

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS IN THE FOUR CASES**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the cross-case analysis and discussion of the findings from the four cases. The preceding chapter discussed in depth the implementation of the school-based teacher evaluation practices in each individual case. The within case analysis was presented to illustrate the underlying purpose of this study, that is, to investigate how administrators in national primary schools carried out teacher evaluation practices and to ascertain the influence of the evaluation process on teacher performance. The three main research questions for this study are as follows: (1) What is the purpose of teacher evaluation in national primary schools? (2) How is school-based teacher evaluation carried out in national primary schools? (3) What are the contextual factors that affect the implementation of the school-based teacher evaluation practices in national primary schools?

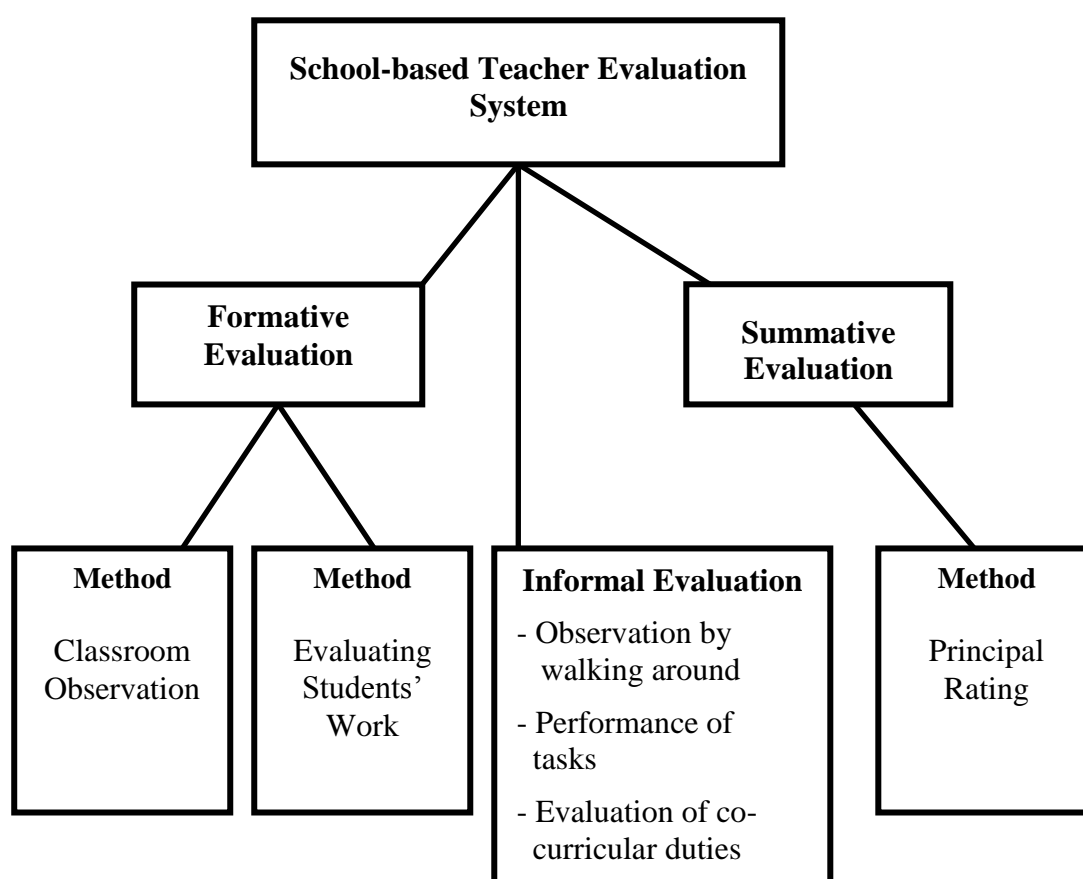
This study focused on the internal evaluation practices within the school system in the selected schools. Even though the findings indicated that external authorities conducted other forms of teacher evaluation practices in these schools, the bounded system or case (Merriam, 1988) identified in this multiple-case study is the school-based teacher evaluation system in the selected schools. The comparative summary, which is a prerequisite for cross-case analysis was constructed to identify common practices across the four schools. The findings of the study indicated that there were more similarities than differences in the overall implementation of teacher evaluation practices in the four schools.

The similarities and differences in the implementation of the school-based teacher evaluation practices are explained further through discussions based on common themes that emerged during the cross-case analysis. This include the section on common

evaluation framework; policy direction; inconsistencies in practices; dissonance between stated and actual purpose; common purpose for summative evaluation; unclear boundaries between supervision and formative evaluation; evaluation based on limited data sources; emerging discrepancies in summative evaluation; the absence of credible evaluation instruments; limited use of evaluation findings in schools; supporting factors; and impediments in teacher evaluation practices.

### **A Common Teacher Evaluation Framework**

The main similarity among the four schools was that they shared a common teacher evaluation framework. A highly centralized education system in the local context has resulted in a common teacher evaluation framework in the four schools. Figure 6.1 indicates the common teacher evaluation framework which existed in the four schools.



*Figure 6.1.* Common Teacher Evaluation Framework

The school-based teacher evaluation system in the selected schools was not established formally as a mechanism to improve teacher quality. Their system encompassed a loosely structured formative evaluation, an ongoing informal evaluation and a mandatory summative evaluation. Formative teacher evaluation looked at what happened in the classroom and it was carried out to provide feedback for improvement of instructional practice. It was solely based on classroom observation and the evaluation of students' work. Other methods of evaluation were hardly used to gather extra data about teacher performance in the classroom.

The four head teachers generally concurred on the objectives of the formative evaluation but tended to differ in their emphasis on student-learning and teachers' compliance to expectations. They used a similar set of criteria such as lesson planning, teaching methods, time management, control of class, preparation of teaching aids, and student involvement to evaluate the teachers. However, they did not go over all of their observation findings during the feedback session; if at all they did, it was on the weaknesses of the instructional practice. In fact, the teachers were generally unhappy about the way the feedback sessions were handled because it did not help them to be better teachers.

The informal evaluations were based on the overall duties performed by the teachers in the school. This helped administrators form opinions on teacher performance based on their competencies, behaviour and attitude in performing their duties. The information gathered from the informal evaluation was used for summative evaluation at the end of the year. The summative evaluation was an annual mandatory appraisal in which principal rating was used to determine teacher performance for the whole year. The disparities in the school-based teacher evaluation practices between the four schools were evident in the way the administrators implemented the evaluation system in their

respective schools. The leadership styles of the administrators had an influence on how they conducted the teacher evaluation practices in their schools.

### **Policy Direction**

A well-designed school-based teacher evaluation system can promote teacher development, improve quality and motivate teachers to perform better. What was glaringly missing in all the four schools was clear policy direction on establishing an effective school-based teacher evaluation system. Limited policy guidelines on how to design a comprehensive school-based teacher evaluation system was the main precursor to problems in evaluating teacher performance in the four schools investigated in this study. There were no documents from the federal or state authorities asking the head teachers to establish a systematic school-based teacher evaluation system incorporating both formative and summative evaluation to provide feedback to teachers. This led to a lack of true will power on the part of the school administrators to evaluate teacher regularly in order to improve teacher performance in school.

The head teachers generally believed that it was their duty to evaluate their teachers at least twice for formative evaluation and once for summative evaluation annually. A document that dated back to 1987 made it mandatory for head teachers to conduct supervision of the teachers; however, it has remained unrevised since its issuance. The circular stated that the head teachers could use the findings during classroom observations to evaluate teacher performance. Another circular instructed administrators to perform mandatory performance appraisal at the end of the year. These two circulars are the only authentic documents that offered, if at all, any policy-like guidelines on teacher evaluation in the schools. Apparently, they were not prescriptive enough and were not stringently complied as there were also conflicting views about them among the administrators and teachers. Although the administrators did not seem

certain about the content and intent of the circulars, they assumed that they supported the practice of teacher evaluation and sounded very positive about its usefulness. For the teachers, however, they seemed to convey the meaning that the teacher evaluation was being carried out just to meet administrative requirements.

Lack of specific guidelines also led to misinformed evaluators who were ignorant of proper criteria to evaluate teachers. The administrators' knowledge of performance evaluation was based on information gathered from friends and experience gained from previous schools. This was inadequate and resulted in ad hoc evaluation practices which did not benefit the teachers in the school. The administrators were confident that what they were doing in school was sufficient to supervise and evaluate teachers, but in reality they were not performing their functions as effective school administrators in their respective schools.

Due to lack of common guidelines and objectives for teacher evaluation, administrators could not clearly perceive a policy direction especially for the formative evaluation. The head teachers found it difficult to adopt a standard model for the school-based teacher evaluation system. They tended to organize it in a way that suited best and was convenient for them. As a result, there were numerous inconsistencies in how the head teachers carried out teacher evaluation in the four schools.

### **Inconsistencies in Evaluation Practices**

The difference in practice was apparent in the manner the evaluation was conducted in the four schools. Even though the classroom observation was conducted twice a year in the two schools in the state of Selangor, sometimes it did not involve the same teachers. In some schools the administrators did not observe all the teachers; only selected teachers were observed by the administrators, while other teachers were neglected.

In Aman Ria classroom observations was not carried out regularly prior to the arrival of the new headmistress. The senior assistant had been practicing a system of only observing teachers who were considered to have a problem with their instructional practice or when there was a complaint against the teacher by parents. Some of the novice teachers who had served in the school for more than three years had not been observed even once and the senior teacher could not remember when she was last observed in the classroom by the administrators.

The lack of teacher evaluation was also due to the change in administration in Aman Ria. The other three schools in this study had more regular classroom observations because the head teachers in these schools had been serving for a longer period in the school and they were more consistent in their practice. The lack of monitoring by state authorities created a *laissez-faire* attitude towards formative evaluation by school administrators, especially in Aman Ria. Teacher evaluation remained low in their list of priorities because the administrators were more concerned with maintaining high student achievement in the national examination at the end of Year Six.

The findings of the formative teacher evaluation were sent to the Selangor State Education Department authorities only by Sri Damai and Kiarra Primary School. In Aman Ria and Impiana the results were kept in the school files. The differing priorities for classroom observation in the selected schools were due to the lack of awareness on how teacher evaluation could be used as a tool for instructional improvement and better learning outcomes for students. The implementation of the formative evaluation practices in all four schools did not reflect any significant change in the instructional practices in the classroom and neither did it impact overall teacher performance in school.

The summative teacher evaluation was similar in all four schools because the administrators had to follow the mandated appraisal policy in the government system. Though the administrators in all the schools adhered to the stated policy, their methods

of rating teachers and selecting excellent teachers in their respective schools differed slightly. Three schools selected teachers based on how they had been performing throughout the year. But Sri Damai differed slightly because the administrators identified certain teachers and groomed them to become excellent teachers at the end of the year. The summative evaluation or performance appraisal rating would affect the remuneration adjustment for the teachers for the year. The teachers were not altogether pleased with the way the summative evaluation was done as well as the decisions that were derived from it.

A comparative analysis of the summative teacher evaluation practice in all four schools indicated that a mandated policy on summative evaluation leaves very little room for innovation in the designing of an effective school-based teacher evaluation system in the school. The administrators were given the autonomy to conduct appropriate school-based teacher evaluation practices to improve the quality of teachers in their respective schools. But none of the administrators in the four cases used this autonomy to develop a unique teacher evaluation system which could improve teacher performance in their respective schools. The school-based teacher evaluation practices in the four schools were expected to have an individualistic system within each case to suit the management system in school. But the inquiry revealed that the school system was tied to a centralized system that emphasized summative teacher evaluation and neglected formative teacher evaluation practices.

### **Dissonance between Stated and Actual Purpose**

The findings indicated that there was a lack of true understanding of why teacher performance had to be evaluated in school. Though the notion of improving quality was indirectly implied, implementation in the four schools did not indicate a comprehensive performance evaluation system which could help develop each teacher's potential to

meet quality standards in the profession. The administrators and teachers had diverse views on why formative teacher evaluation was carried out in their schools. It indicates the absence of a common understanding about formative teacher evaluation within the cases and also between the four cases in this study.

The administrators gave various reasons why they evaluated teacher performance in school, whereas the teachers had their own opinions on why they were being evaluated by their administrators. In some instances there was congruence between the views of the administrators and the teachers while at other times there was a difference of opinion in all the schools. Generally, there was a dissonance between stated and actual purpose for evaluating teachers in all the four schools.

The stated reasons for evaluating teacher performance in the four schools include improving instructional practice through regular feedback, quality assurance practice, monitoring performance of assigned duties, checking on adherence to stated policies and meeting administrative requirements. The administrators in all four schools were united in advocating formative teacher evaluation for improved instructional practice in the classroom. But the methods of evaluation they employed indicated that they were mainly checking to ensure that teachers performed their respective duties in school.

This was corroborated by the teachers in all the four schools. The terms ‘check’, ‘detect’, ‘assess’ and ‘gauge’ were repeatedly used by the teachers when they explained the rationale for formative teacher evaluation. A teacher in Sri Damai summed it up aptly when she said that the evaluation was carried out “to keep the teachers on their toes”. The exertion of organizational influence and control over teachers in the respective schools were indirectly implied when the reasons for teacher evaluation bordered on issues of checking performance, continuous monitoring of classroom teaching, measuring excellence, and providing feedback to rectify teachers’ weaknesses in school. The teachers were aware that their performance was evaluated to identify weaknesses



that could be rectified. Unfortunately the emphasis on teachers' weaknesses overshadowed the recognition of a teacher's strengths in the classroom. When due recognition is given to teacher performance it helps to keep them motivated, improve quality and work towards the common goals of the school.

The teachers lamented that they did not receive constructive feedback, which could help them improve teaching practice. Furthermore there was an absence of any remediation plans based on evaluation findings to overcome teacher deficiencies in the classroom. The formative evaluative process in school lacked commitment and clear direction from the administrators. However, the administrators believed that constant monitoring could improve the quality of teaching in their schools. This was seen especially in Impiana, where the administrators considered teacher evaluation as a quality assurance process to ensure that teacher quality was maintained. But the evidence of how teacher quality improved based on sporadic evaluation practices was still remote and uncertain in all the four schools.

The need for teacher evaluation practices to improve overall performance in order to ensure better student learning resonated strongly as the intended purpose of formative evaluation in the four selected schools in this study. But the link between current teacher evaluation practices and improved teacher performance was not explicitly evident in any of the schools. Subsequently the connection between teacher evaluation practices and improved student learning was also not obvious in the four schools.

### **Common Purpose for Summative Evaluation**

The stated purpose for the summative evaluation was in accordance with the actual purpose in all the four schools. The stated purpose was firstly to meet the mandatory appraisal regulations in the government sector. It was obligatory for the administrators to carry out the annual appraisal by completing the Performance

Evaluation Report PSD4/2002 and send it to the State Education Department. The findings of the summative evaluation were used to select teachers for the Excellence Service Award. Teachers were recognized for their excellent performance throughout the year and the Excellence Service Award symbolized the governments' appreciation of the contribution made by the teachers in the school.

There were other implied rationales for summative teacher evaluation, which was carried out yearly. These included using summative evaluation results to determine promotional chances and in applying for scholarship when teachers wanted to further their studies and for future professional development. The summative evaluation was also carried out to gauge the overall performance of the teacher for the whole year in the various duties given to the teachers. In all the schools the teachers were assigned duties based on the three main management aspects in school, that is, Curriculum, Student Affairs and Co-Curriculum. So how they performed each one of their duties from the various aspects determined the ratings they received for their summative evaluation. The teachers had to meet the high expectations of their administrators to receive good ratings for the final appraisal.

In all the four schools summative evaluation was not used for decisions pertaining to hiring, retaining or firing a teacher. This is because in the Malaysian context, teachers are government employees who work till retirement. Only those who have seriously breached the code of conduct are suspended or fired from government service after a thorough inquiry. Otherwise they continue to serve even if they have been given low ratings in their final appraisal.

Another similarity among the four schools is that summative evaluation did not directly affect salary increment or payment of bonus. Everyone got the same bonus annually despite their level of performance for the whole year. This led to a feeling of dissatisfaction among some teachers who had worked hard and performed their duties

well in school. It also led to feelings of apathy towards the whole summative evaluation process in school. The teachers were aware that they would be paid the same bonus despite their performance for the year. This was because the purpose of the summative evaluation was limited and it did not include decisions on giving special bonus based on performance to the teachers. It followed the public service regulations on giving bonus and incentives to government employees. This further indicated that there was no direct link between summative evaluation and improved teacher performance in school.

### **Unclear Boundaries between Supervision and Formative Evaluation**

There were grey areas between supervision and formative evaluation in the four schools. Most school administrators occasionally mistook formative teacher evaluation for clinical supervision and vice versa. Two of them regarded that the classroom observations were indeed equivalent to the clinical supervision, while the other two could not see the relationship between them. However, all four of them could not explain effectively the dynamics involved in the two activities. Although the 1987 circular from the Ministry of Education required the head teachers to conduct clinical supervision, it did not provide specific instruction on how to do it; there was no follow up training on it, either. An in-depth inquiry revealed that neither clinical supervision nor formative teacher evaluation was carried out satisfactorily in any of the four schools.

Based on the 1987 circular on supervision, the administrators were instructed to conduct supervision in schools. But none of the administrators in the four schools actually followed a supervision model espoused in the literature on clinical supervision (Acheson & Gall, 1992; Goldhammer, Anderson & Krajewski, 1993; Pajak, 2002) Even the simple structure of clinical supervision which consisted of pre-conference, observation and post-conference (Cogan, 1973) was not adhered to by the administrators in the four schools.

Over the years, the head teachers had learned to do the supervision or formative evaluation as they deemed fit. The supervisory practice in the local context consisted of sporadic classroom visits by the administrators, occasional advice given to teachers during meetings, direct assistance given to some teachers and instructions given to individuals while performing certain duties. The classroom visits were basically to judge the level of competence in teaching and not to supervise teachers on how to design an action plan for further improvement of instructional practice.

The teachers considered the classroom observation in their schools more as an evaluation practice than a supervisory duty by the administrators. The school administrators assumed that their comments, instructions and guidance given during the beginning of the year were sufficient to meet the required supervisory practice for the whole year. Generally most of the teachers in this study noted the absence of satisfactory supervisory practices in their schools. Only teachers in Sri Damai and Kiarra indicated that they were supervised by their headmistress from time to time in performing their duties.

The lack of supervision was apparent in Aman Ria where novice teachers expressed their bewilderment at the inability to perform some of their duties and spoke of lack of guidance from the administrators. The teachers had to constantly ask around and find their way through murky waters. Sometimes they were tossed into the ocean of uncertainty and sailed across to safe shores at the end of their voyage and emerged better equipped to meet the challenges in school. But there were others who were misguided and performed poorly in their duties.

The administrators in all four schools were hardly aware that supervision should precede evaluation practices to promote teacher development and ensure continuous improvement in performance. Supervisory practices should be non-judgmental and assist teachers to achieve instructional improvement goals (Glickman, Gordon & Gordon,

2004). This should be followed by regular formative evaluation to provide feedback on areas that need improvement. But the findings of this study revealed that this practice was not adhered to in the four selected schools. A further analysis of the documents indicated that the schools did not have any special program or professional development plan based on supervision or formative evaluation to promote teacher growth in school.

### **Evaluation Based on Limited Data Sources**

Another similarity in all the four school was that the school administrators used limited methods to collect data on teacher performance in school. They measured teacher performance using quantitative and qualitative methods they deemed suitable in their respective schools. An analysis of the methods used for the school-based teacher evaluation practices in the four schools indicate that classroom observation and evaluating students' work were the main methods for formative evaluation and principal rating was used for the summative evaluation. This was interspersed with indirect measures of teacher performance in school. The informal evaluation included methods used to gauge how teachers performed their assigned duties in school.

All schools indicated that they had to carry out two or more classroom observations a year. But in actual fact most of the teachers were only observed once. In order for evaluations to be a fair judgment of teacher competencies and abilities it must be carried out several times (Glickman, et al, 2004). Administrators cannot rely on single classroom visits to make decisions on performance evaluation in a school system. It would be grossly unfair to the teachers concerned. Besides classroom observations data, administrators could evaluate teachers based on 'classroom artifacts', which indicated learning outcomes (McGreal (1989) as cited in Glickman, et al. (2004). The only other alternative method of evaluation used by the administrators in the four schools was evaluating students' work in the classroom. The administrators in the four schools

considered evaluating students' work as another method of determining how teachers taught their lessons in the classroom. All the four schools had a common practice where the students' exercise books were collected and sent to the administrators so that they could verify if the teachers had given quality, as well as sufficient work to their students. This practice was carried out twice a year in the four schools. The method of evaluating students' work differed slightly between the schools. In Aman Ria, Impiana and Kiarra the teachers collected the books and gave them to the administrators who in turn checked the books and signed them. The teachers were required to fill a form to indicate that they had collected the books and passed them to the administrators.

In Sri Damai the teachers collected the exercise books and gave them to the subject panel heads. They collected, checked and signed the books before returning them to the students. They did it stage by stage where they would collect the books from one cohort of students in a particular month and later collected from another group of students until they had checked all the books. But it was not evident how administrators could rely on work given in the exercise books as an indicator of teacher performance or student learning. Teachers in all four schools were not convinced that they could be evaluated based on students' work. They were cynical and felt that this method could only indicate how much work a teacher had given to the students and not the actual learning outcome in the classroom.

The school administrators used principal rating to judge overall teacher performance during summative evaluation. This common practice in all the four schools was based mainly on the administrators' personal judgment of how teachers had performed their duties throughout the year. In this form of evaluation the administrators took into consideration the teacher's duties outside the classroom, as well as contributions to the community and the nation. An evaluation practice based entirely on the administrator's personal judgment raised questions whether the school-based teacher

evaluation system was fair, objective, reliable and transparent. The administrators were aware that the ratings given by school administrators in a district were not consistent. There was a need to shift away from complete reliance on principal ratings as the sole method of summative evaluation.

There was also inconsistency in setting work targets for the summative evaluation. The teachers were asked to set work targets in the beginning of the year. The targets set by the teachers were usually based on student achievement. The administrators would review the achievements of the targets by the teachers and give them a rating. This practice was adhered to by administrators in Aman Ria, Impiana and Kiarra. But there was a difference in Sri Damai the administrators and teachers stated that previously the teachers set work targets but now, only the administrators needed to do so.

As the literature made it explicit, as well as some teachers did explain, the head teachers could have adopted other sources for collection of data on their performance such as peer evaluation, student survey, parent survey, teacher portfolio and self-evaluation. Appropriate instruments could also be produced to support the alternative methods of data collection. They would provide more evaluative data of the teachers from different points of view and perspectives. They would enable the teacher evaluation process to be broader and holistic in a way the head teachers would never have imagined before. But, then, they would also require an able mechanism to collect the data and analyze them.

### **The Absence of Credible Evaluation Instruments**

The school-based teacher evaluation system in all the four schools used only two main instruments to measure teacher performance. The administrators used the Classroom Observation Instrument for the formative evaluation and the Performance

Evaluation Report PSD4/200 for the summative evaluation. The classroom observation instrument used in the schools had gone through some changes over the years, whilst the instrument for the summative evaluation was a standard instrument provided by the government. The Head Teachers Council had adapted the instruments from the instrument used by the Federal Inspectorate of Schools. It was clear that the reliability and validity of the instrument was not questioned by the administrators in Aman Ria, Sri Damai Primary School and Kiarra. The validity and reliability of the instrument was based on the assumption the original creators of the instrument would have made sure of the reliability and validity of the instrument.

The common trend in all the four schools was that the administrators did not develop their own instruments according to the needs of the teachers in the school. The notion that one size fits all shows the administrators' lack of knowledge about the significance of an appropriate instrument to measure teacher performance in their schools. Both the novice teachers and seniors were evaluated using the same instrument. The criteria in the instrument were not clearly defined to ensure consistency in measuring teacher performance by different administrators in the school.

The criteria used to measure teacher performance were interpreted differently by the administrators. The administrators in Kiarra left out some criteria, which they deemed not suitable, while the other administrators tried to incorporate all the criteria in their observation. All of them agreed that it was not possible to evaluate teachers based on all the criteria in the instrument in a single classroom visit. But to meet administrative needs the administrators rated all the criteria in the instrument during a single visit to the classroom.

In all the four schools the teachers were not well-versed with the instrument used to evaluate them. The novice teachers in Aman Ria and Kiarra and some of the senior teachers in Impiana and Sri Damai had not seen the classroom observation instrument



prior to the administrators' visit to their classroom. These teachers did not know what aspect of their teaching was evaluated using the instrument. Only those who had taken a look at the instrument beforehand could envisage what the administrators were evaluating in the classroom. Most of the teachers were ignorant of the indicators of effective teaching in the classroom.

The summative evaluation instrument focused on evaluating the overall performance of the teacher in the school. It did not just take into consideration the instructional practice, which takes place in the classroom. In all the four schools the administrators based their judgment on perceived notion of teacher competence in school. They gave the teachers specific duties and evaluated them discreetly throughout the year and the final judgment was given in the summative evaluation instrument. Due to this there has been a lot of unhappiness and dissatisfaction among teachers because they feel that sometimes the evaluation is biased and mainly based on what the administrators observe, and not evidence-based.

The teachers and administrators in all the four schools concluded that the Performance Evaluation Report PSD4/2002 could be revised and improved further to ensure fair judgment of teacher performance in school. The findings indicated that teacher performance could not be based on one instrument for formative evaluation and a mandated instrument for summative evaluation. In order for the findings of the evaluation to be credible, the data on teacher performance must be derived from various sources using different instruments.

### **Limited Use of Evaluation Findings in School**

The school-based teacher evaluation practices in the four schools used similar methods of evaluation to obtain data on teacher competencies, skills and behavior. The data obtained from formative and summative evaluation were used to make decisions

about overall teacher performance in school. The findings of the evaluation were seldom used to bring about significant change in the manner teachers performed their duties in school.

Two of the schools in the same state sent the classroom observation records regularly to the state education authorities whereas the other two schools in another state stored them away internally. It appeared that there was state-wise difference to what happened to the classroom observation records as certain states mandated them to be sent to the state education department, while other did not. However, all four schools sent their summative evaluation records to the state education department as required by a clause in the circular that originally propped up the practice. The summative evaluation findings were used to decide on the Excellence Service Award, promotion exercises, and offering of scholarships for further studies. But, no decisions seem to come out of them to act on the teachers' professional development or termination.

Within the schools as well, it was not a practice to act on the results of the formative teacher evaluation to improve instructional practice in the school. The teachers were given feedback and they were expected to make the necessary changes to improve their teaching practice. The lack of professional development based on the results of the evaluation was also evident in all the schools. Sometimes sporadic staff development programs especially on motivation and team-building were conducted but they had very little relevance to the outcomes indicated in the school-based evaluation exercises. Somehow the focus on teaching-learning seemed diffused. The teachers saw the irrelevance of the programs, which were focused on increasing motivation or encouraging team building among the staff. It was not to identify deficiencies and plan remediation for the teachers. All this made it even more difficult to convince the teachers that the evaluation practices were carried out to improve teacher performance in schools.

### **Supporting Factors**

The successful implementation of a comprehensive teacher evaluation system in a school depends on several factors. While some supporting factors facilitated the implementation of teacher evaluation practices to a certain extent, there were several common challenges faced by administrators in establishing an effective teacher evaluation system in the four schools. The teachers in all four schools could not really pinpoint the supporting factors within their school system because they were not really aware of the methods used by the administrators to evaluate their performance. The most common supporting factors included (i) the administrator's experience over the years, (ii) the administrator's personality, (iii) cooperation from the teachers and the passive acceptance of the evaluation process.

### ***Administrators' Experience***

The administrators in all the four schools were experienced teachers who had taught in the primary and secondary school system for several years. They had observed several teachers in the classroom and had provided feedback to improve instructional practice. They had also attended meetings with the state education authorities to discuss the details of summative evaluation in school. The administrators exchanged ideas about evaluating teacher performance with colleagues from other schools. The senior assistant in Impiana had attended courses on Training of the Trainers and therefore she was aware of different methods of performance evaluation. The knowledge she had gained during her courses had aided her in evaluating teacher performance in her school.

Likewise, the headmistress in Kiarra was a member of the panel that selected schools to confer Excellent School Award in the state of Selangor. She had knowledge of indicators of quality within a school system, which encompassed the daily performance of mandatory duties by the teachers. She was aware of the appropriate criteria to evaluate teacher performance based on her observation in the classroom and also through performance of special tasks assigned to the

teachers. The administrators in Aman Ria, Impiana, Sri Damai and Kiarra were confident that the knowledge and experience they had gained over the years helped them in their judgment of teacher performance in their respective schools.

### ***Cooperation from Teachers***

The teachers in all four schools were cooperative and never questioned the administrators about the teacher evaluation practices in their respective schools. They were mainly passive and followed instructions during formative and summative evaluation. Some of them had very little knowledge of how they were evaluated by their administrators in school. The teachers did not question the administrators about the methods or the criteria used to evaluate their performances in school. The administrators decided on the methods of evaluation and used criteria which they thought were suitable to evaluate performance. The common practice in all four schools was that there was no prior discussion with the teachers on how they should be evaluated. The lack of knowledge and interest on the part of the teachers enabled the administrators to carry out teacher evaluation practices in their schools without any resistance. The passive acceptance of the teachers in the local context had affected the effectiveness of the whole teacher evaluation system in the four schools.

### ***Administrator's Personality***

The administrators, especially the senior assistants in the school had built a rapport with the teachers and they were able to get the teachers' cooperation while evaluating them. The senior assistants in Impiana and Kiarra had a pleasant personality and were approachable. They did their best to put the teachers at ease during classroom observation. The teachers in Impiana, Sri Damai and Kiarra were allowed to negotiate with the administrators about the most appropriate time for classroom observation. This

made the classroom visits less stressful for the teachers. The cordial relationship between the evaluators and the teachers paved way for a more open and effective teacher evaluation system in the schools.

The evaluation of the teachers' performance was mainly informal and the administrators' close interaction with the teachers enabled them to capture the actual performance of duties by the teachers. They believed this provided valid insights to base judgment on teacher performance in school. The judgment was not just based on individual instances of good performance but rather a series of incidents of good work performed by the teachers throughout the year.

### ***Monitoring System in School***

A supporting factor which was noted only in Sri Damai, was the constant monitoring system established by the headmistress to obtain information about how teachers performed tasks assigned to them. She had a management book in which teachers recorded information about the duties they had performed and she checked the books regularly to ensure that duties given to the teachers were carried out properly according to her expectations. This allowed her to gather data on teacher performance throughout the year. The information gathered helped the headmistress to carry out her summative evaluation. The administrators also worked as a team while evaluating the teachers and this further helped to facilitate the implementation of the teacher evaluation system in Sri Damai.

### **Impediments in Teacher Evaluation Practices**

The hindering factors in implementing teacher evaluation practices in the four schools outweighed the supporting factors. The common factors which hindered the proper implementation of the teacher evaluation practices in the four schools were the (i)

distraction caused by other administrative duties, (ii) lack of time, (iii) the administrators' lack of subject content knowledge, (iv) inexperienced evaluators, especially the Subject Panel Heads and (v) inadequate support and policy guidelines from the State Education Department. These factors impeded the effective implementation of the teacher evaluation system in all the four schools.

### *Administrative Duties*

A common problem encountered by head teachers in all four schools was the distraction from other administrative duties. They were constantly required to attend to pressing administrative matters in school and this gave them very little opportunity to evaluate the teachers in the school. Most of the formative evaluation was carried out by the senior assistants. Sometimes when the head teachers were scheduled to conduct classroom observations they had to postpone it because of urgent matters like meeting parents or attending meetings. It was evident that the administrators' heavy workload did not give them much time to concentrate on the teacher evaluation practices in school.

### *Lack of Time*

The administrators had very little time to carry out more than two classroom observations in a year. On the one hand the administrators knew that they had to conduct more classroom observation to obtain valid information on teacher performance but due to time constraints they based their judgment on short sporadic visits carried out in their spare time. In some instances the administrators did not have the time to sit and have a pre and post observation conference with the teachers. They just informed the teachers that they were coming on a particular day and went in to observe them and walked out after the observation. Some administrators did not even have the time to provide feedback to the teachers immediately. Even during the summative evaluation at the end

of the year most of the administrators did not have the time to discuss and explain the ratings they had given the teachers. This resulted in dissatisfaction among the teachers because they were ignorant about the whole evaluation process and how teachers were selected for the Excellence Service Award in school.

### ***Limited Subject Content Knowledge***

Another common challenge faced by the administrators in all four schools was their lack of subject content knowledge. The administrators were from diverse fields and sometimes they had to observe teachers from different areas of specialization. There were only four administrators and more than 50 teachers in each school. So it was not always possible to match the administrators from the same area of specialization with the teachers they were observing. This made the teachers uncomfortable and reluctant to accept the feedback given to them by the administrators. The teachers felt that the feedback given was not appropriate to their subjects. In such instances the feedback given during formative teacher evaluation had very little effect on instructional improvement in the school.

### ***Inadequate Support from the State Education Authorities***

The administrators in all four schools did not get adequate support from the state education authorities in implementing the school-based teacher evaluation practice. This was a hindering factor for the administrators because they did not have any guidelines on how to evaluate their teachers. The administrators used their own methods to obtain data on teacher performance. The state education authorities did not provide training to the administrators and often questioned administrators who gave low ratings in the summative evaluation. The administrators, especially in Sri Damai were frustrated that they could not give low ratings or sack teachers who were incompetent. Whenever the

administrators gave low ratings, they had to provide an explanation to the state education authorities. Due to this the scores for the summative evaluation were not consistent throughout the different schools. Some administrators were lenient and gave high ratings whilst others were strict and gave low ratings. This eventually affected teacher promotion, which was based on the summative evaluation findings.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the cross case analysis to indicate the similarities and differences found in the implementation of the school-based teacher evaluation practices in the four schools. The findings showed that in all the schools teachers were evaluated based on one or two classroom observations, infrequent evaluation of student work, principal rating and informal evaluations throughout the year. When teachers were identified as having deficiencies in their teaching methods, there was very little in the way of remediation plans and support to assist the teachers in improving instructional practice. Re-evaluation was a rare occurrence and only carried out when there was a complaint against a particular teacher. Generally the school-based teacher evaluation system was seen as a mandatory process that had to be carried out to meet requirements set by the state education authorities. The administrators had total control over the school-based teacher evaluation process in the selected schools and the teachers remained passive receivers of a system which judged their performance in school.