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**BEYOND LECTURES:
INSIGHTS FROM BUSINESS
DISCIPLINES
(REFLECTIONS,
TRANSFORMATIONS, AND
THE HUMAN SIDE OF TEACHING)**

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT
UiTM CAWANGAN JOHOR**

Beyond Lectures:
Insights from Business Discipline-
(Reflections, Transformations, and the Human
Side of Teaching)

Chief Editor
Dr. Azila Jaini



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ROLE OF EDUCATORS AS MENTORS, GUIDES, AND LEARNING DESIGNERS FROM ACADEMICIANS' PERSPECTIVES IN MALAYSIA

Mazlina Ismail, Nur Adilah Saud, Muruga Chinniah

Introduction

Globalisation, technological advancement, and the growing need for knowledge-based economies are all causing major changes to education systems worldwide. The duties and responsibilities of educators in schools and higher education institutions in Malaysia have changed as a result of these changes. In the past, students were seen as passive recipients of knowledge, and teachers were primarily seen as knowledge transmitters who gave lectures. However, modern educational viewpoints stress that teachers need to take on more dynamic responsibilities that support students' overall growth. According to Malaysian academicians, educators today are required to actively promote students' intellectual, emotional, and professional development in addition to serving as mentors, advisors, and learning designers. This change is in keeping with the objectives set forth in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 by the Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Educators as Mentors

Mentorship is one of the most significant tasks of educators, according to Malaysian academicians. Mentoring is a supportive relationship in which teachers give students professional advice, direction, and encouragement. In contrast to traditional instruction, mentoring emphasises students' whole development, including their academic achievement, personal development, and professional goals. Teachers frequently serve as mentors at Malaysian higher education institutions by assisting students in overcoming obstacles in their coursework and adjusting to university life. Ismail and Abiddin (2011) assert that mentoring has a major impact on students' motivation, attitudes, and academic achievement. Teachers assist students in gaining self-assurance, leadership abilities, and a feeling of accountability through mentoring relationships. Additionally, mentoring helps students create their professional identities. For example, instructors who oversee postgraduate theses or undergraduate research projects frequently advise students during the research process. They assist students in developing research topics, choosing suitable approaches, and analysing study results. The research and critical thinking abilities that are necessary for both academic and professional professions are developed by this mentorship.

Emotional support is a crucial component of mentoring. Many students suffer from stress and anxiety because of personal struggles, financial hardships, or academic demands. Teachers who serve as mentors help students overcome these obstacles and maintain their motivation by offering support and assurance. Supportive interactions between teachers and students increase students' sense of belonging and boost academic engagement, claim Zainal and Matore (2021). Additionally, mentoring is essential in helping students get ready for the workforce. Malaysian academics frequently give students advice on professional growth, internships, and career prospects. Teachers can improve students' employability by putting them in touch with specialists in the field and professional networks. This kind of mentoring helps close the knowledge gap between academic study and practical application.

In Malaysia, where students come from a variety of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, mentoring is especially crucial. Teachers who mentor students can offer tailored advice that considers each student's unique requirements and learning preferences. As a result, mentoring promotes inclusive education and guarantees that every student has the chance to achieve academic success.

Educators as Guides and Facilitators of Learning

Malaysian academicians stress the role of educators as mentors or learning facilitators in addition to mentoring. Students had a passive role in learning in traditional teacher-centered classrooms, where teachers were the main source of information. Modern teaching methods, however, place a strong emphasis on active learning, in which students participate in debates, group projects, and problem-solving exercises. As mentors, teachers assist students in conducting independent research while helping as required. Teachers who serve as facilitators enable students to challenge presumptions, critically evaluate material, and apply knowledge in practical situations, according to Abdullah et al. (2019). Deeper comprehension and long-term knowledge retention are encouraged by this method.

One of the key responsibilities of educators as guides is to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Instead of simply delivering information, educators encourage students to evaluate different perspectives, interpret data, and develop their own conclusions. This is particularly important in higher education, where students must develop analytical abilities that prepare them for complex professional environments. Malaysian universities increasingly adopt teaching strategies that emphasize guided learning. For example, lecturers often use problem-based learning (PBL), where students work in groups to solve real-world problems. In this approach, the educator acts as a facilitator who guides discussions and encourages students to explore various solutions.

Another common strategy is project-based learning, where students collaborate on long-term projects that require research, planning, and presentation. Through such activities, educators guide students in developing teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. Guidance also involves helping students develop effective learning strategies. Educators teach students how to conduct research, evaluate sources of information, and manage their time effectively. In the digital age, where information is widely available online, students must learn how to distinguish reliable sources from misinformation. Educators therefore guide students in developing information literacy skills.

Additionally, by enabling students to assess their own learning processes, teachers support reflective learning. Students can set personal goals, recognise their strengths and limitations, and continuously improve their performance through reflection. Salleh et al. (2020) claim that reflective learning fosters lifelong learning and increases students' self-awareness. Teachers in Malaysian classrooms also direct cooperative learning exercises where students share knowledge. Students can share ideas and improve their interpersonal skills through group discussions, debates, and peer feedback sessions. Teachers assist students in developing the communication skills and self-assurance that are critical in work settings by supporting these exchanges.

Educators as Learning Designers

The use of technology in the classroom has greatly increased the role of educators. Malaysian academics emphasise that teachers now must act as learning designers, creating engaging lessons that meet learning objectives. Organising course material, choosing effective teaching techniques, and creating evaluation procedures that support learning goals are all part of learning design. Effective learning design guarantees that teaching activities, evaluations, and learning outcomes are well connected to improve student learning, according to Rahman and Abdullah (2021). Learning designers frequently include digital tools into instruction in Malaysian higher education institutions. Teachers can build interesting learning environments with the help of interactive technologies, multimedia presentations, and online learning platforms. In Malaysian colleges, blended learning—which blends in-person and virtual instruction—is becoming increasingly popular.

As learning designers, educators create cutting-edge educational resources like interactive modules, simulations, and movies. These tools make it easier for students to understand difficult ideas and interact with the material more successfully. For instance, business

professors can produce digital case studies that examine actual businesses, while engineering professors might build virtual simulations that let students experiment with technical systems. Another important aspect of learning design is the development of meaningful assessments. Educators must design assessments that evaluate not only students' knowledge but also their ability to apply concepts in practical situations. Authentic assessments such as presentations, case analyses, and research projects allow students to demonstrate their understanding in real-world contexts. Learning designers must also consider the diverse needs of students. Malaysian classrooms often include students with different learning styles, language abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Educators must therefore design inclusive learning environments that accommodate these differences. Providing multiple learning resources, offering flexible learning activities, and encouraging collaborative learning can help address diverse student needs.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, when schools switched to online instruction, the job of educators as learning designers became more important. To ensure that students could continue to learn well in virtual environments, Malaysian academicians had to modify their courses. The significance of adaptability, inventiveness, and technological proficiency in learning design was brought to light by this event.

Integration of the Three Roles

In practice, mentoring, guiding, and learning design are tightly related even though they are frequently discussed independently. To create full learning experiences that encourage both academic accomplishment and personal growth, effective educators integrate these roles. For instance, a teacher who plans a group project also helps pupils finish it and coaches them in gaining self-assurance and leadership abilities. In a similar vein, a lecturer overseeing a research project is responsible for creating suitable research activities, assisting students with their research, and mentoring them in the development of professional competences. Malaysian academics stress that ongoing professional growth is necessary to integrate various positions. Teachers need to keep up with the latest developments in educational research, technology, and pedagogy. Conferences, workshops, and professional training programs assist teachers in improving their pedagogical abilities and adjusting to changing trends in education.

Challenges Faced by Educators in Malaysia

Despite the importance of these roles, educators in Malaysia face several challenges. One major challenge is the increasing workload associated with teaching, research, administrative duties, and community engagement. These responsibilities may limit the time educators can dedicate to mentoring students and designing innovative learning experiences. Another challenge is the rapid advancement of technology. Educators must continuously learn new digital tools and integrate them into their teaching practices.

Similarly, a lecturer supervising a research project oversees developing appropriate research activities, helping students with their research, and guiding them as they build professional competencies. Malaysian scholars emphasise that integrating different jobs requires continuous professional development. Teachers must be abreast of the most recent advancements in pedagogy, technology, and educational research. Teachers can enhance their pedagogical skills and adapt to evolving educational trends with the help of conferences, workshops, and professional training programs. Furthermore, some children could find it difficult to adjust to student-centered learning strategies. At first, students who are used to traditional lecture-based instruction might find it difficult to participate in group projects or discussions. In order to assist students, adjust to new teaching approaches, educators must guide them gradually and provide them precise directions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the demands of a knowledge-driven culture and the evolving needs of education have led to a substantial evolution in the role of educators in Malaysia. According to Malaysian academicians, educators are now required to play more varied and dynamic roles as mentors, advisors, and learning designers rather than just imparting knowledge. These positions complement the Ministry of Education Malaysia's educational goals, especially those outlined in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education), which seeks to generate graduates who are creative, flexible, and able to contribute to the advancement of the country. In their role as mentors, teachers foster students' professional and personal development in addition to their academic advancement. Through mentoring, teachers assist students develop resilience, self-assurance, and a strong sense of responsibility by offering support, counsel, and direction. To help students overcome academic obstacles and get ready for future professional prospects, these mentoring connections are crucial.

In addition, teachers support student-centered learning by serving as mentors and facilitators. Teachers urge students to actively participate in debates, group projects, and problem-solving exercises rather than depending just on traditional lecture-based instruction. Teachers assist students in developing the critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills necessary for success in the contemporary workforce by leading them through various learning processes. Teachers also build relevant and captivating learning experiences by acting as learning designers. While utilising technology and cutting-edge teaching techniques, they meticulously create instructional strategies, learning activities, and assessments that are in line with learning objectives. Students are guaranteed to stay interested and be able to apply theoretical information to practical problems when learning is designed effectively.

Overall, the integration of mentoring, guiding, and learning design roles highlights the importance of educators in shaping the future generation. By fulfilling these responsibilities effectively, educators contribute to the development of knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible graduates who can support the continued progress of Malaysia's education system and society.

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