

## Reasons for Change in Career to Teaching and Challenges Faced Among the Teacher Trainees in a One-Year Post Graduate Teacher Education Course in Music Education at a Teachers' Training Institution in Kuala Lumpur

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to explore reasons behind graduates' decisions to pursue teaching as a career and challenges experienced in a one year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education at a teacher training institution in Kuala Lumpur. Specific objectives of this study were to determine the pull and push factors that determine why young Malaysian graduates opt to change their career path to teaching at primary schools and how these young Malaysian graduates from various cultural backgrounds and qualifications view their training and face challenges in a one-year music education course. A total of 20 trainee teachers participated in this study. This study comprises two components. The first component consisted of two focus group discussions to bridge social and cultural differences amongst the participants. As a result of this first phase, trainee teachers with specific characteristics were targeted for a follow-up one-to-one interview phase. Interviews provided more insights into the trainee teachers' reasons for a career change and challenges experienced in a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education. The findings are based on the teacher trainees' narratives which have been transcribed from the focus group discussions and the one-to-one interviews. Different combinations of reasons and challenges emerged from the findings between male and female students, and these reasons and challenges experienced are further illustrated and discussed. The findings of this study would help build further development on questions arising about implications for teacher training in the future and the quality of graduates to lead music education in this nation.*

**Keyword** career change, Post Graduate Teacher Education Course, teacher training

### Abstrak

*Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti sebab utama golongan mahasiswa membuat keputusan menukar kerjaya menjadi seorang guru dan cabaran yang dilalui semasa mengikuti Kursus Perguruan Lepas Ijazah (KPLI) Pendidikan Muzik di sebuah*

*Institut Pendidikan Guru di Kuala Lumpur. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk melihat faktor-faktor tarikan dan dorongan yang menyebabkan mahasiswa Malaysia mengambil keputusan untuk menukar kerjaya menjadi seorang guru sekolah rendah dan bagaimana mahasiswa dari pelbagai latar belakang dan kelulusan memberi pendapat tentang cabaran yang dilalui setelah mengikuti kursus pendidikan muzik selama setahun. Seramai dua puluh guru pelatih telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini yang terdiri daripada dua komponen utama. Komponen pertama terdiri daripada perbincangan dengan dua kumpulan fokus. Tujuan utama dijalankan perbincangan kumpulan fokus adalah untuk menjalinkan perbezaan sosial dan budaya antara guru-guru pelatih yang dikaji. Setelah menjalani komponen pertama, guru-guru pelatih dengan ciri-ciri spesifik telah dipilih untuk kajian lanjutan berdasarkan temuduga secara individu. Dapatan daripada temuduga secara individu telah menunjukkan maklumat yang lebih mendalam tentang sebab utama mereka menukar kerjaya dan cabaran yang dihadapi semasa mengikuti Kursus Perguruan Lepas Ijazah (KPLI) Pendidikan Muzik selama setahun. Hasil dapatan yang diperolehi adalah berdasarkan maklumat yang dibincangkan dalam kumpulan fokus dan temuduga secara individu. Pelbagai sebab dan cabaran telah dikemukakan dan dibincangkan di antara guru pelatih lelaki dan perempuan. Hasil dapatan kajian ini akan membantu menangani persoalan yang ditimbulkan berkenaan implikasi terhadap latihan perguruan serta kualiti guru berijazah menjadi peneraju bagi memperkembangkan pendidikan muzik masa hadapan.*

**Kata Kunci** *Kursus Perguruan Lepas Ijazah (KPLI), latihan perguruan, menukar kerjaya*

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## Introduction

Malaysia, a growing country in the Asian region, is facing rapid changes in educational development. A few notable changes have occurred in the education policy. In higher education, Vision 2020 actually propelled the enrolment at the degree, diploma and certificate levels. To meet the manpower requirements of a rapidly growing economy, enrollment in the degree and diploma programmes increased from 131,725 in 1996 to 190,188 in 1998 (adapted from the original speech by the Prime Minister for the official announcement of Vision 2020).

The national education system is designed to produce quality world class education to achieve the nations aspiration which is, to create a nation that is fully developed along the economic, political, social, spiritual, psychological, and cultural dimensions.

In order to meet this aspiration, the current concern from the Ministry of Education is to train graduate teachers to meet the need of providing qualified teachers at all levels in primary and secondary schools. The Ministry's mission is to achieve one hundred percent graduate teachers at secondary level and twenty five percent graduate teachers at the primary level by the year 2020. Up to 2005, statistics show that a total of 11,539 (6.1%) primary school teachers and 112,578 (82.4%) secondary school teachers are graduates (adapted from the 9th Malaysia Plan launched by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato'Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, 2006).

Malaysia, like other English-speaking countries is facing a shortage of graduate teachers. There has been growing pressure to find ways of recruiting new teachers from the traditional high school leavers and to provide the quality and professionalism the teaching force in Malaysia strives towards.

The former trend was to recruit high school leavers and train them for three years in order to obtain a diploma level certificate in teaching. Replacing the baby boom generation of teachers has been of great concern to the Teacher Training Division as diploma holders would have to spend an extra three years to complete a degree. In total, it would take six years and this would be a problem to meet the Ministry's target by the year 2020. As a result of this, it was proposed that fresh graduates be recruited to meet the 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysia plan.

Teaching is often not a first priority for fresh graduates as there are better career options in the private sector. The shortage of all suitably qualified and experienced teachers promises to worsen unless teaching as a career can be made attractive to new and old graduates. In 2002, the Post Graduate Teacher Education Course (KPLI) was introduced by the Teacher Education Division, Ministry of Education, Malaysia to enable graduates in various fields the opportunity to enter the teaching profession so as to accommodate the shortage of teachers in schools across the country. The Post Graduate Teacher Education Course (KPLI) is a one-year full time course in Teacher Training Institutes throughout Malaysia. Besides that, the Ministry of Education promised a monthly allowance of RM 1300 for the duration of training at any teacher training institution in the country and assurance of a teaching position in government schools with a four-year bond after the training is completed.

The cohorts of new graduate teacher trainees who continue to sign up to become teachers every year hope of fulfilling the Ministry's target of graduate teachers at all

levels in all government schools. Many of these new entrants qualified from local and foreign universities have consciously chosen teaching in preference to a career in which they were already established. The influx of applicants applying for teaching has been overwhelming for the Ministry of Education.

Currently the intake of graduates for teacher training comprises various subject areas such as Mathematics, Science, English, Special Education, Physical Education and Music Education. Two-thirds of the intake are trained to fill in the teaching positions in primary schools, while one-third for secondary schools. Based on profile records of these graduates from the Students' Affairs Department of the institution, a majority of these graduates have been professionals in various fields (e.g. lawyers, veterinary doctors, engineers, accountants and a host of other occupations) and have now come in for a teacher training diploma.

This paper will embark on a profile of people who have decided to undertake a teacher education course as a career change into teaching and examine their experiences in a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education.

### **Aims of the Study**

The aims of the study are two-fold. Firstly, it aims at finding out reasons why young Malaysian graduates decide to change careers and opt for teaching. Secondly, it aims to explore the challenges experienced in a one-year post graduate teacher education course in music education. This study focuses on twenty students registered for a post graduate music education programme. These graduates had gained their previous degree qualifications from local and foreign universities in various fields. Since community attitudes to teachers and teaching tend to preclude it from being seen as a high status and high salary career, it is therefore of interest to ask these teacher trainees for their reasons in switching to a career in teaching.

Some of the key issues examined in this study include the pull and push factors for career change and challenges faced among the teacher trainees during a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research design and instrument***

The methodology used for this study is based on documentation of profile records of the respondents obtained from the Students' Affairs Department of the institution, a focus group discussion and an in-depth one-to-one interview. This study consisted of two phases. For Phase 1, a total of twenty post-graduates between 25 and 32 years old undertaking the Post Graduate Teacher Education Course (KPLI) in music education were selected randomly from the documentation of profile records obtained. The focus group discussion was done in two groups, of ten respondents each. The first focus group consisted of eight females and two males while the second focus group consisted of six females and four males. All the respondents were graduates from local, and foreign universities. The focus group method was a way of exploring the teacher



trainees thoughts and ideas. Focus groups are an effective method of data collection in market research because they are good for exploring people's feelings, thoughts and behaviours (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

Focus group discussions were also used to gain exploratory qualitative data administered by the researcher during a sit-down session lasting for an hour per group. This was to gather a relatively large amount of qualitative data from multiple human subjects regarding the pull and push factors for career change. The pull factors were elements that made teaching an attractive proposition while the push factors were reasons that made them decide to quit their previous career. The focus group discussion relied on the narratives constructed by the respondents. As a researcher, I decided to explore and use focus group discussions as a start because this technique enables the researcher to "collect data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" (Morgan 1996: p.130). As a moderator during the discussion, I, as a researcher had to make sure that the discussion was based on a conversational structure and the narrative produced by the group guided the production of data. The most compelling purpose of using focus groups in this study was to bridge the social and cultural differences as the respondents were from a mixed group of ethnic backgrounds.

Table 1 displays the demographic information of the respondents. They consisted of six males and fourteen females and were from different cultural and social backgrounds. Ten were of Malay origin, three Chinese, two Indian and five from East Malaysia. Sixty percent of the respondents have been working in other related fields for more than five years while forty percent of the respondents have been working below five years in other related fields.

**Table 1** Respondents' demographic information

n = 20		
Race	Malay	10
	Chinese	3
	Indian	2
	East Malaysian	5
Gender	Male	6
	Female	14
Number of years working in other related fields	below 5 years	8
	above 5 years	12

Focus group discussions also helped me as a researcher to extract information. A patchwork of different patterns was stitched together from the information gathered during the focus group discussions. This helped me to further study the challenges faced by the respondents during a one year music education training program.

Table 2 below comprises the questions that were discussed during the focus group sessions. Items 1-5 were adapted from a previous study while items 6 and 7 were additional questions asked by the researcher. The findings were based on the narratives of the respondents within a loosely structured discussion. Each group's discussion lasted for an hour.

**Table 2** An extract of questions asked during both the focus group discussions

Item	Questions
1.	Was the degree pursued at university your choice?
2.	What were the other occupations/careers you have pursued?
3.	When did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?
4.	What most influenced your decision to pursue a teaching career?
5.	What has been most influential in your decision to leave your current occupation/career?
6.	How do you see teaching as giving you a future in your career path?
7.	Do you see teaching as a career that will enhance your social status?

**Note:** Items 1-5 Adapted from: Richardson, P.W & Watt, H. M.G. (2005) "I've decided to become a teacher". Influences on career change. *Teacher and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies*, 2 475-489.

In phase 2 and as a follow-up of the focus group discussion, information regarding challenges faced during their one-year music education post graduate teacher education course was gathered using an in-depth one-to-one interview. In terms of validity, I decided to follow Daniel Wight (1994) who used the same participants from the focus group discussions. These interviews relied on the narrative voices that they constructed. This method was used as a way of drawing on a long-established tradition of post-positivist qualitative, narrative analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cortazzi, 1993; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; Mishler, 1986; Riessman, 1993). The interview was conducted using open-ended questions.

The interviews were recorded with the trainees' consent. These interviews were then transcribed. The data from the interviews were coded to determine common traits or characteristics. The data revealed a significant number of reasons regarding pull and push factors towards career change and also a variety of challenges faced in a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education.

**Table 3** An extract of some of the questions asked during the one-to-one interview

Adapted from: Richardson, P.W & Watt, H.M.G. (2005) "I've decided to become a teacher". Influences on career change. *Teacher and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies*, 21, 475-489.

Item	Questions
1.	Are you enjoying your studies in this institution? Has there been a culture shock to you?
2.	Do you have any experience in the field of music?
3.	Do you think that a one year teacher training programme in music education is sufficient to enable you to become a qualified primary school music teacher?
4.	What are your concerns regarding teacher training experiences?
5.	Do you think you'll continue to the end of your career as a music teacher or would you consider other options in the future?

## Findings and Discussion

### Focus group discussions

The purpose of the study was to find out the pull and push factors for career change. Findings related to this issue are presented in the tables below. From the above focus group discussions, the narratives produced by both groups are as follows:

**Table 4** Some of the pull factors prevalent between males and females for opting to take up teaching as a career according to priority as follows:

No.	Main Reasons - Males and Females
1.	Monetary incentives - Pension, gratuity and golden handshake for accumulated leave for a maximum of 120 days not taken by the employee during service
2.	Job Security - a future that is assured
3.	Housing and car loans
4.	Medical benefits
5.	Scholarships to further studies
6.	Long semester breaks which are fully paid
7.	Duration of working time
8.	A noble profession with an assured future
9.	Opportunity to contribute to society
10.	Greater job satisfaction with imparting knowledge

## 1. Monetary incentives

- i. Payment of *monthly allowances* amounting to RM 1300 to pursue a post-graduate teacher training programme by the Ministry of Education which is not refundable.
- ii. Importance of an assured *salary scheme* by the Ministry of Education which was revised on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia with an increase of 15% in basic salary excluding various allowances such as housing allowance and cost of living allowance. A definite increment each year.
- iii. After securing the job upon completion of training, participants are entitled to receive a *bonus* which is normally a one month salary at the end of the year. This is attractive to most of them as compared to the private sector where only a handful may receive three months bonus or some do not receive any bonus based on performance.
- iv. All confirmed teachers are entitled to receive a *pension* and *gratuity* upon retirement. Should the person concerned pass away before or after retirement, his or her spouse is also entitled to receive a pension. Teachers who accumulate leave for a maximum of 120 days are entitled to receive a *golden handshake* which is equivalent to four months of their last drawn basic salary.

## 2. Job Security

All trainees are assured of a job in states of their choice upon completion of their post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) with a bond of four years with the Malaysian Ministry of Education. Even though they fear a posting to any remote or urban areas, most of them normally secure a posting according to their choice of application.

## 3. Housing and car loans

Once these teachers are confirmed in their jobs after three years of service, they will be entitled to apply for housing and car loans at a low interest rate compared to banks and financial institutions. The employee is given up to 25 years to settle housing loans and 8 years maximum for car loans.

## 4. Medical benefits

Teachers are entitled to free medical treatment at all government hospitals during service and even after retirement. Women are entitled to free maternity medical benefits at government hospitals and paid leave up to 60 days while husbands are entitled to seven days paid paternity leave.

## 5. Scholarships to further their studies

Teachers who are interested to further their education are given a chance to apply for scholarships at Masters and PhD level at local and foreign universities. All



tuition fees are paid by the government. They also receive their full salary and allowance every month. Candidates are also granted leave without any break in service during the years of study.

6. Long semester breaks which is fully paid  
Both male and female teachers are happy with the long semester breaks which occur four times a year. They also enjoy a total of 11 weeks of paid school holidays in a year.
7. Duration of working time  
Teachers are attracted to the shorter working hours as compared to the longer hours in the private sector. As teachers, they work half a day compared to longer hours in the private sector. One respondent said, *"I used to leave for work when the sun is still not up and return when the moon is out"*.
8. A noble profession with an assured future  
These graduates feel that this profession is respected by society and there is an assured future. Even though teachers in urban schools face a lot of criticisms from parents, they are still respected and honoured for their services especially by children on Teachers' Day 16<sup>th</sup> May each year.
9. Opportunity to contribute to society  
These graduates would like to contribute their experiences to the younger generation in terms of sharing knowledge gained during their school and university days.
10. Greater job satisfaction imparting knowledge  
The respondents mentioned that they would experience greater job satisfaction when their students are successful and this would be a source of encouragement to them.

**Table 5** What are the push factors among male and female graduates to opt for teaching?

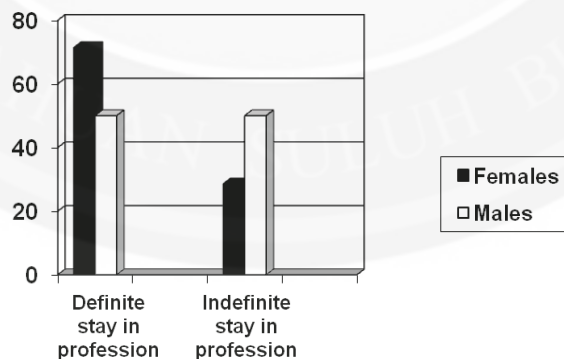
No.	Main Reasons- Males	Main Reasons-Females
1.	Difficulty in finding jobs related to degree obtained	Competing in a male dominated field
2.	Unemployed for certain periods of time	Pressure after marriage to spend more time with family
3.	Job opportunities only in big towns rather than in small towns	Family background of teachers Parents are teachers and daughters in particular are encouraged to opt for teaching as a career
4.	Very competitive in the private sector	Love for children-nurture little children Being a mother

Table 5 (cont.)

5.	Slim chances of promotion due to favouritism in the private sector as compared to the public sector	Working late hours and having to socialize which is against religion- entertaining clients
6.	To try a new venture	Pressure of working overtime in the private sector has indirectly affected health - example high blood pressure.
7.	Working based on contracts Unsure of renewal of contracts- not stable	Wanting to contribute to society
8.	Uncertain of their future	Tired of changing jobs within a short span due to contracts that are not renewed (job hopping)
9.	Working in various jobs not related to qualifications obtained	Choice of degree offered and degree obtained at university does not meet demand in job market
10.	Poor command of English and communication skills which are required in the private sector	Want to experience working with a younger group.

Out of the 20 respondents in this study, it was revealed that during discussion, ten out of fourteen female respondents said that they would stay on in this career till retirement. As for the male respondents, three out of six expressed that they were still quite skeptical about staying on long and did say that they might move on once their bond is over with the government. Below is a percentage analysis of respondents desire to stay on, or leave the teaching profession.

Figure 1 below states the percentage as follows: Definite stay in profession is 71.4% for females and 50% for males while indefinite stay in profession is 28.5% for females and 50% for males.



**Figure 1** Percentage analysis of respondents desire to stay or leave the teaching profession

### One-to-One Interview Session

Below are findings from the one-to-one interview session conducted with 20 respondents regarding challenges faced during a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education.

From the tape recordings transcribed, more interesting personal data was revealed as they were shy to express their inner feelings during the focus group discussions. These findings answered the research questions relevant to the topic on reasons for opting and challenges faced during training. The quotes below explain the inner feelings of the respondents which were not prevalent during the focus group discussions.

Some of these personal reasons are quoted below:

- a. I just fell into the job. It's never really been my first choice as I'm fed up with scraping by. This job gives me security and I'm paid a good amount each month to study. I'm also not sure if I will be able to have patience with primary children in schools next time. There is a lot for me to understand about children and my training here is giving me new ideas but I feel that one year is not enough for me. I hope I'll be able to sustain long in this profession as I actually applied for IT but was given Music Education. This was an initial disappointment to me. I have no basic in music and it feels like a whole new world. (Malay male with a degree in Multimedia)
- b. People outside have told me that it is easy to pass a teacher training course but I know that it isn't true especially specializing in an area I have never explored before. The music syllabus is of high level and all these musical notation is new to me. I have been actually struggling. I hope I won't be a boring music teacher next time. It is so different from banking. A whole change from numbers to musical notes. (Iban female {indigenous group} with a degree in Banking)
- c. It has not been easy dealing with the outside world and I've had some unpleasant experiences having to entertain clients till late night. This is against my religion and may also cause unhappiness in my married life. (Malay female with a degree in Mass Communication)
- d. I'm afraid that I won't be able to sustain long in a primary school as I find it not challenging, and relationships with primary children are very different. I'm unable to give much knowledge especially in the field of music and therefore this restricts my potential to go further at a deeper level. I feel that someday I may look elsewhere for better satisfaction (Chinese male respondent with a degree in Food Industry)
- e. I have had the challenge of competing with graduates trained overseas and this has been a stressful time for me as my command of English is much weaker than those qualified from abroad and I have been told off a couple of times by

my boss for my weakness in communication. Pursuing this music course is challenging but I'm trying my best as I love music. (Kadazan male {indigenous group} respondent with a degree in Malay linguistics and drama)

Some key issues raised regarding challenges experienced in a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education are as follows:-

- a. Unable to transfer knowledge gained at university to the post graduate course as they are pursuing a different field of study.
- b. Some of them experience lack of assistance from the staff of the institution during times of difficulty.
- c. Academic staff have high standards and expectations of these respondents as they perceive them to be high achievers and experienced people
- d. It's a stressful time when academic results do not meet the post graduate teacher education standards.
- e. The challenges of becoming a music teacher within a short frame of time which is merely 40 weeks.
- f. Some have faced personal challenges related to being relocated away from friends and family, health and relationships.
- g. Concern about the ability to learn new contexts and situations in a short frame of time.
- h. A whole new world to be explored in a specialized field within a compressed time.
- i. Pedagogical aspects in teaching music in the classroom and mode of delivery.

### Conclusion of Findings

The study has revealed the reasons behind why young Malaysian graduates opt to become teachers and undertake a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education. Of the study conducted through focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews, it seems that the main aim of these respondents are for monetary benefits. This situation is similar to the number of people training to be teachers in England and Wales as it was reported that the number in both these places increased for the first time in eight years because the pay scale is being improved and extended.

Other reasons are job security as these graduates are sure of a job at the end of their training and are assured of their job until retirement. This situation is different elsewhere especially in the private sector where jobs are determined by contracts. Long term benefits such as housing and car loans as well as free medical benefits have also been a pull factor. Enjoying long fully paid semester breaks is a great attraction as other jobs do not offer such benefits. For most of them, the duration of working time is also another factor of encouragement as they are able to have more family time. These young respondents have also mentioned that teaching is a noble profession and therefore want to contribute to society and have the privilege of job satisfaction by imparting knowledge to the future generation. These factors are common among both males and females.

As for the push factors, there were both similarities and differences between males and females. The similarities were obviously in terms of unemployment. Due to this scenario, it is very obvious that these graduates have faced a time of uncertainty in their future and also great competition in the outside world.

As for differences in push factors, the males have different reasons such as venturing elsewhere, becoming tired of odd jobs and being weak in communication skills. This is different from females as marriage and family play important roles in their lives. Also working conditions that are suitable for them according to their culture and religion are found to be essential for their well being.

In contrast, there were other personal reasons mentioned during the one-to-one interviews. Here again there were some differences amongst males and females. Some males have reluctantly opted for teaching in terms of monetary gains. And it is very obvious that due to their lack of interest, they are unsure of remaining long as teachers in primary schools. The other great challenge is weakness in communicating in English. This is prevalent mostly in males compared to females. This is of great concern as the Ministry of Education places importance on English Language in schools. The other reason is looking for independence and autonomy. This situation may be a priority for someone who has not had good experience in the private sector.

As for females, family commitment plays an important role. As most of them are married or getting married, they hope to develop motherly instincts to nurture the future generation. Additionally, some have expressed their love for teaching children.

Regarding their experiences and concerns undertaking the post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education, most of them have expressed their concern regarding the ability to learn new things in a short frame of time. This new knowledge is not similar to what they have done in the university before. Also they are expected to perform at a high level and meet the standards of teacher education as they are perceived as matured students. It is also a great transition for them to handle primary school children as compared to dealing with adults in the private sector.

### **The Implications for Teacher-Education Development**

From the above study, it is obvious that many young graduates opt for teaching as a career due to unemployment and also monetary benefits. This is an issue of great concern as the Ministry of Education wants to meet its target of having 100% graduate teachers in all secondary schools and 25% graduates in all primary schools by the year 2020, as well as fulfilling the shortage of teachers. It is prevalent that most of these graduates are applying with the intention of getting extrinsic rewards such as an attractive allowance to study, job security, holidays and salary (Moran et al., 2001; Hayes, 2004). Several questions would then arise from this scenario. For example “Do these graduates truly have an interest in teaching?” or “What will the outcome be in the future for music education in schools?”

The other issue is the challenge of having to grasp all pedagogical aspects in a specialized area such as music education in 40 weeks. Recognizing the pending crisis, teacher education programmes will struggle to address teacher shortages issues while maintaining high standards to prepare highly qualified teachers (Alliance for Excellent



Education, 2004). This is also another important issue of concern for teacher training programmes to be successful.

Finally, this study has provided insights into the main reasons why young Malaysian graduates opt for teaching as a career. The narrative analysis transcribed has given insights on the pull and push factors between males and females opting for teaching and the challenges faced during a one-year post graduate teacher education course (KPLI) in music education. This group plays an important part in bolstering the profession and signaling that teaching as a career still holds attractions.

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### Biography

Edna Wellington is currently a music lecturer and curriculum coordinator of the Music Education Department, IPG Kampus Ilmu Khas, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur. She holds a Bachelor of Education degree in Music from the University Of Otago, New Zealand and a Masters' Degree in Educational Administration from Universiti Putra Malaysia. Edna has been actively involved in teacher training for the past twenty years. The subject areas she teaches at teacher training level include music teaching approaches, curriculum and music teaching, piano playing, theory of music and foundation of music education. Besides supervising final year semester students in their Action Research projects, she has also played an active role in research for music education and has published papers in action research journals for IPG Kampus Ilmu Khas. She is also a member of the editorial board for the publication of the research bulletin in her institution. Her research interests include current issues and development in music education for teacher training.