

# Towards Futuristic Education Strategy in Developing Trainee Teachers' Personality

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**Abstract:** *Teachers' personality plays an important role in educating the new generation. This paper attempts to discuss a futuristic strategy in developing trainee teachers' personality in one university course in an education university in Malaysia. The strategy is merging community with classroom using blended and Adventure Based Counseling, that is applied in Personality Development course. Trainee teachers are required to apply what they have learnt in the classroom in their community outreach programme and experiential learning. The usage of technology devices and applications are encouraged to be utilized creatively in presenting trainee teachers' real community experience in classroom. These efforts are targeted to enhance trainee teachers personality development and to prepare them mentally and physically as effective futuristic teachers.*

**Keywords:** *community-based approach, personality development, blended learning, trainee teachers, experiential learning*

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant current discussions on educating trainee teachers is related to teachers' personality development. Several studies have been focusing on the importance of teachers' engagement and the usage of technology devices and applications among students and teachers (Meyer, Wohlers, & Marshall, 2014; Kimbark, Peters & Richardson, 2017). However, far little attention has been paid to merging community with classroom using blended and Adventure Based Counselling in an education university course. Thus, an extraordinary approach is used in one university course, namely Personality Development, where trainee teachers are expected not only to attend classes in the classroom but are also actively engaged with the community. They are exposed to various experiences and social backgrounds while conducting the activities.

All the valuable experiences gained when interacting with the community are presented, discussed, shared and reflected by utilizing technology such as Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD), montage, video, digital camera and different types of video editing software. This learning process highly requires trainee teachers' critical and creative thinking, thus putting the theories learnt into practice.

The main focus of this course is to explore the trainee teachers' personalities by introducing personality theories that describe individual characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. By doing so, trainee teachers will be able to develop holistic trainee teachers' personality that align with the four components stated in the Malaysian National Philosophy, which are physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual. Besides, trainee teachers are also encouraged to embed teaching ethics, professionalism, noble and Bitara values during their learning process. Various opportunities are given to trainee teachers to practise their understanding and skills in interacting with others, including basic interviewing skills and soft skills.

The uniqueness of this course is the innovation of teaching and learning course that merges classroom and community-based learning by integrating technology in the learning process. Conventional classrooms are conducted in face to face learning with the aim of delivering theoretical knowledge and skills related to teaching profession. Delivery methods included are case study, hands-on, role play, group discussion and interactive lectures. On the other hand, community-based learning involves real situation learning that requires trainee teachers to engage themselves with the community through Experiential and Outreach Programmes. This learning process incorporates Adventure-Based Counselling.

To merge conventional classrooms learning process with community real experience, blended learning approach is utilized through MyGuru system and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) as a platform for trainee teachers to share their experiences. Several activities are carried out in these systems such as involving them in the forum and discussion, providing them constructive feedback and uploading their creative real community experience videos, pictures or montage as well as their programme reports.

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Additionally, trainee teachers are encouraged to use Plickers, Apps, Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD), Facebook, Telegram, Prezi, Blog and videos for their classroom presentations. Trainee teachers are also given the opportunity to participate in an Innovation Competition on Teachers' Personality Development which is organized by the Psychology and Counselling Department.

Hence, trainee teachers' communication skills as well as their instructional technology skills are enhanced through the usage of MyGuru system and the technology devices. In addition, experiential learning and cooperative learning also help in enhancing communication, leadership and teamwork skills among trainee teachers. Adventure-Based Counselling is also applied to enhance soft skills and Bitara values in developing towering personality among trainee teachers. The activities in Adventure-Based Counselling are outdoor activities that engaged trainee teachers with the community, and are conducted in experiential learning and outreach programme. At the end of the programmes, trainee teachers are asked to reflect on their learning experiences and provide recommendations for self improvement.

## II. DEFINITION

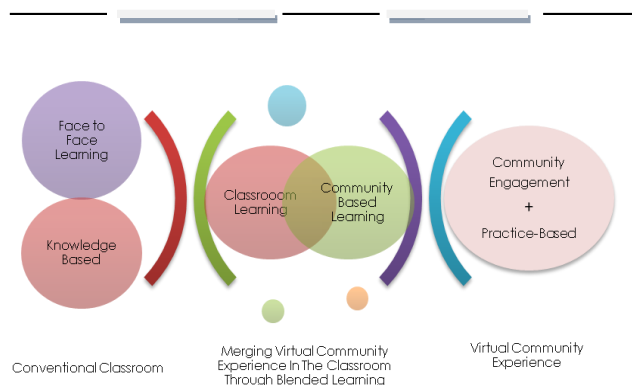
Blended Learning is an integration of information technology to enhance experience in teaching and learning of teachers and students either face to face or distance learning. The learning outcomes of blended learning can give good results to students and teachers in terms of learning, teaching and course management (Bath & Bourke, 2010). In this paper, blended learning refers to the usage of MyGuru system and MOOC for teaching and learning purposes.

Adventure Based Counselling (ABC) is an innovation of counselling approaches that emphasize team members of group counselling taking part in challenges designed to stimulate immediate feeling that are similar in real life situation. ABC approach encourages critical thinking about the immediate experience using a variety of questions during the programme (Kozlowski & Day, 2013). In this paper, ABC refers to the activities prepared in the Experiential Learning and Outreach programmes that challenge trainee teachers to be critical and creative in problem solving, thus utilize appropriate communication skills during the programmes.

Personality development consists of individual's behaviour and the interaction of the behaviour with environment (Samkange, 2015). Personality development describes an individual difference in terms of feeling, thought, and behaviour. In this paper, personality development refers to one specific university course, compulsory for all trainee teachers to know their own personality, understand others and National Education Philosophy as well as teachers professional ethics, apply appropriate communication skills, instil noble and Bitara values and discuss issues regarding teachers and teaching profession in a creative and critical way.

## III. VALUE ADDED

The innovation is developed in a harmonious environment between lecturers of the Psychology and Counselling department in preparing the course. Based on Figure 1, there are three critical stages in designing the course. The first stage involved conventional way of teaching that emphasized on theoretically knowledge and skills, without much concentration on practice based learning. According to Freire (2004), conventional way of teaching is like a "banking" model in which teachers fill the students with the contents of his narration. The students record, memorise and repeat what they have learnt, without realizing the true significant of the contents. Students may feel bored, less motivated and lost interest to follow the learning process.



**Fig. 1 Merging Community With Classroom Using Blended Learning and Adventure Based Counselling For Teachers Trainees' Personality Development**

In order to bring back the lively classroom, the merging of the community based learning through Adventure-Based Counselling, Experiential Learning and Outreach Programme are utilized in the second stage. Trainee teachers are required to go beyond the classroom learning and actively involved in the community programmes. This is the process for trainee teachers to put theories into practice where they are able to explore their own potential, strengths and weaknesses as well as to portray their inner qualities. Moreover, trainee teachers are given the opportunities to enhance their communication, problem solving and leadership skills through various programs in different settings such as schools, universities, agencies, and so forth. The engagement of trainee teachers in multiethnic, multi-religious, and multilingual society allow them to develop the sense of appreciation of cultural differences, as well as to strengthen their multicultural competency in dealing with diverse background students.

The third stage involves the merging of community-based learning with classroom using blended learning. The experiences gained during the implementation of community programmes



brought back to the classrooms to be discussed.

Trainee teachers are required to present their real experiences and idea focusing on the personality development of themselves in MyGuru system and MOOC using various types of technology devices. Moreover, a deep reflection and discussion are also expected from trainee teachers in the classrooms. Parallel learning process occurs as trainee teachers apply what they have learnt from their lecturers into community settings, and bring back the real valuable experiences into the classrooms.

As conclusion, the teachers' roles in the 21st century are not just to impart knowledge but also to develop the students' characteristics according to the six student aspirations stated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint. In order to develop quality and efficient teachers in the future, trainee teachers should undergo the personality development course that merge community with classrooms by using blended learning. Thus, this is the utmost way to develop trainee teachers' knowledge, skills and towering personality.

### III. BENEFITS OF THE INNOVATION

There are several benefits of the futuristic strategy in enhancing trainee teachers' personality development. Lecturers can easily access to the learning materials provided in MyGuru system and MOOC. Trainee teachers are also be given the opportunity to create and share their real learning materials with others through MyGuru. Regarding the teaching method, it merges the practical and theoretical aspects with the experiential learning approach, bring your own device, blended learning, thus the student centred approaches will make teaching and learning fun and lively. The content provided enables trainee teachers to gain a lot of experiences and insights, and also help them to develop their positive personality. This course also provides trainee teachers with ideas of becoming effective and professional teachers. To enhance trainee teachers' awareness and understanding of teachers role, which is not just to impart knowledge but also to develop the well rounded students' characteristics.

### IV. VALUE ADDED AND COMMERCIAL VALUE

The character building of trainee teachers through counselling approach, community based approach has develop and improve trainee teachers' communication skills skills with others from diverse backgrounds (Aslina et al, 2016a). They know about themselves, understand others and has enhance their knowledge and capability of using Blended Learning.

Its unique and universal content of this Personality Development course that utilize futuristic strategies makes it easy to commercialize locally and internationally. The content can also be used to train all teachers despite their differences in background and culture. The uniqueness of the teaching

modules that incorporate various approaches and instructional techniques creates fun and cheerfulness throughout the teaching and learning. The combination of educational, psychological and community elements in the implementation of this subject allows all trainee teachers in Malaysia and abroad to comprehend it. Moreover, the user friendly content does not require teachers to attend special classes to implement it. Thus, MyGuru and MOOC are open systems which are ready to be utilized locally and internationally.

### V. COMMERCIALISATION POTENTIAL AND RECOGNITION

The innovation of Personality Development course has been studied by several groups of researchers. Studies conducted by Aslina et al (2016a and 2016b) have shown that this course has given positive impact towards students' interest and motivation in teaching. The interest also aroused a longitudinal group of researchers from UPSI (NRGS Research Programme) and doctorate candidate in looking at the development of a teacher education model for preparing quality teachers for the future as well as developing an instrument to measure the personality development among trainee teachers. Furthermore, this course has been launched in the MOOC platform in the middle year of 2016. Reference books and modules have also been published regarding the course (Abdul Malek et al., 2014; Aslina et al., 2018; Aslina et al., 2016; Fauziah et al., 2014; Mohammad Aziz Shah et al., 2011).

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