

Chapter 11

Implications of this study for the Royal Malaysian Police Force

The Royal Malaysian Police Force has embarked on many schemes and programmes to 'professionalise' the force (Aslie 1989). Training and education have long been seen to be the main method of achieving this aim. In this final chapter, the researcher draws from the findings of this study some implications for the Royal Malaysian Police Force.

Training and education at the Royal Malaysian Police Force

The Royal Malaysian Force distinguished the difference between training and education during the mid sixties (Aslie 1989). The discussion on what constitutes training and what constitutes education was seen to be a simple differentiation between what could be taught at the police college and what could not be taught at the college. The force decided that basic skills and some specialist skills such as safety, security, traffic rules, police acts could all be taught at the police college and this was training. Education for the officers would have to be developed in conjunction with

technical colleges, universities and government designated institutes. In the mid seventies, police officers were also sent overseas to pursue law and business degrees from prestigious higher learning institutions.

The history of the Royal Malaysian Police Force in relation to training and education provides a very sophisticated force that constantly encouraged higher education for its officers long before forces in the region even considered this as a viable option (Morrah 1987). The Malaysian Police Force also considered working in partnership with colleges and institutions of higher learning to develop specific programmes for its officers. What is presented is a forward thinking organisation that was advanced in its planning of training and education for its employees. The Malaysian Police Force formulated many of its training policies based on what was happening in Britain and at the FBI training college. In fact, it was the very first force in the region to send its officers to both the Hendon Police College in London and the FBI Academy (Aslie 1989). The officers who went to these institutions returned to the force and soon became senior officers. When they were in positions of power, they too encouraged their junior officers to attend their alma mater. This system is still current in the Malaysian Police Force where senior officers attend a particular

University or Institute and then provide the mentoring skills to encourage their staff to attend similar institutions to complete similar programmes.

The Royal Malaysian Police Force(RMPF) has also the advantage of having qualified instructors at the Police Colleges. The two Police Colleges, one catering for the recruits and junior officers and the other that provides senior officer training programmes both have the advantage of recruiting from the pool of highly educated police officers that are in service at any given time. The RMPF has also in the past provided specialist education related programmes from the National University for their training staff. Even though this programme was discontinued mainly due to financial constraints, the effect of having this type of programme on increasing the morale of the staff was emphasised during the interviews that was conducted with senior staff of the organisation in 1997.

The description of the training regime that has been provided on the RMPF indicates that the RMPF has been well equipped in meeting the challenges facing its training needs(Aslie 1989). This was very true in the early 1990s but there in todays environment, there are many implications of this thesis that could provide some interesting and useful lessons for the RMPF. In the next section, I shall outline these and provide

some analysis of the issues the RMPF training unit will face in the coming years.

Revisiting Training and Education of the RMPF

The methods of training and education that are currently being employed by both the junior and senior training colleges of the RMPF will be analysed. The RMPF employs both face to face and distance based education and training more than 90% of the training and educational programmes are taught face to face in classrooms. When interviews were conducted with senior staff from the RMPF, it was clear that at no time had the RMPF engaged in a detailed debate about the methods and processes of training and education. The first implication of this study for the RMPF would therefore be in relation to the processes of education and training employed by this force. As we analyse the police forces in the region, it became clear that there should be ample engagement by senior training staff with the participants in all training and educational programmes. In Malaysia, it is timely that such a process is carried out especially in relation to the processes being employed in the area of training and education. The 'critical hermeneutics' method should be introduced to the RMPF and all participants in training

and educational programmes could comment on the processes.

The RMPF would benefit greatly by providing some type of framework that would establish the ownership of the training and educational processes to the participants in these processes. Currently, the senior staff of the organisation decide on what should be taught to both junior and senior staff. Many evaluations have been carried out both before and after training has been conducted but these are evaluations and are sometimes confused with consultation. Senior staff in charge of training and education saw these evaluations as being part of the consultation process and this is correct. But there needs to be a major consultation process that would establish where the force is at the current time in relation to training and education. There has also been no major process that has been conducted to make the officers think about where the force is heading over the next five to ten years. This process must be carried out as soon as possible and one area that should be mapped out after the participants have decided where the force is heading is of course what should be the content and process of training and education.

One further suggestion is to revamp some of the training materials to be more critical in its approach. The researcher went through the entire curriculum of

the recruit programme and the strategic studies programme (for senior officers). What was clear from the curriculum was that the materials covered were all relevant but there has been no major changes made to the content of the programmes over the last 15 years in the case of the recruit programme. It is suggested that an exercise that would ensure that the participants of previous and current training programmes were consulted on the content and process of the training be carried out as soon as possible. This process would ensure that participants felt that they were involved in the process of design and content of these programmes and this was seen to be of value at the different locations where this study was carried out.

Conclusion

As Malaysian society has and is undergoing a major transformation in relation to its economic and political makeup, it is essential that it has a police force that takes into account these changes. What would be crucial is a fully trained and well educated police force. The findings of this thesis in relation to the methodology that has been used in the other jurisdictions should be applied in Malaysia to the RMPF. It is especially important that officers be asked about their perceptions on what changes they think will

be occurring to the RMPF in the next 5 years. These officers have not been asked this question in the past but it is especially important that this exercise be carried out now due to the major changes that would impact both the Malaysian society and the RMPF. The entire contents of the training programme in some areas may need to be revamped based on the perceptions of the participants of this exercise. As an example, the recent gang related activities and perceived racial tension is something that the police have to deal with everyday. The training that is provided in these specific areas to all police officers will need to be changed radically as the society faces these challenges. The RMPF has a crucial role to play in maintaining law and order and unless the officers have an understanding of multiculturalism and how to deal effectively with the changes in the multicultural society, they will not be able to play the role that society in Malaysia expects them to. A major implication from this study for the RMPF is to engage with their officers when designing training and educational programmes at all levels. This should be carried out using appropriate methodology ie critical hermeneutics. Both senior and junior staff should be encouraged to participate in such exercises from time to time in a constant fashion and a living document outlining the discussions should be created. Unless

such an exercise is embraced by all sections of the RMPF, it will not be an effective exercise. The ownership of training and educational programmes should be transferred to all officers and not just to the select few at senior levels in the training unit. And finally, a major research programme should be set up in the area of training and education of the RMPF in relation to the challenges facing the entire Malaysian society in the next ten years.