tend to focus on OBE training, mainly promoting the adoption of teaching strategies like student-centred learning, active learning, collaborative learning, co-operative learning and problem-based learning (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2010), as if to say, "out with the old and in with the new". It must be realised that OBE does not only benefit from constructivist perspectives and approaches. OBE workshops need to be accompanied by teachers' expanded awareness of the multiple roles they play, the impact of what they do on student learning approaches, the different ways knowledge is constructed and more (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996; Trigwell et al., 1994; Trigwell et al., 1999) – a more all rounded idea of factors that influence quality teaching. This is to promote contextual considerations and strategic teaching/learning decisions (Biggs & Tang, 2007; Entwistle & Walker, 2002; Ramsden, 2003).

In a positive light, current research in professional development in Malaysian higher education institutions suggests some transformations and opportunities for change. There is awareness in helping teachers cope with new roles and developing professional competence (Karuppan,

2006). The need to allow teachers time for enquiry, reflection and intellectual development is recognised (Fernandez-Chung, 2009). The need to give teachers autonomy in directing their own learning has been explored (Balakrishnan, 2010). More importantly, the emphasis on continuing professional development, the recognition for pre- and post-service training and the realisation that improving teaching is in the best interest of students' learning, signify the recognition of more sustainable professional development programmes and student-focused perceptions (Fernandez-Chung, 2009; Karuppan, 2006). Enhancing professional development efforts in the Malaysian tertiary setting should be well-informed by issues in current literature particularly those written by local researchers.

Critical adaptation and adoption of Western ideas in education should be complemented by acknowledgement and enhancement of pre-existing approaches. This is important because there are inherent constraints in some teaching/learning contexts that OBE curriculum reformation alone is insufficient to achieve teaching/learning excellence. The pursuit for teaching/learning excellence requires overall revamp of systemic support.

Revamping the Malaysian systemic support for quality teaching involves widespread awareness of the roles various constituents play within the education system. In the effort to build a world class higher education system, one of the recommendations made by the World Bank and Economic Planning Unit Human Development Sector report was for Malaysia to begin with a *mutually agreed upon definition of quality* and to determine the indicators to measure quality and academic performance at world class level (Economic Planning Unit & The World Bank, 2007). Indicators of academic quality may exist with the introduction of SETARA – the Malaysian rating system of higher education institutions (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2010). However, the problem of disjointed quality assurance system raised in the World Bank report does not appear to have been addressed. Higher education institutions in Malaysia have the freedom to develop or adopt its own quality assurance model. OBE curriculum models too are institution's own designs (A. R. Ahmad et al., 2011; Aziz et al., 2005) bound to EAC and MQA guidelines of graduate attributes with little reflection of unified pedagogical considerations. This signifies the lack of a mutually agreed upon definition of teaching/learning quality.

Needed is a national level initiative that streamlines quality management efforts in individual institutions that puts in its forefront, quality teaching and learning processes and system support for them, alongside interest in graduate outcomes and satisfying stakeholders' interests. These initiatives need to be informed by national level evidence-based research such as that in Australia and New Zealand (Chalmers, 2008; Chalmers, Lee, & Walker, 2008; Chalmers &

Thomson, 2009; Prebble et al., 2005). Also lacking is an articulation of teaching/learning philosophy Malaysian higher education subscribe to for institutional reference point such as that provided by the Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee (AVCC, 2006).

The establishment of central bodies like the Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council (MAGNETIC) and Academy for Leadership in Higher Education (AKEPT) is applauded (Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi (AKEPT), 2008; The Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council (MAGNETIC), 2011). However, their roles could go beyond providing platforms for higher education institutions to meet and to discuss current practices. They could incorporate efforts to streamline the idea of quality teaching/learning in the country beyond Western prescriptions of curriculum reforms. The overall system support needs to be looked into. Higher education expansion, large classes, the alignment between teaching/learning practices and assessments, as well as teacher professional development are just some of the issues in higher education institutions that need investigating. The over-arching need for critical adaptation of Western ideas and help in coping with international trends need to be recognised.

Malaysia, like many other developing nations that are competing in the global market, is bound by international socio-economic trends and changes in higher education. In order to ensure competitiveness, these nations benchmark themselves against international standards and Western ideas of economic, political and social advancement. Since the foreign models can be “educationally alien” in some respects (Singh, 2002, p. 175), an “anglophone” enculturation of the Western ideals should not take over reformations in the Asian sphere (Scott, 2005, p. 52). It is crucial that ideas developed in the Western sphere are given critical cultural and contextual consideration so that they become realistic and practical.

There are no simple solutions to complex issues like quality teaching. In the Malaysian context of predominantly teacher-centred transmission-based teaching, the need to adopt more constructivist approaches to teaching is recognised in order to promote learner-focused teaching in line with OBE requirements. It is wise to begin with broadening teachers' conceptions first. Systematic and sustainable programmes that promote a well-rounded view on teaching and learning and contextual factors that influence decision-making processes need to be provided. The existing system is recognised. Broadening conceptions must be done within the OBE national setting. Change can take place in incremental steps but it needs to start with people at the chalk face – the teachers.

Chapter 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.0 Thesis and chapter overview

This study has explored the perceptions of quality teaching at one case institution of higher learning in Malaysia as a starting point to improve and enhance teaching quality at the institution. It takes a constructivist stance on quality teaching with the belief that learning occurs best when learners construct their own understanding of how the world functions (Fosnot, 2005; Phillips, 2000; Slavin, 2012). Only then will learning be deep, meaningful and responsive to new challenges (Biggs, 2003; Biggs & Tang, 2007; Ramsden, 2003). Multiple teaching perspectives and approaches were also encouraged to promote teacher versatility.

Further, the role institutional ethos plays in shaping the way teaching is conceived, recognised and valued at a higher education institution is acknowledged (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Tennant et al., 2010). This study has explored a higher education institution with a quality assurance context which has its own issues. Therefore, any strategies to improve and enhance teaching within this context needs to be done with careful consideration of culture-specific ways of thinking and working, as well as being mindful of institutional identity and national aspirations (Gnanam, 2002; Lim, 2001; Skelton, 2005, 2007). It needs to work alongside the existing system so as to be realistic.

This final chapter is structured as follows: conclusions from the study and recommendations that arise from them, the significance of the study in the national context as well as its links with the global context, the study's contribution to literature on quality teaching, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

7.1 Research conclusions

The investigation into quality teaching at the case institution was governed by four research questions. The following conclusions are drawn from the study.

7.1.1 How do the teachers in the case study institution perceive quality teaching?

It was established at the beginning of the study that there is no one single definition for quality teaching and that there is no one best way to teach. However, Ramsden (2003) reminds us that there is such a thing as good and bad teaching and that good teaching promotes deep learning approaches resulting in meaningful learning - the third and highest level of his theories of university teaching. Ramsden's (2003) Theories of University Teaching and Biggs and Tang's

(2007) Levels of Thinking about Teaching were combined to identify at which level of the theory the researched teachers' teaching perceptions could be placed.

Primarily, the teachers held teaching perspectives in line with level one theory where teaching is focused on content transmission by lecture - is associated with surface-level learning. Indeed, poor learning responses were reported. At level two, there were perceptions aligned with students engaging in learning activities and being responsible for their own learning but teaching approaches reported were still confined within transmission-type teaching. Finally, level three of the theory that is associated with students' conceptual change more than mere understanding was not found in the teachers' perceptions. While some teachers held beliefs and intentions that could have resulted in deep learning for students some of these beliefs and intentions were not followed through in practice. As a result, opportunities to foster deep learning were missed.

More missed opportunities for deep learning occurred through unaligned teaching perspectives. Based on Pratt's (1998) five variations of teaching perspectives, the teachers were found to have unaligned perspectives in the way they perceived their teaching roles, the emphasis they placed in teaching and their preference for ways to assess learning. Among Pratt's five teaching perspectives, the top three preferences were developmental, apprenticeship and transmission perspectives, showing concern for facilitating students' learning and understanding, relating learning to real-life situations and passing on accurate content knowledge. Although all these perspectives have the potential to bring about effective teaching and learning, inconsistencies between teaching intentions and actual practices reduces the prospect. Despite good intentions, the teachers' teaching practices were predominantly transmission-type, possibly influenced by institutional contexts.

The OBE curriculum approach adopted by the institution was partly equated with good teaching. The use of Bloom's Taxonomy and learning domains provided the teachers with a structured view on teaching objectives, learning outcomes and assessment methods. The national goal is to be a fully-industrialised country, so the teachers' developmental, apprenticeship and transmission perspectives might have been influenced by this goal encapsulated within the OBE curriculum. This stresses further, the need to help the teachers align their teaching practices with their teaching perceptions. As OBE emphasises situated, active and collaborative learning (ADeC Universiti Malaya, 2011; CADe Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2010; Malaysian Higher Education Teaching and Learning Council & Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi, 2011) it supports the development of Ramsden's (2003) more advanced levels of teaching.

Reformulating the idea of quality teaching for the case institution

Ramsden's (2003) and Biggs and Tang's (2007) combined theories of university teaching carry implicit assumptions. Firstly, teaching and learning are inexorably linked. A teacher's approach has implications for the quality of cognitive processes demanded of the learners, the level of engagement in learning and may influence the approaches learners take to learning (with reservations for learner differences). Second is the assumption that level three of the theory is desirable for good teaching and learning despite acknowledging that there is no one correct way to teach. Inherent is a constructivist perspective on teaching and learning. Good learning is when learners are able to personalise their conceptual understanding and to reformulate them in new situations (Fosnot, 2005; Slavin, 2012). Good teaching is when the teachers are able to provide a conducive environment for this to happen. Good teaching and learning is teachers facilitating learning and students being actively engaged. In short, good teaching is student-centred. There are qualitative differences in the way teachers approach teaching and the way students approach learning (Trigwell & Prosser, 2003; Trigwell et al., 1994; Trigwell et al., 1999). The qualitative differences do not involve quantitative addition of knowledge but rather promote a qualitative advancement of students' cognitive abilities that requires a teacher's sophisticated understanding of teaching/learning relationships, as well as the way knowledge is constructed.

However, there is no one correct way to teach. Although there is good and bad teaching/learning, delivering good teaching and achieving good learning are not confined to student-centred teaching. Lectures, teaching as telling, transmission-type teaching or teacher-centred teaching that is commonly associated with surface learning can be effective if done well, and if employed in the right contexts. Subjects like science and maths where there are often "assumptions of single right or wrong answers" (Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2007, p. 74) can benefit from authoritative transmission of content. However, constant use of this approach can ignore learner differences and levels of receptivity. Therefore, there is a need and appropriate time for teacher-centred teaching as much as there is a need and appropriate time for student-centred teaching. Two prominent writers argue:

[Teaching] is too complicated and personal a business for one single strategy to be right for everybody and every discipline (Ramsden, 2003, p. 85).

... good teachers are not effective all of the time in all situations or with all kinds of learners (Nuthall, 2007 in St. George & Bourke, 2008).

What matters is to broaden the teachers' perspectives on teaching so that they are able to see various legitimate ways to teach but at the same time, to bear in mind that a desirable aim of teaching is to bring about meaningful learning.

This researcher associates good teaching with effective and expert teaching. Whatever methods, techniques and approaches a teacher uses, the teacher should aim to employ them to great effects. The ultimate objective is for learning to be effective. Sensitivity to the teaching and learning context is crucial. It is imperative that teachers are made aware of the importance of fine-tuning teaching appropriate to contextual needs. Contextual factors that affect teaching decisions and the interplay among them that affects the quality of learning must be acknowledged. Therefore, fine-tuning teaching requires strategic and/or expert decisions done in the wake of momentary needs. It takes sophisticated conceptions of teaching, broad perspectives on teaching and an extensive repertoire of teaching techniques and approaches to make strategic teaching decisions. To develop such sophistication in teaching, takes practice and experience. However, that in itself is insufficient. Pratt (1998) has some wise words:

Ten years of experience without reflection is just one year's
experience repeated nine times! (p. 139)

Instead of believing OBE is the ultimate in good teaching, teachers can be helped to reflect on their practice using sound pedagogical understanding. This will develop quality teaching. The institution could help teachers to enhance their teaching conceptions to be more student-focused. It does not mean promoting deep learning approaches or incorporating learning activities in all lessons all of the time. Rather, a well-developed student-focused conception promotes teaching that is sensitive to students' learning needs within a given context, rather than concentrating on the topic to be delivered to students. Since students' learning needs change in different learning situations and with different sets of students, teaching techniques and approaches too need to change accordingly. The end result should be to impact on the quality of students' thinking, rather than to merely add on knowledge. With sustained effort, the teachers' expanded beliefs and intentions will eventually impact on the way they approach teaching.

7.1.2 What kinds of existing constraints are there which impede the teachers' delivery of quality teaching?

There were several constraints to quality teaching identified at the case institution. Most prominent and influential was quality initiatives within a quality assurance framework that stemmed from the institution's pursuit to be internationally renowned. The initiatives and related activities required heavy involvement of the academics which impacted on their focus

on teaching, quality teaching preparations and teacher morale. Further, within the quality framework, teaching was found to take the backseat in order to make way for income-generating research. This influenced the way teachers perceived research and publication in comparison to teaching. Teaching was seen as providing a service to students who are one of the consumers of education. The institution's goal in education reflected priorities in research and in satisfying market needs for technically-competent graduates. All these institutional values and ethos have culminated in distorted priorities as far as teaching and learning are concerned. Focus on teaching and learning was reduced as seen in the institution's key performance indicator.

With regards to the institution's direction in teaching excellence, the OBE curriculum approach was adopted to meet international accreditation requirements. Being newly-introduced at the time of research, the potential risk was uncritical acceptance. The need to be sensitive to the issues of competency gap reported in the recent government report (Economic Planning Unit, 2010) was discussed. There is also the need to look into implementation issues in order to maximise the opportunity for situated, collaborative and deep learning that works well within a local setting accounting for existing constraints and support (cf. Au et al., 2009; Collins, 2008; Donnelly, 2007; Engelbrecht & Harding, 2008; Walther & Radcliffe, 2007).

Other constraints on quality teaching were large classes, poor student selection and poor provision of multimedia facilities. These are attributed to the pressures of internationalisation and higher education expansion that resulted in a larger and more diverse student intake with profit-making intentions, often within shrinking financial resources. These constraints impacted on the quality of teaching. Large classes, poor student selection and inadequate multimedia resources made it difficult for teachers to teach well in a less than conducive teaching/learning environment. Shrinking resources and small budget allocations limit opportunities for teacher development activities including conference participation and teacher training.

Rectifying constraints on quality teaching

In order to redress the imbalanced priorities and to raise the value of teaching within the quality framework, it is imperative that change begin from the top. The source of most of the constraints was identified as the institutional goals and quality framework that put teaching in the backseat. This is the starting point for redressing imbalance – policies related to teaching and institutional ethos. Once teaching is recognised as a part of educational enhancement initiatives, equal to that of research, the teachers will know that teaching matters and good teaching will be well-recognised. Once resources are provided to support good teaching, the teachers will be in a better position to teach well.

7.1.3 What kinds of existing support for teaching do the teachers find helpful in delivering quality teaching?

The quality assurance framework has not only had negative impacts on teaching. On a positive note, the introduction of new types of support for quality teaching was identified. Perhaps the most significant support reported was the OBE curriculum approach adopted in compliance with international accreditation and MQA requirements. However, despite optimistic teacher opinions, opportunities for unaligned implementation were identified. In classroom practices, the dominant transmission-based teaching approach is a cause for concern as it can hamper full utilisation of OBE student-centred advocacies. Biggs' and Tang's (2007) OBTL model provides a useful reference for aligning teaching, learning and assessment constructively. At the institution level, the need is to align all types of existing support so that they have a common theme for quality teaching that runs through them (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005).

Other types of existing support at the case study institution are immediate managers' and peer support, student evaluation and peer observation of teaching, avenues to explore and develop teaching capabilities (e.g. mentor programme, faculty-level teaching/learning committee), staff development programmes provided by a budding teaching centre, as well as the university's Conference on Teaching and Learning. All these types of support were helpful and could be developed.

Aligning support for quality teaching

What is lacking in the available support is a clear direction for teaching excellence. OBE is not a sufficient answer to teaching excellence. What is needed is a strong teaching philosophy that underlies the way the institution values teaching. Constructivism provides a pathway to good learning and good teaching but is not the only way to go. There is also a need to go beyond teaching techniques and to broaden perspectives on what good teaching means. What is clear is that a strong performative view of teaching excellence that adheres to externally-imposed criteria of excellence bounds the notion of teaching excellence to measurable skills (MacFarlane, 2007; Skelton, 2005). Quality teaching is a highly complex concept that deserves widespread interest at all levels of the university constituencies and requires close and critical scrutiny (D'Andrea & Gosling, 2005; Tennant et al., 2010).

The professional development centre has a crucial role. As pedagogical experts, the planned centre is in the best position to influence business-oriented mind-sets. It is important that the centre is constantly involved in major institution level decisions such as policies that affect recognition and rewards for teaching (Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005; Kanuka, 2010). Being well-

informed about issues and current trends in teaching and learning, it is the role of the professional developers to raise interest and awareness in critical reflection on teaching practices. Professional developers' role is central to the enhancement of quality teaching.

7.1.4 What kinds of support for teaching do the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided?

A major support needed to enhance quality teaching is to help the teachers cope with their multiple academic responsibilities, mainly teaching and research. These two need to be developed in parallel as they have implications on the way teachers are appraised. However, distorted priorities and imbalances confuse teacher roles. Heavy demands for discipline-specific international publications and quality enhancement activities shift the teachers' attention away from a focus on teaching enhancement. With regards to discipline-based thinking, there is a need to learn to teach in specific disciplines. There is a need to promote investigation into teaching practices and to help the teachers reconcile teaching and research.

Another support needed for teaching is professional development programmes that are customised according to levels of teaching experience. Also needed is the institution's recognition of teacher freedom in making decisions and in expressing critical thoughts.

Enhancing support for quality teaching

The role of professional developers is again highlighted. A scholarly approach to professional development is recommended. The objectives are two-fold: first is to help teacher reconcile their interest in doing research in specific discipline areas with interest in investigating the teaching of it and second, to promote a culture of inquiry into teaching informed by pedagogical theories. This is the starting point from which to make qualitative changes to teaching conceptions and teaching practices. It is important to recognise that scholarly research is not the preserve of the education-trained teachers only. Modelling on experienced institutions, it is worth developing a well-planned programme that raises and sustains long-term interest in education-based inquiry. Finally, it is also the role of professional development centre to become education advisors to the institution and the provider of moral support to the teachers in the effort to appreciate teacher autonomy and promote freedom of speech. The main objective is to value teachers as agents of change worth listening to.

7.2 Recommendations for case institution's policy considerations

The conclusions above lead to these recommendations to enhance the quality of teaching at the case study institution:

7.2.1 For top management to consider

1. Promote an institutional culture that values quality teaching alongside research.
2. Be sensitive towards the needs of quality teaching and learning (e.g. the quality of student intake, the number of students per class, support for cross-cultural teaching).
3. Allocate sufficient funding for adequate material provision and maintenance of resources that support good teaching practices (e.g. multimedia equipment, multimedia and science labs, renew and review library resources).
4. Develop a systems framework that values teaching as equivalent to research (e.g. itemise institutional key performance indicators so that teaching has specific indicators; incorporate more diverse mechanisms to evaluate teaching; ensure teaching evaluation is fully implemented).
5. Recognise that all teachers at all levels need to be given the time and opportunity to review their teaching practices and to be involved in professional development activities for a sustained period of time; reduce quality initiatives and quality activities.
6. Recognise the value of research on teaching and learning (the scholarship of teaching and learning/ SoTL); grant merit in staff appraisal/teaching portfolio for efforts in SoTL in any form, particularly those that are presented in UGG Teaching and Learning Conference.
7. Align all support for teaching in a manner that recognises the institution's perception of teaching excellence beyond OBE.
8. Recognise the central role of the professional development centre in determining appropriate steps to take to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (taking into account national and institutional policies).
9. Allow the integration of the professional development centre's activities with existing university functions such as student evaluation of teachers, peer observation of teaching, Best Teacher Award, OBE programme reviews.
10. Involve professional developers in major university decision-making processes related to quality teaching.
11. Allocate sufficient funding for professional development activities (e.g. for the invitation of international guest speakers and renowned local experts).

7.2.2 For professional developers to consider

12. Enhance the Teaching and Learning Policy: Articulate a clear teaching philosophy as a reference point for institutional teaching enhancement efforts and align all the professional development centre's objectives in a manner that upholds the philosophy.

13. Plan a programme that helps teachers broaden their teaching conceptions. Assist teachers to understand:
 - the close relationship between teaching and learning; how the teachers teach affects how the students learn;
 - teaching should aim to change the quality of students' thinking rather than bring about mere understanding;
 - student-centred activities require close guidance and proper facilitation;
 - teaching is more than skilful performance and delivery or innovative techniques; there is a multitude of factors influencing quality teaching;
 - there are multiple and legitimate ways of teaching;
 - there are no simple solutions to quality teaching issues (e.g. OBE and the use of multimedia facilities are only means to an end).
14. Plan a programme that introduces and promotes SoTL in the discipline.
 - Develop discipline-based learning communities to discuss issues in teaching and learning.
 - Develop a structured programme to introduce teachers to pedagogical theories and concepts and to encourage critical reflection on their own teaching contexts.
 - Introduce teachers to scholarly research and guide them in developing their own.
 - Promote the sharing of SoTL inquiry in UGG Conference of Teaching and Learning.
 - Inculcate the understanding that teaching excellence is an ever-evolving concept and that teachers need to take ownership of the changes that occur outside and within the institution.
15. Integrate all planned programmes and enhancement initiatives with existing OBE curriculum implementation and other institutional goals.
16. Develop close partnerships with faculty level teaching/learning committees for delegation of centre tasks and to gain faculty level input.
17. Develop open channels (e.g. professional development centre websites, centre bulletin, internal forum) for teachers to communicate their needs and wants with regards to the enhancement of teaching and learning.
18. Develop rapport with the institutional management team in order to influence policy-making decisions.
19. Develop networks and partnerships with teaching-learning centres in other universities.

7.3 Significance of the study

i) National higher education scene

Intrinsic interest in the case study has incidentally served an instrumental purpose (Stake, 2005). Quality teaching in the context of quality assurance can be generalised to other universities in Malaysia. Bound by national goals, other major local higher education institutions are also going for world ranking and international recognition, putting weight on disciplinary research, adopting the OBE curriculum for programme accreditation and being subjected to Malaysian Qualifications Agency's (MQA) review. How is teaching valued and how does it fit into these other universities' quality frameworks? Issues that are raised in this study and recommendations made for the case study institution can be used as reflection points for other local institutions undergoing similar experiences. It is acknowledged that contexts between different institutions are not entirely similar. It is also acknowledged that other universities may be far ahead in their quality teaching initiatives and may have better solutions to some of the issues. Therefore, developing networks and close partnerships with other professional development centres can enrich ideas and even promote collaborative education-based research.

ii) Global higher education scene

Recent global changes include the development of market forces, industrialisation, and a focus on people who are able to be innovative problem-solvers. This kind of human capital is the aspiration of most countries, especially developing ones as they try to catch up with global competition. The way nations respond to these changes, though unique in some respects (e.g. national aspiration, cultural values, education philosophy), are universally similar in others (e.g. to compete in world market, to develop human capital, to make changes in higher education systems). This study contributes to what is known by exploring quality teaching in one institution in a rapidly developing nation struggling to compete in this global context.

iii) Literature on quality teaching and education enhancement

This study contributes an Asian perspective to the predominantly Western research on quality teaching and constructivist approaches. Bound by international trends and market demands, the researcher advocates a critical adaptation of Western ways of thinking about good teaching and learning and the Western model of promoting, developing, enhancing and sustaining good teaching and learning to the Malaysian context. However, the challenges and struggles faced by an Asian country in complying with international demands have been described. This research

study adds to studies on quality teaching in quality assurance contexts of other developing countries (Billing, 2004; Gnanam, 2002; Lim, 2001; Mok, 2005; Singh, 2002; Uvalic-Trumbic, 2002).

This is the story of one higher education institution in Malaysia. Studies by local researchers have looked at some of the issues explored in this study but separately (S. Ahmad et al., 2010; Consilz, 2008; Goh, 2008; Hassan, Tymms, & Ismail, 2008; Mohammad et al., 2008; Morshidi et al., 2010; Noor et al., 2009). With one-off investigations of individual issues it is hard to see the big picture and the contextual forces that have powerful influences and require thoughtful consideration in any teaching enhancement efforts. Nevertheless, there are other local studies that looked at some of the above issues within powerful global forces (Kaur Sidhu & Kaur, 2011; Sohail, Rajadurai, & Abdul Rahman, 2003; Yew & Pang, 2011). This study contributes to such investigations. It has combined detailed investigations of a variety of quality teaching issues bound within a quality assurance case study context. It has revealed the links between internal and external forces in a given context.

7.4 Limitations of the study

i) Generalisability of a case study

The nature of a case study is that it is situational and contextual (Merriam, 1998, 2009; Yin, 2003, 2009). The complexities of a system's functions and interactions between elements in the institution are unique to the case. Generalisation is limited but this is typical of case study. Issues that could be generalised to other higher education institutions in Malaysia and in other developing countries have been discussed with careful considerations of unique case contexts.

ii) Online survey response rate

The survey had a 23% response rate. Although typical of an online survey, a higher response rate could have provided a wider view of the teacher population opinions. Those who responded were likely to be those who felt strongly about the topic quality teaching and might have wanted to be 'heard'; those who did not respond might have had different opinions. In hindsight, the online survey could have been complemented by paper versions (Epstein, Klinkenberg, Wiley, & McKinley, 2001; Knapp & Kirk, 2003).

iii) Self-selection and researcher influence

Subjectivity is inherent in interview-methods research. The researcher began this investigation with the idea that teaching was taking the backseat within a quality-driven institutional context. There was a strong tendency to be biased in taking notice of elements within the case study context that had affected teaching quality in negative ways. During data interpretation, there was also the tendency to see the institution in a bad light. This was dealt with by constantly staying true to the data doing abductive and reflexive reasoning (Morgan, 2007).

7.5 Suggestions for further research

There is plenty of opportunity to develop further research from this investigation. Those identified as immediate concerns are:

1. How is quality teaching perceived in other higher education institutions in Malaysia? Is a transmission-based perspective prevalent too? How do other perspective types present themselves in other institution's setting? If there are other perspective types, to what extent are they carried out in teaching? Might there be stories of success with more student-focused teaching perceptions and practices?
2. In light of OBE, there is a potential for evidence-based investigations of teaching/learning practices in the Malaysian context. Why is there lack of soft skills after a period of implementation as reported in the recent *Tenth Malaysia Plan*? Does the problem lie in the curriculum design, in non-standardised approaches between universities, or misinterpretation of the OBE tenets? More importantly, what is happening in OBE classes in other Malaysian universities? There is an opening for thorough investigations into teaching/learning processes as well as system support. The investigation should not be confined to quantitative measures since this alone does not do justice to the complex nature of teaching and learning. This may involve consideration of national level thinking about OBE implementation processes, alongside outcomes and guidelines for process standards. There is potential for OBE studies with pedagogical sensitivity. These could feed into national level initiatives for higher education streamlining.
3. With regards to studying teachers' perceptions of quality teaching, there is opportunity to include students' perceptions in a single study. This may provide a more balanced view for interpretations of the Malaysian and/or Asian perspectives.
4. Also in relation to studying perceptions, there is opportunity for further research that incorporates teaching observations. This could enrich studies on perceptions with input

on actual practices and the exploration of transfer between teaching beliefs and intentions and practice.

5. With regards to professional development, how can teachers be assisted with critical adaptations of Western concepts? How can these strategies and existing professional development approaches be integrated into the whole university system functions for aligned system support?

7.6 Final thoughts

It takes delicate balance to adapt a Western model in an Asian context bound by different values and perceptions of what is good teaching and learning. However, the Western model and experiences provide a reference point for consideration and reflection. Constraints and existing support in the local setting were considered. Although the researcher advocates the critical adaptation of Western thinking and approaches to quality teaching, it is not the one best way to resolve issues in poor teaching. It is important than any intention to apply the outcomes of this research in a different setting, be made with thoughtful consideration of the particularity of the given context, as well as the needs and wants of the people involved in the setting.

Bringing together discipline-based research and generic scholarship of teaching and learning is not straightforward. While the researcher recognises the significant role professional developers play in linking the two, the challenges posed by disciplinary cultures and identities are acknowledged (Griffiths, 2004; Healey, 2005a; Henkel, 2000). In addition, the organisational cultures and subcultures give particular meanings to research and teaching (Land, 2004). These challenges stress the need for careful thought and consideration of the many possible ways to enhance the teaching-research link. Most important is to be responsive to the subtle ways people conceive teaching, learning, knowledge and research, and the inter-relations between them (J. Robertson, 2007). There needs to be space for teachers to make meaning out their own experiences and to let them flourish in these spaces. Enhancing the teaching-research link takes time, constant re-evaluation and revision.

It is also important to note that the notion of teaching excellence is a dynamic and evolving concept. The relevance of assumptions made in this study requires constant review. The wisdom of two Australian researchers is relevant here. Reflecting on changes in the higher education setting, Devlin and Samarawickrema (2010) recommended the renewal of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council's criteria for effective teaching. Their words are equally applicable to the recommendations for change made on the basis of this study.

It is envisaged that such a renewal would form part of an ongoing endeavour to ensure that future developments, trends, understandings, government directions, stakeholder expectations and student needs are continually considered and incorporated into the collective understanding of effective teaching. The notion of effective teaching in higher education can then continue to have resonance and meaning within a changed and changing context (p. 122).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Research approval from MUHEC



Massey University

25 March 2009

Ms Tara Hilaluddin
35 Hardie Street
Hokowhitu
PALMERSTON NORTH 4410

Dear Tara

Re: HEC: Southern A Application – 09/03
Exploring constraints and support in quality teaching at a higher education institution in Malaysia

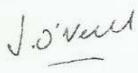
Thank you for your letter dated 19 March 2009.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Professor John O'Neill, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A

cc Dr Linda Leach
School of Educational Studies
PN900

Dr Alison St George
School of Curriculum & Pedagogy
PN900

Prof Howard Lee, HoS
School of Educational Studies
PN900

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council



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APPENDIX B: Research approval from UGG Vice-Chancellor



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Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

**VICE CHANCELLOR
CONSENT FORM**

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. I understand that while every effort is made to protect the identity of [REDACTED] some people may be able to identify the institution in written reports.

I thereby, grant permission for *Thaharah Hilaluddin* to:

1. conduct the study at [REDACTED]
2. have access to the teacher database to randomly select teachers for interviews.
3. interview randomly selected teachers.
4. have access to institutional documents and records relevant to the study.
5. interview institutional managers or appointed officers as identified in the Information Sheet.
6. have access to the teacher mailing list for the online teacher survey.
7. conduct online teacher survey.

Signature:  Date: 4/6/09
Vice Chancellor
Institution: [REDACTED]
Full name – printed: [REDACTED]
E-mail address: [REDACTED]



APPENDIX C: Information sheet for teachers



Massey University
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Te Kupenga o Te Mātauranga

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Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

Information Sheet Teachers

Prof. / Dr. / Sir / Madam / Miss,

You have been randomly chosen from the list of academic staff, to be invited to participate in my doctoral research study that explores quality teaching in higher education. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. However, your contribution for information is much sought and appreciated. Please read below for further details.

Researcher's introduction

I am Thaharah Hilaluddin, [REDACTED] Under the university scholarship, I am currently pursuing my doctoral degree at Massey University, New Zealand under the School of Educational Studies. My supervisors are Dr. Linda Leach and Dr. Alison St. George and my area of interest is in quality teaching in higher education.

This research project that I am currently conducting intends to help address issues in quality teaching with the focus on teachers and their perceptions. It is noted that while student evaluation of teachers and students' final grades are often used to indicate teaching success, teachers' views and their teaching contexts are rarely explored. Teaching is a very complex process and there are numerous factors that constrain and enable the delivery of quality teaching. If these factors are not investigated, the education system may waste the great teaching potentials of teachers who often work hard to give their best.

The purposes of this study

The purposes of this doctoral research project are to:

1. explore teachers' perceptions of quality teaching;
2. identify existing support for teaching that helps teachers deliver quality teaching;
3. identify existing constraints that impede their delivery of quality teaching; and
4. identify the kinds of teaching support the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided.

This research project is essentially exploratory. It does not assess teachers' teaching quality. Instead, the investigation into teachers' perceptions of quality teaching and their teaching contexts may help the institution strengthen its efforts to upgrade and maintain teaching quality, especially in our ultimate goal to reach world class standard.



Methods of data collection and timeframe

The methods of data collection are:

1. Personal interview with teachers – 15; 3 in each college and institute (June-July 2009).
2. Document analysis of selected relevant documents (June-July 2009).
3. Interview with selected institutional managers – Head of [redacted] Teaching and Learning, Human Resource Senior Manager, [redacted] of Quality [redacted] (June-July 2009).
4. Survey of teachers (December 2009-January 2010).

Participants' involvement

As a teacher, you are invited to be interviewed as part of this research project. The interview will focus on the topics outlined below:

1. your perceptions of quality teaching;
2. existing support for teaching that helps you deliver quality teaching;
3. existing constraints that impede your delivery of quality teaching;
4. the kinds of teaching support you wish could be enhanced or provided.

This is your opportunity to share your views on quality teaching and to express our opinions on your teaching environment. Your contribution will provide invaluable information for the betterment of teaching at the university.

Details for the interview are as follows:

1. Three teachers will be interviewed from each college and institute.
2. Each interview will take approximately one hour.
3. You will be interviewed once.
4. The interview will take place between June and July 2009.
5. The interview will be recorded in order to have an accurate record of what you say.

If more than three people from your college or institute agree to participate in the interview, I will randomly select the participants. I will let you know the outcome within seven days of you receiving this invitation.

The recorded interview will be transcribed into written form. It will then be made available to you for review if you wish to change any information. Your contribution in this interview will provide invaluable information for the betterment of teaching support and teaching quality at the university.

Participants' anonymity and confidentiality

Your identity will be confidential. In order to ensure this:

1. you can respond to this invitation for research participation personally by returning the consent form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope;
2. you should not reveal to anyone your participation in this research study;
3. you may be interviewed in a quiet space outside the university premise, if so wished;
4. you may set your own time for the interview;
5. I will not use your name in any report about the research.

The identity of the institution will also be protected to the best of my ability. The name of the institution will not be mentioned in any research reports.

All information is confidential and will be stored and reported in such a way that the participants' identity will remain confidential. However, please note that I am not able to guarantee absolute confidentiality of the institutions' identity as it may be identified by research readers who are familiar with it.

The original interview recording and signed consent forms will be stored in a secure place. All original data will be destroyed after 5 years.

Participants' rights in the study

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you decide to participate in the interview, you have the right to:

1. withdraw yourself and / or the information you have contributed at any time until the interview transcripts are finalised;
2. decline to answer any particular questions during the interview;
3. ask for the recording to be stopped at any time during the interview;
4. ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
5. use Bahasa Melayu where and if you feel better able to express yourself;
6. provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
7. be given access to the summary of the project findings through [REDACTED] e-mail when the project is concluded.

Contact details

If you require further information or clarification on this research project, feel free to contact me as in the following:

Doctoral Research Student
Thaharah Hilaluddin
Graduate School of Education
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Mobile phone : ++646 021 048 27 88
Home phone : ++646 3545481
E-mail : thilaluddin@yahoo.com

Alternatively, you may contact one of my supervisors as in the following:

Main doctoral supervisor

Dr. Linda Leach
School of Educational Studies
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Office phone: ++646 356 90 99,
ext. 8831
E-mail : L.J.Leach@massey.ac.nz

Second doctoral supervisor

Dr. Alison St. George
School of Curriculum and Pedagogy
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Office phone: ++646 356 90 99,
ext. 8627
E-mail : A.M.StGeorge@massey.ac.nz

Committee approval statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 09/03. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8771, e-mail humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz

Responding to this invitation

If you agree to provide the relevant documents and to be interviewed, I sincerely thank you. Please complete the attached consent form and return it to me using the enclosed self-addressed envelope within 7 days of receiving this invitation.

If you decline or are not able to be interviewed, please suggest another officer whom I could invite or approach.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to working with you.



.....
Thaharah Khalid

APPENDIX D: Teacher-participant consent form

 **Massey University**
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
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SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
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F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

**TEACHER PARTICIPANT
CONSENT FORM**

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to participate in this research project under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Please tick the appropriate boxes

I wish / do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

Signature : Date :

Full name – printed:

College/Institute:

E-mail address :

Contact number(s) :



APPENDIX E: Information sheet for institutional managers



SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand
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F 64 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

Information Sheet Institutional Manager

Dear [REDACTED]

I have been given the permission by the Vice Chancellor to conduct research in your centre for my doctoral research project. I will be analysing some relevant documents from your departmental records. Subsequently, I wish to invite you to participate in an interview. You are under no obligation to accept the invitation to participate in the interview. However, your contribution is much sought and appreciated. Please read below for further details.

Researcher's introduction

I am Thaharah Hilaluddin, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Under the university scholarship, I am currently pursuing my doctoral degree at Massey University, New Zealand under the School of Educational Studies. My supervisors are Dr. Linda Leach and Dr. Alison St. George and my area of interest is in quality teaching in higher education.

This research project that I am currently conducting intends to help address issues in quality teaching with the focus on teachers and their perceptions. It is noted that while student evaluation of teachers and students' final grades are often used to indicate teaching success, teachers' views and their teaching contexts are rarely explored. Teaching is a very complex process and there are numerous factors that constrain and enable the delivery of quality teaching. If these factors are not investigated, the education system may waste the great teaching potentials of teachers who often work hard to give their best.

The purposes of this study

The purposes of this doctoral research project are to:

1. explore teachers' perceptions of quality teaching;
2. identify existing support for teaching that helps teachers deliver quality teaching;
3. identify existing constraints that impede their delivery of quality teaching; and
4. identify the kinds of teaching support the teachers wish could be enhanced or provided.

This research project is essentially exploratory. It does not assess teachers' teaching quality. Instead, the investigation into teachers' perceptions of quality teaching and their teaching contexts may help the institution strengthen its efforts to upgrade and maintain teaching quality, especially in our ultimate goal to reach world class standard.



Methods of data collection and timeframe

The methods of data collection are:

1. Personal interview with teachers – 15; 3 in each college and institute (June-July 2009).
2. Document analysis of selected relevant documents (June-July 2009).
3. Interview with selected institutional managers – Head of [redacted] Teaching and Learning, Human Resource Manager, Head of Quality [redacted] (June – July 2009).
4. Survey of teachers (December 2009-January 2010).

Participants' involvement

1. Document analysis

As the person in charge of some institutional documents and records that are relevant to my research study, I hope to seek your co-operation in identifying, selecting and making available copies of relevant documents from your centre / department. This may include some of the following:

- i) [redacted] Teaching and Learning (e.g. record of courses, workshops, conferences conducted for teachers internally or externally, report or feedback from courses, workshops, conferences conducted for teachers internally or externally, the centre's quality initiatives for teaching and learning, the centre's yearly work plan or target for courses and the like.)
- ii) Human Resource Department (e.g. number of teaching staff who attended courses, workshops, conferences nationally or internationally, HR policies on staff's entitlement to professional development and the like).
- iii) Quality [redacted] (e.g. institutional quality initiatives that contain statements or sub-initiatives on improving the quality of teaching and learning; institutional missions and their short and long term quality assurance implementation work plan, policies or audit reports related to MQA review or the Ministry's national development plans, and the like.)
- iv) Others that you suggest are relevant to my study.

2. Personal interview

As the person in charge of some relevant documents, I wish to invite you to participate in an interview to gain a better understanding of the policies, documents or records accessed above in relation the university's quality assurance efforts.

Please find attached:

- i) Interview Schedule for Institutional Managers for your review and preparation.
- ii) Consent Form in which to express whether or not you agree to participate in the interview.

The interview will take approximately one hour. The interview will be recorded with your permission. This is to help me focus on listening to you rather than on taking notes, as well as to have a record for reference. The recorded interview will be transcribed into written form. It will then be made available to you for review if you wish to change any information. Your contribution will provide invaluable information for the betterment of teaching support and teaching quality at the university.

In cases where you feel that you are not the best reference point for a particular document, please suggest another officer who would be able to discuss the documents with me.

Confidentiality statement

Your identity will not be revealed in any research reports and I will not name your position. Protecting the identity of the institution is also my main concern. The name of the institution will not be mentioned in any research reports.

All information is confidential and will be stored and reported in such a way to protect confidentiality. However, I am not able to guarantee absolute confidentiality where your identity may be identified by what you say about the documents you are responsible for, or where the institutional identity may be identified by the description of its contexts. I will try my best to protect confidentiality by using pseudonyms or by not mentioning names in any research reports.

The original interview recording and signed consent forms will be stored in a secure place. All original data will be destroyed after 5 years.

Participants' rights in the study

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you agree to be interviewed, you have the right to:

1. withdraw yourself and / or the information you have contributed at any time until the interview transcripts are finalised;
2. decline to answer any particular questions during the interview;
3. ask for the recording to be stopped at any time during the interview;
4. ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
5. use Bahasa Melayu where and if you feel better able to express yourself;
6. provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
7. be given access to the summary of the project findings through [REDACTED] e-mail when the project is concluded.

Contact details

If you require further information or clarification on this research project, feel free to contact me as in the following:

Doctoral Research Student
Thaharah Hilaluddin
Graduate School of Education
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Mobile phone : ++646 021 048 27 88
Home phone : ++646 3545481
E-mail : thilaluddin@yahoo.com

Alternatively, you may contact one of my supervisors as in the following:

Main doctoral supervisor

Dr. Linda Leach
School of Educational Studies
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Office phone: ++646 356 90 99,
ext. 8831
E-mail : L.J.Leach@massey.ac.nz

Second doctoral supervisor

Dr. Alison St. George
School of Curriculum and Pedagogy
College of Education
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Office phone: ++646 356 90 99,
ext. 8627
E-mail : A.M.StGeorge@massey.ac.nz

Committee approval statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 09/03. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8771, e-mail humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz

Responding to this invitation

If you agree to provide the relevant documents and to be interviewed, I sincerely thank you. Please complete the attached consent form and return it to me using the enclosed self-addressed envelope within 7 days of receiving this invitation.

If you decline or are not able to be interviewed, please suggest another officer whom I could invite or approach.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to working with you.



.....
Thaharah Hilaluddin

APPENDIX F: Manager-participant consent form

 Massey University COLLEGE OF EDUCATION Te Kupenga o Te Mātauranga		<small>SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES Private Bag 11 222 Palmerston North 4442 New Zealand T 64 6 356 9099 F 64 6 351 3385 www.massey.ac.nz</small>
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Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

**MANAGER PARTICIPANT
CONSENT FORM**

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to be interviewed for this project as set out in the Information Sheet.

Please tick the appropriate boxes

I wish / do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

If you do not agree, DO NOT sign this consent form. Please suggest another officer whom I could invite to participate.

Name of officer:

E-mail address of officer:

Signature : Date :

Full name – printed:

Department/Centre:

E-mail address :

Contact number(s) :

Te Kōwhiri
ki Pākehanga

APPENDIX G: Interview schedule for teachers

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

Maximum duration of interview: One hour

Introduction:

This interview is exploratory. It means that I would like to explore your opinions about teaching, but NOT to judge how you teach. My intention is to find out how teachers in this university think about quality teaching.

The areas that I will be covering in this interview are:

- i) some details about yourself as a teacher;
- ii) your opinions about quality teaching;
- iii) the kinds of teaching support you get from around you that helps you teach well;
- iv) the kinds of barriers to teaching that prevents you from teaching well;
- v) the kinds of teaching support that you wish the university could provide in order for you to teach better.

I'll be conducting a teacher survey in a few months' time to compare your answers with other teachers' opinions. Since you have contributed your opinions in this survey, you do not need to answer the teacher survey.

Are there any questions before we start the interview?

I will start recording as soon as I start asking the first question. Feel free to stop the recording at any time during the interview if you feel uncomfortable.

I. Demographic details

1. When did you start teaching at this university?
2. What subjects are you teaching this semester / in the most recent semester?
3. How is your regular teaching load like?
 - How many credit hours / contact hours?
 - Students of degree / diploma level?
 - Class capacity?
 - Lecture / lab / tutorial or mixture?
 - Lecture hall / classroom / computer lab?
4. What is your area of specialisation?

II. Perceptions of quality teaching

1. In your opinion, what is good teaching?
2. What does a good teacher do?

(Prompts) - Plan lessons?

 - Teach in class?
 - Know that a student has learned well? Prepare students' assessments?
 - Improve his/her teaching?
3. What are the most important things that you do in order to help students learn?

III. Existing institutional support

1. Are there things in your teaching environment you that help you teach well?
2. How do you feel about the opportunity to discuss issues in teaching in your department / college?
(e.g. choice of textbook, how to use textbook, opportunity to revise syllabus, opportunity to revise course assessment).
3. How do you feel about your contribution in the course you are currently teaching?
(e.g. course design, choice of textbook, learning outcomes, students' assessments).
4. How do you feel about the opportunity to improve your teaching?
 - How is your teaching assessed? (e.g. SET, peer observation, teaching portfolio)
 - How does it help improve your teaching?
5. Did you have any teacher training before and after working at [REDACTED]?
 - Where and when?
 - Level of teaching qualifications?
6. What teaching-related courses / conferences have you gone to this year?

IV. Existing institutional constraints

1. In your experience teaching at this university, are there things that make it difficult for you to teach well?
2. Have you ever felt "I could have taught better if..." or "I could have had better student evaluation if..."
(Prompts) – Teaching load?
 - Workload / professional responsibilities other than teaching?
 - Class capacity?
 - Had to teach subjects that are not your area of specialisation?
 - Lack of facilities / technological aid?
 - Lack of support from university administration?
 - Choice of textbook?
 - Curriculum / syllabus design?
 - Teaching approaches imposed or institutional expectations? (e.g.OBE, PBL, IEEE accreditation? MQA review?)
3. How well are the issues in teaching that you have mentioned, heard by your college / the university?

V. Needed support

1. Think about the issues in teaching you've mentioned earlier. What might the university do in order to counter the problem?
2. Are there other things that you feel the university can do to help you or teachers in your department / college teach better?
3. If time is a factor, how will having more time make you teach better?
4. If teacher training is a factor, what kinds of teacher training courses do you wish to attend?
5. Given an ideal situation, how do you want to be better 'listened to' in terms of your teaching issues?

APPENDIX H: Interview schedule for the head of Department of Pedagogical Training (DPT)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING (DPT)

Maximum duration of interview: One hour

Introduction:

The purpose of this interview is to obtain further information on the documents that I have had the privileged opportunity to look through. My intention is to understand the context in which the documents were prepared, as well as to understand the university initiatives that are related to them. It is NOT my intention to evaluate how well the documents have been prepared.

Mainly, our discussion will evolve around the university initiatives in providing support for quality teaching. Our discussion today will comprise:

1. details about yourself as a DPT head;
2. clarification of information obtained from DPT documents that have been provided earlier, in light of quality teaching;
3. clarification of information obtained from teachers of the university;
4. DPT's view on the quality initiatives for teachers

Are there any questions before we start the interview? I will start recording as soon as I start asking the first question. Feel free to stop the recording at any time during the interview if you feel uncomfortable.

DPT details

1. When did you take office as DPT head?
2. How many staff do you currently have?
3. Do your staff members have formal teacher training / qualifications?

DPT Documents

1. IWP : Sub initiative; teaching methodologies
 - (Refer attachment) There are 5 workshops. How are they run?
 - Is this (referring to induction course) an evolution of "Teaching and Learning Foundation Workshop"?
 - Are there other implementation work plans than workshops & proposed activities for FY 2010? (e.g. How has the "implementation work plan" been achieved so far? Teaching portfolio? Peer review/observation?)
2. There have been several proposals of activities that have been postponed sometimes for reasons unclear. Would you like to comment on that?
 - e.g. "Kursus Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran" [*Teaching and Learning courses*] 28-30/11/2007 (postponed due to teambuilding). Has this been revived?
 - e.g. "Persidangan P&P Peringkat Kebangsaan" [*Teaching and Learning Forum: National Level*] 12-13/06/2007 "Cabaran & Persaingan ██████████ Dalam Industri Pendidikan Negara dan Antarabangsa". Revived?

3. Teaching and Learning Policy
 - Where does this fit in? Who prepared it?
 - How will it be used? By TL staff / by the university? How will it be disseminated?

DPT Activities

1. Induction Course for Academic Staff
 - Has this been regular?
 - Who are the participants? Who are the target audience? How has their response / reception been? Document suggests that people have failed to attend and there had been replacement classes. Comment please?
 - Why are the facilitators internal? Would external facilitators make a difference?
 - How would you do it differently? Topics relevant?
2. Professional development programmes for Academic Staff
 - Ref : Professional Dev. Programmes for Ac Staff FY 08/09. How far has this been achieved? Why / why not? What are the barriers?
 - How do you obtain participation for the programmes?
3. UGGCTL '08
 - What's your opinion on the outcome of the conference? Has it been successful to you? Participants? Speakers? Presenters? Content?
 - How was the participants' feedback? How was the management's feedback?
 - What kind of support did you get for this conference? Management? Administrative support? Budget?
 - What kind(s) of constraint(s) did you face?
 - Would you do anything differently in the next round?
 - When is the next round?

Clarification of information from teachers

1. There have been comments from lecturers about not having time to attend your workshops. What's your comment?
2. How do you reach out to the branch campus? Are you aware if they have their own TL committee?
3. One of their responses on DPT activities is that they can't recall what they have gained from the talks / workshops. Why so you think so? What can DPT do better to improve the effectiveness of activities you run?
4. Another comment is a suggestion for a comprehensive teacher development programme. How do you see this possible?
5. There have also been comments from some professors that they do not think they need to take up what DPT has been offering. How do you reach out to these people?

DPT's view on university quality initiatives for teachers

1. One of the university's target for UGG-10 is to achieve academic/teaching excellence. How do you see DPT's role thus far?
2. What is quality teaching, in your view?
3. What's your opinion on the kind of support DPT has been given thus far? (Dean / DPT staff / other staff / university teachers / the management?)
4. What's your hope for DPT in the nearest future?

APPENDIX I: Interview schedule for the head of Department of Human Resource (DHR)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE (DHR)

Maximum duration of interview: One hour

Introduction:

The purpose of this interview is to obtain further information on the documents that I have had the privileged opportunity to look through. My intention is to understand the context in which the documents were prepared, as well as to understand the university initiatives that are related to them. It is NOT my intention to evaluate how well the documents have been prepared.

Mainly, our discussion will evolve around the university initiatives in providing support for quality teaching. Our discussion today will comprise:

1. details about yourself as a DHR head and university quality initiatives;
2. clarification of information obtained from DHR documents that have been provided earlier, in light of quality teaching;
3. clarification of information obtained from teachers of the university;
4. DHR's view on the quality initiatives for teachers

Are there any questions before we start the interview? I will start recording as soon as I start asking the first question. Feel free to stop the recording at any time during the interview if you feel uncomfortable.

Details about HR Senior Manager position and university quality initiatives:

1. When did you start holding the position as a DHR head at this university?
2. Quality improvement and enhancement seems to be the university's top agenda at present. Can you name the (major) university quality initiatives when you first took office?
3. Can you name some quality initiatives that have been introduced later while you're in office?

Clarification of information in HR documents

1. **COPPA / COPIA :**
How does DHR consider academic staffs' application to go to a workshop/course/conferences/seminar? (especially abroad to go abroad)
What does DHR do to allocate for who or what the opportunity for the professional growth is provided within the university budget?
Does DHR play a role in forwarding / sharing invitation to courses?
2. **Training grant:** only to present papers? What about attending?
: Do the young staffs have better chances? What about repeat applications?
How has DHR policy/budget changed as quality initiatives take place?
3. **Sabbatical :** How has the uptake for sabbatical been? So far, what do they go for?
Anyone teaching abroad?

4. **Industrial attachment :** Industry Linkage committee – university or government? Is industrial attachment part of govt requirement?

Clarification of information from teachers

1. There have been comments from teachers about grant being awarded is short of the necessary (e.g. RM1,000 fee for a course). Financial support for accommodation (RM120 for lecturer) seems to be insufficient. What's your comment?
2. There have also been comments about lack of time to go to workshops. What's your comment?
3. In so far, how has DHR support for teachers worked? What works and what don't?

DHR's view on quality initiatives for teachers

1. How do these support for teachers above help improve the quality of teaching?
2. What is quality teaching, in your view?
3. How does the university fit quality teaching into its initiatives?
4. What is the university's ultimate goal for teachers?

APPENDIX J: Interview schedule for the head of Department of Quality Assurance (DQA)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE (DQA0)

Maximum duration of interview: One hour

Introduction:

- Thank you for the documents.
- Research project: quality **teaching** within university quality initiatives.
- Purpose of interview :
 1. to understand DQA's roles in the university quality initiatives;
 2. to clarify information obtained in document analysis;
 3. to explore views on quality teaching from the managements' perspectives.

I. DQA's roles and details of head's position

1. When did you take office as the head of DQA?
2. How would you describe the major difference between the role(s) of DQA and DOP?
3. What role does DQA play in ensuring the quality of teaching at the university?

II. Clarifying document analysis

1. TL policy
 - Who produced the final draft of TL policy in DQA records?
 - How is it utilised? How is it shared with the academic staff?
 - In your opinion as the head of DQA, how well has the quality of teaching been enhanced within the university quality initiatives? Reasons / evidence?
2. COPIA
 - What does COPIA stand for? What is it for?
 - Area 5: academic staff
 - ➔ (support for teaching: mentor and guidance system for academic staff, peer observation for teachers with poor SEQ feedback, remedial training to assist teaching effectiveness)
➔ how does the university ensure the effectiveness of all these operating procedures?
 - ➔ (CAC – College Academic Committee) Do all colleges have it? Who does the committee report to?

III. Views on quality teaching

1. In your opinion, how do you recognise quality teaching?
2. Key terms used for university direction in institutional records (e.g. roadmap, AKP report),
 - ➔ What does the university mean by “teaching excellence”? What is the university's ultimate goal for teaching?
 - ➔ What does the university mean by “premier” and “unique and enriching learning experience”? How do you ensure that academic staffs at all levels have the same understanding of these key definitions?

3. Opinion on teaching issues? (5S, ISO, QE, AKC, QMEA, AKP – never-ending, overlapping and rigorous)
- Amidst rigorous quality activities where academic staff at all levels are involved (and seconded – taken away from teaching), how does the university improve, enhance and maintain the quality of teaching as laid out in COPIA?
- Time at work spent on committee meetings, quality activities and administrative tasks; less time for teaching responsibilities (reading, lesson preparation, class, exam prep, marking) – What's your comment?

UGG10 Strategic Plan 2007-2010 (prompts):

- Sub 5: to produce resilient graduates, attract quality students (very weak students, poor English)
- Sub 8: improve teaching methodologies and staff competence (no time to attend courses, prepare for classes).
- Sub 12: improve quality of staff (mentoring system – procedural)
- Sub 15: inculcate research culture (lack of time and resources – little funding for conference fees)
- Academic staff that are seconded?

What is your comment?

APPENDIX K: Interview schedule for the head of Department of Organisational Planning (DOP)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING (DOP)

Maximum duration of interview: One hour

Introduction:

Thank you for the documents.

Research project: quality teaching and university quality initiatives.

Purpose of interview:

1. to clarify DOP's roles in quality initiatives;
2. to understand DOP's role in the quality of teaching at the university;
3. to explore views on quality teaching from the managements' perspectives.

I. DOP's roles and details of head's position

1. When did you take office as the head of DOP?
2. Clarify roles: DOP maps out strategic plans & align with national and corporate goals; DQA benchmarks and monitors quality standards?
→ Improving, enhancing and maintaining the quality of teaching – how are the roles of DOP and DQA divided?

II. DOP's roles in ensuring the quality teaching

1. Business Plan
→ Conclusion recognises issues of high teaching load, high level of administrative work, and high teacher-student ratio.
Thus, what is the next step for DOP? How will DOP address these issues?
→ Business description, “to deliver excellent and quality educational services”
- How is this translated for teachers?
(10 strategic objectives (internal processes and enhancement of human capital i.e. teaching methodology and academic staff training and development prog).
- Who provides the input? Who monitors the execution of these tasks?

III. Views on quality teaching

1. In your opinion, what is quality teaching?
2. What is “teaching excellence”? What is the university's ultimate goal for teaching? “Premier”? Unique and enriching learning experience?
3. How do you ensure that academic staff at all levels have the same understanding of these key definitions? (between colleges, Deans, HODs) → OBE, PBL.
4. Amidst rigorous quality activities where staff at all levels, esp. the academics, do you see any impact on teaching (prompts)?
 - Sub 5: to produce resilient graduates, attract quality students (very weak students, poor English)
 - Sub 8: improve teaching methodologies and staff competence (no time to attend courses, prepare for classes).
 - Sub 12: improve quality of staff (mentoring system – procedural)
 - Sub 15: inculcate research culture (lack of time and resources – little funding for conference fees)
5. Academic staff that are seconded?
6. What is your comment? What is the university doing about the quality of teaching?

APPENDIX L: Transcriber confidentiality agreement



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www.massey.ac.nz

Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a
Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT TRANSCRIBER

I (Full Name – printed)
agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX M: Translator confidentiality agreement



Massey University
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Te Kupenga o Te Matauranga

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F 04 6 351 3385
www.massey.ac.nz

Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher
Education Institution in Malaysia

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT
TRANSLATOR

I (Full Name – printed) agree to
keep confidential all information concerning the project

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX N: Authority for release of tapescript



Massey University
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Te Kupenga o Te Matauranga

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Exploring Constraints and Support in Quality Teaching at a Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TAPE TRANSCRIPTS INTERVIEWEES

This form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview/s conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, *Thaharah Hilaluddin* in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____



APPENDIX O: Sample of teacher interview preliminary analysis

Section I. Perceptions of quality teaching

1. In your opinion, what is good teaching?

Faculty A	Faculty B	Faculty C	Faculty D	Faculty E
Teacher 1: Maintain students interest, conveys principles clearly, concisely, precisely	Teacher 1: Knows his field and the subject he teaches, understands module, content and course structure	Teacher 1: Teaches from the heart, has passion and genuine interest in teaching; want to see other people grow	Teacher 1: Has vast industry and research experience; shares with students, consider the students' level of understanding and makes adjustments to suit their needs	Teacher 1: Has sound knowledge in subject matter, has a reasonable number of experience working in the subject area, articulates information well
Teacher 2: Strong grasp of subject-matter. Maintain good relationship with students	Teacher 2: Effectively communicate subject, think of ways to pass knowledge in the way that helps students grasp knowledge.	Teacher 2: Sincere and really wants to make a difference in students' lives, has high spirit in teaching, genuine, warm, will do everything to help students learn	Teacher 2: Good presentation and delivery, has good personality, personal grooming, communication skills, confident, able to sustain student attention and interest	Teacher 2: Passionate in teaching, passes on passion for subject to students, inspires lifelong learning
Teacher 3: Use knowledge learned to apply to another or an advanced subject, relate theory and real life situations	Teacher 3: Dedicated; ensures that learning takes place in class, helps students solve learning problems using model solutions	Teacher 3: Interactive in class, responsive to students' learning and personal needs, caring	Teacher 3: Be well-versed in the subject matter, aware of the types of students who are taking different courses, tailor-make teaching to students' needs	Teacher 3: Challenge students to think analytically and critically

 Relationship with students
 Teacher's knowledge of subject
 Effective delivery
 Keep students interested
 Has work/industrial experience
 Ensures that learning takes place in class
 Challenges students' thinking

2. What are the most important things that you do in class in order to help students learn?

Faculty A	Faculty B	Faculty C	Faculty D	Faculty E
Teacher 1: Besides the board, use graphical simulations, don't give notes, ask students to solve learning problems	Teacher 1: Ask students questions while teaching to gauge understanding, keep students alert in class, make them review class notes	Teacher 1: Prepares lessons as best as the teacher can, incorporate materials from outside sources for student enrichment	Teacher 1: Know the flow of lecture and subject content, be confident, uses PowerPoint to focus on important diagrams	Teacher 1: Always make them think about 'how' and 'why' – give meaning to numbers and figures
Teacher 2: Confident to deliver lecture, has a clear overview of the subject to gauge learning outcome	Teacher 2: Develop students' confidence in speaking for communication in future job, make a difference in their lives	Teacher 2: Learn the subject first, prepare notes, go through them several times, prepare PowerPoint slides	Teacher 2: Print copies of teaching for students	Teacher 2: Use analogy and real-life examples to relate to discussion topics
Teacher 3: Tell them the relevance of activities they do in class, relate lessons to real life situations, discuss the results of students' lab experiments	Teacher 3: Tell students to engage in online academic forums, ask students to switch off computer monitor and give full attention to teacher instructions	Teacher 3: Take interest in students' personal problems to aid their peace of mind, use PowerPoint presentation	Teacher 3: Tests the students first: if they can grasp material well, give more challenging tasks, relates lessons to workplace situations	Teacher 3: Encourage students to share their personal stories

APPENDIX P: E-mail invitation for survey participants

[Print - Close Window](#)

Subject:	Fw: Test2: invitation to survey
From:	thaharah Hilaluddin (thilaluddin@yahoo.com)
To:	thilaluddin@yahoo.com;
Date:	Monday, 15 March 2010 10:13 AM

Professor, Associate Professor, Dr., Sir and Madam,

I have been given kind permission by the Vice Chancellor to conduct an online survey of all teachers at [REDACTED]. While this survey is part of my doctoral research, it mainly hopes to explore issues in teaching at [REDACTED]. With this knowledge, the study hopes to inform future efforts to improve the quality of teaching at this institution, in our pursuit for teaching excellence.

I am thus inviting you to complete the online teacher survey as linked at the end of this e-mail. Further information is as in the following:

Researcher's introduction

Name: Thaharah Hilaluddin

Work attachment: [REDACTED]

Type of research project: PhD research

University of study: Massey University, New Zealand

School/College: School of Educational Studies, College of Education

Supervisors: Dr. Linda Leach and Dr. Alison St. George

The purposes of this research project are to:

1. explore teachers' perception of quality teaching (**the word "teacher" is used as a generic term to refer to academic staff of any level**) ;
2. identify existing support for teaching that helps teachers deliver quality teaching;
3. identify existing constraints that impede the delivery of quality teaching; and
4. identify the kinds of teaching support that teachers wish could be enhanced or provided.

Note: This study is exploratory. It does NOT intend to assess your teaching quality.

Participants' anonymity

In order to protect your identity, you are not required to identify yourself in the questionnaire.

Participants' rights

1. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to decline to answer any particular question.
2. Completion and return of the questionnaire implies consent.
3. You will be given access to the summary of the project findings through [REDACTED] e-mail when the project is concluded.

Contact details

If you have any questions regarding this survey, feel free to contact the researcher at thilaluddin@yahoo.com or the supervisor at L.J.Leach@massey.ac.nz

If you agree to participate in this online teacher survey, I sincerely thank you. You may choose to complete the survey in English OR Bahasa Melayu. Feel free to choose the version you are more comfortable with, but please complete only **ONE survey**.

The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please follow one of the links below.

English version:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Qualityteachinginhighereducation_TH

Bahasa Melayu version:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Pengajaranberkualitidiperingkatpengajiantinggi_TH

Best regards,
Thaharah Hilaluddin

APPENDIX Q: Survey questionnaire

Quality teaching in higher education

1. Introduction to the survey

Greetings sahabat,

This survey is part of a doctoral research project on **quality teaching** in higher education. In this survey, I hope to explore your perceptions of quality teaching as a faculty member of this institution. I also hope to identify some pertinent issues in your own teaching contexts. With the knowledge, this survey aims to inform future efforts to improve the quality of teaching at this institution, which may further provide impetus in our pursuit for teaching excellence.

This survey is divided into **8 sections** and contains a total of **19 questions**. The estimated time completion of this survey is **15 minutes**.

You may complete this survey halfway through, choose to "exit this survey" and return to it at a different time. Your responses will not be deleted. However, you must access the survey on the **SAME** computer. You may also change your responses at any time until the survey collection is closed (**Closing date: 26th of March 2010**).

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are sharing your computer with another person, please finish completing this survey in one sitting.

Thank you for taking your time to complete this survey.

2. Demographic information

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Age:

21-30 years old

51-60 years old

31-40 years old

60+ years old

41-50 years old

3. College

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

4. Academic position:

Principal lecturer

Assistant lecturer

Senior lecturer

Tutor

Lecturer

Research assistant

Quality teaching in higher education

5. Total number of years taught at this university:

- Less than one year 7-8 years
 1-2 years 9-10 years
 3-4 years 11+ years
 5-6 years

6. The most recent work experience before being employed at this university:

- Fresh graduate
 Teaching area
 Engineering area
 IT area
 Business area

Other areas (please specify)

3. Perception of self as a teacher

The questions on this page aim to find out some background to your teaching and how you see yourself as a university teacher.

7. Which of the following statement(s) describe(s) why you've chosen to teach? (You may tick more than one answer.)

- When I graduated, there was no job available in the related professional job market.
 My educational qualifications led me into teaching.
 Job-hopping from my last work place led me into teaching.
 I wanted to try teaching.
 I have always wanted to teach.
 Economic pressure.
 Family pressure.

Other reasons (Please specify)

Quality teaching in higher education

8. Which of the following teacher roles describe(s) BEST how you see your role as a university teacher?

(You may tick up to 3; 1: most dominant role; 3: least dominant role)

	1	2	3
Instructor (one who passes on knowledge)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitator (one who guides learning)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friend (one who provides support for learning)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provocateur (one who challenges thinking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Role model (one who models appropriate behaviour to the students' future profession)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Which of the following statements describe(s) BEST, the emphasis you place in teaching?

(You may tick up to 3; 1: most emphasis, 3: least emphasis)

	1	2	3
Students' critical views of the subject discipline and how it plays its role in the surrounding community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students' high confidence level and self-esteem towards the learning of the subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students' learning activities in class and how they make sense of learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students' learning experiences that are close to situations in their future world of work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students' strong grasp of the subject content.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Which of the following statements describe(s) BEST how you know whether the students have learned well in your class?

(You may tick up to 3; 1: best way to gauge learning, 3: less of a way to gauge learning)

	1	2	3
Demonstration of learned skills in model or product-based projects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstration of skills and creativity in a variety of course work projects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Essays that demonstrate critical thinking and creativity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facial expressions or gestures in class that demonstrate students' sense of learning achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Objective test scores that are based on the content learned in the course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Perceptions of quality teaching

The questions in this section aim to explore your views on teaching.

Quality teaching in higher education

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about good teaching?

(Note: The word "teacher" here is used to include tutor, assistant lecturer, lecturer, senior lecturer and principal lecturer.)

Good teaching is when the:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
11.01 teacher knows the subject well enough to answer students' questions;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.02 teacher's teaching notes can be used for students' exam revision;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.03 teacher builds the structure of the subject content for students;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.04 teacher uses technology in teaching and learning;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.05 teacher tries to incorporate group activities in teaching and learning;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.06 teacher delivers a clear lecture;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.07 students can approach the teacher to discuss learning problems;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.08 students can approach the teacher to discuss personal problems;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.09 students can approach the teacher to have a drink together;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.10 teacher is able to raise students' interest in the subject;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.11 teacher is able to stay beyond working hours for student consultation;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.12 teacher is able to support students' job aspirations;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.13 students respond well to teachers' questions in class;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.14 students score high marks in the final exam;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.15 students thank the teacher after the course finishes;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.16 teacher scores high marks in the standard teacher evaluation form;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.17 teacher makes an effort to get open-ended student feedback on his/her teaching;	<input type="radio"/>				
11.18 teacher is granted "the Best Teacher Award".	<input type="radio"/>				

Additional comments related to any of the statements above:

Quality teaching in higher education

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about teaching and learning?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
12.01 I use technology in the classroom to make my lessons interesting.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.02 I use technology in the classroom to make my teaching structured and clear.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.03 I use technology in the classroom depending on the subjects I teach.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.04 I believe that problem-based approach to teaching can lead to effective learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.05 I believe that the conventional standard lecture can lead to effective learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.06 I incorporate group activities and projects in my lessons to promote effective learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.07 I incorporate group activities and projects in my lessons to prepare students for their future work environment.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.08 I incorporate group activities and projects in my lessons to reduce marking load.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.09 OBE helps me prepare lessons according to targetted objectives.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.10 OBE helps me with teaching approaches in class.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.11 OBE helps me with designing course assessments.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.12 OBE is not suitable for the subject(s) I teach.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.13 Knowledge is as is stated in books.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.14 Knowledge is to be constructed by the teacher.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.15 Knowledge is to be constructed by the students.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.16 I am comfortable with the way I teach.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.17 I believe that I have an interesting personality as a teacher.	<input type="radio"/>				
12.18 I try to emulate the style of teaching of teachers I know to be effective.	<input type="radio"/>				

Additional comments related to any of the statements above:

5. Perceptions of improving teaching

The questions in this section aim to explore your views on improving teaching.

Quality teaching in higher education

13. The following are some ways to improve teaching.

Based on your opinion, choose FIVE only and rank them in order of importance. (1: most important; 5: least important)

What helps improve teaching are:

	1	2	3	4	5
academic qualifications;	<input type="radio"/>				
experience in the relevant industry;	<input type="radio"/>				
doing research;	<input type="radio"/>				
teacher development courses;	<input type="radio"/>				
formal teacher training;	<input type="radio"/>				
teaching experience.	<input type="radio"/>				
Other (if any, please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

14. The following are some aspects of teaching. Which of them would you like to improve the MOST?

Choose FIVE only and rank them in order of importance. (1: most important; 5: least important)

The quality of my:

	1	2	3	4	5
teaching notes / teaching materials;	<input type="radio"/>				
teaching methods and approaches;	<input type="radio"/>				
rapport with students;	<input type="radio"/>				
motivational support for learning;	<input type="radio"/>				
feedback on students' assessments;	<input type="radio"/>				
professional conduct.	<input type="radio"/>				
Other (if any, please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>				

Other

6. Constraints on quality teaching

The questions in this section aim to find out about what prevents you from doing the quality of teaching you would like to.

Quality teaching in higher education

15. Based on your experience teaching at this university, to what extent do you agree with the following possible barriers to quality teaching?

(Note: Please think about your most recent teaching context.)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
15.01 Class capacity in the course that I currently teach is too large.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.02 I have been asked to teach courses that are beyond my area of specialisation.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.03 Students in my courses do not match the expected entry standards to take up the course.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.04 Multimedia facilities are inadequate.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.05 Classroom arrangements hamper effective teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.06 Lab facilities need to be improved.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.07 The library resources are inadequate.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.08 I have not had the chance to contribute my ideas in the design of the courses I teach.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.09 I have not received any feedback from the teacher evaluation form.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.10 The feedback of teacher evaluation form has not done much to help me improve my teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.11 I have not been able to attend RELEVANT training courses that can help me improve my knowledge and expertise in my subject area.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.12 I have not been able to attend QUALITY training courses that can help me improve my knowledge and expertise in my subject area.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.13 I have not been able to attend quality TEACHER DEVELOPMENT courses.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.14 Committee tasks take precious time off responsibilities related to teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.15 Research projects take time off responsibilities related to teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.16 Consultancy work takes time off responsibilities related to teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.17 My teaching load is too much for me to deliver quality teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.18 The university quality activities do not place enough emphasis on the improvement of teaching.	<input type="radio"/>					
15.19 The university's expectation of me as a teacher is unclear to me.	<input type="radio"/>					

Additional comments related to any of the statements above:

7. Support for quality teaching

The questions in this section aim to find out your opinion about the support for teaching at this university.

Quality teaching in higher education

16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding EXISTING support for teaching at this university?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
16.01 I have ample support to develop as an academic.	<input type="radio"/>				
16.02 I have ample support in learning how to teach.	<input type="radio"/>				
16.03 I have ample support in learning how to design exam questions.	<input type="radio"/>				
16.04 I have ample opportunity to be told whether I am teaching well.	<input type="radio"/>				
16.05 I have ample opportunity to discuss with other teachers of my subject, what they are doing in their class.	<input type="radio"/>				
16.06 I have ample opportunity to learn effective ways of teaching in my subject area.	<input type="radio"/>				

Additional comments related to any of the statements above:

17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding NEEDED support for teaching at this university?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Never heard of this before
17.01 I believe that "Peer Review of Teaching" should be continued.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.02 I believe that the "Annual Programme Review" has been a good avenue to discuss teaching issues.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.03 The university's annual "Conference of Teaching and Learning" (UCTL) has been a good avenue to enhance teaching ideas.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.04 The university's "Inbound-Outbound Teaching Collaboration" programme provides ample support for gaining teaching experiences outside of the country.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.05 The university provides ample support for industrial attachment.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.06 The university provides ample support for sabbatical leave.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.07 The university provides ample support for academic staff to further studies.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.08 My immediate superior responds well to teaching issues I express.	<input type="radio"/>					
17.09 The university provides helpful teacher development courses.	<input type="radio"/>					

Additional comments related to any of the statements above:

18. What additional support for teaching do you think is needed for teachers at this university?

8. Perception of university quality standards

The question in this section aims to find out how you perceive the quality standards set by the university.

Quality teaching in higher education

**19. The university's ultimate goal in the year 2020 is to be a "world premier university".
As a teacher at this university, how do you contribute to this goal?**