



## Durham E-Theses

---

### *Classroom structures, culturally-derived values and students' motivational orientations: a comparative study of two types of primary schools in Hong Kong*

Lui-Lau, Icy

#### How to cite:

---

Lui-Lau, Icy (2001) *Classroom structures, culturally-derived values and students' motivational orientations: a comparative study of two types of primary schools in Hong Kong*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/3844/>

#### Use policy

---

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full Durham E-Theses policy](#) for further details.

**Classroom structures, culturally-derived values and  
students' motivational orientations: A comparative study of  
two types of primary schools in Hong Kong**

**by**

**Icy Lui-Lau**

**Thesis**

**Presented to the Graduate School of**

**The University of Durham**

**in Partial Fulfilment**

**of the requirements**

**for the Degree of**

**Doctorate in Education**

**June 28, 2001**

**The copyright of this thesis rests with  
the author. No quotation from it should  
be published in any form, including  
Electronic and the Internet, without the  
author's prior written consent. All  
information derived from this thesis  
must be acknowledged appropriately.**



**26 MAR 2002**

**Classroom structures, culturally-derived values and students' motivational orientations: A comparative study of two types of primary schools in Hong Kong**

**by**

**Icy Lui-Lau**

**Thesis**

**Presented to the Graduate School of  
The University of Durham  
in Partial Fulfilment  
of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
Doctorate in Education**

**June 28, 2001**

**Abstract:**

At a time when policy-makers in Hong Kong are pushing for educational reforms, there seems to be an increasing interest for both the Government and parents to use success stories of our western counterparts as a point of reference in guiding reforms. The general purpose of this study was to examine the subtle interplay of factors (e.g. classroom structures, culturally-derived values, teachers' perceptions of 'what counts' in education, students' perceptions of their learning, government policy and resources allocation etc) that might contribute to students' motivation orientations. Two primary classrooms, one from each education system (a local school and an international school in Hong Kong), were analysed. Subjects for this study were 80 students who completed a questionnaire and 20 students and 5 teachers who were interviewed individually by the researcher. They were chosen from two Key stage 2 classes in each of the two targeted schools. One specific focus of this investigation was to examine whether there were any significant differences in students' motivational orientations in the two classes of students (who came from two types of schools) studied. A second specific focus was to examine whether there were any differences in the classroom structures and practices between the two classes of students and, if so, to find out to what extent did they account for the differences in students' motivation orientation. The third specific focus was to examine the extent to which culturally derived values served to affect teachers' interpretation of their professional values and definitions of good educational practices, which in turn defined how they structured their classroom. The last focus was to examine the extent to which culturally derived values served to affect students' perceptions of the classroom instruction, and their definition of 'how learning should happen' in the classroom. Findings from this study could shed light on whether policy-makers are heading for the right direction in education reforms.

**Sincere thanks to Professor M. Byram for his patience and valuable guidance**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

|     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| 1.1 | Statement of the problem and purpose of the study..... | 7  |
| 1.2 | Research questions .....                               | 21 |
| 1.3 | Significance of the Research .....                     | 23 |

### Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Part I : The relationship between motivation and classroom processes*

|           |   |    |
|-----------|---|----|
| 2.1       | Introduction .....  | 26 |
| 2.2       | The important role motivation plays in students' learning .....   | 27 |
| 2.2(i)    | The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.....  | 28 |
| 2.2 (ii)  | Advantages of Intrinsic motivation  |    |
| 2.2 (iii) | Optimizing intrinsic motivation in the classroom:<br>enhancing students' perception of academic competence and<br>perceptions of control .....  | 35 |
| 2.2 (iv)  | Factors that affect one's perceptions of academic competence<br>and perceptions of control .....  | 37 |
| 2.2(v)    | How students' perceptions of their abilities affect their learning<br>behaviour .....   | 45 |
| 2.2(vi)   | Goal Conceptions of Students .....  | 48 |
| 2.3       | Maximising intrinsic motivation, the salience of instilling<br>in students a mastery goal orientation and a sense of<br>belongingness: classroom structures/instructional practices<br>that can be mapped in relation to mastery and performance goals... | 54 |

#### *Part II : The effects of culturally derived values in the classroom*

|        |  |    |
|--------|--|----|
| 2.4    | Cultural influences on students' motivation and teachers'<br>pedagogy.....               | 71 |
| 2.4(i) | A Framework for comparing cultural differences.....                                      | 73 |
| 2.5    | How teachers' professional perspective affect classroom<br>structures/ processes .....   | 78 |
| 2.6    | How students' perceptions of classroom structures and<br>processes affect learning ..... | 82 |

## **Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY**

|            |  |            |
|------------|--|------------|
| <b>3.1</b> | <b>Methodology .....</b>   | <b>88</b>  |
| <b>3.2</b> | <b>Instrumentation .....</b>   | <b>92</b>  |
| 3.2(i)     | Getting a comprehensive view of the classroom processes in the two classrooms by using the SCOTS Schedule.....                               | 92         |
| 3.2(ii)    | Gauging students' motivation and finding out whether or not there are significant differences between students from the two classrooms ..... | 102        |
| 3.2(iii)   | Gauging students' perception of the classroom processes.....   | 110        |
| 3.2(iv)    | Gauging teachers' pedagogy/professional perspectives and perception.....   | 112        |
| <b>3.3</b> | <b>The Piloting Stage.....</b>   | <b>114</b> |
| <b>3.4</b> | <b>Characteristics of the schools.....</b>   | <b>120</b> |
| <b>3.5</b> | <b>The Data gathering Schedule.....</b>  | <b>122</b> |

## **Chapter 4 : RESEARCH FINDINGS**

|            |   |            |
|------------|---|------------|
| <b>4.1</b> | <b>Are there significant difference in classroom processes in the two classes studied .....</b>   | <b>125</b> |
| 4.1 (i)    | Class "P"(the local school) : Dimension on Teachers' role and authority.....  | 128        |
| 4.1 (ii)   | Class "K"(the international school) : Teachers' role and authority.....   | 142        |
| 4.1 (iii)  | Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Teachers' role and authority.....  | 152        |
| 4.1 (iv)   | Class "P"(the local school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation/ recognition and Time use.....          | 162        |
| 4.1 (v)    | Class "K"(the international school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation / recognition and Time use..... | 170        |
| 4.1 (vi)   | Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Task Orientation and; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use.....       | 175        |
| <b>4.2</b> | <b>Are there significant differences in students' motivation orientations in the two classes studied?.....</b>                                      | <b>184</b> |
| 4.2 (i)    | The MANOVA Test.....  | 185        |
| 4.2 (ii)   | The ANOVA Test.....   | 186        |
| 4.2 (iii)  | The Discriminant Analysis.....  | 188        |
| 4.2 (iv)   | The Inter-correlation Test.....   | 190        |
| 4.2 (v)    | Summary.....  | 194        |

|                                  |   |            |
|----------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>4.3</b>                       | <b>Are there significant relationships between motivation orientation and classroom structure?.....</b> | <b>195</b> |
| <b>4.4</b>                       | <b>How do culturally-derived values influence teachers' perception of teaching?.....</b>                | <b>198</b> |
| 4.4 (i)                          | Findings 1: Perception on the degree of freedom in defining the curriculum.....                         | 201        |
| 4.4(ii)                          | Findings 2: Perception on Discipline.....   | 207        |
| 4.4(iii)                         | Findings 3: Perception on homework.....   | 209        |
| 4.4 (iv)                         | Summary.....  | 212        |
| <b>4.5</b>                       | <b>How do culturally-derived values influence students' responses to learning? .....</b>                | <b>214</b> |
| 4.5 (i)                          | Perception on criteria for success.....   | 215        |
| 4.5 (ii)                         | Perception on Control in the classroom .....  | 219        |
| 4.5 (iii)                        | Perception on task orientation and structure.....   | 221        |
| 4.5 (iv)                         | Perception on their relationship with teachers.....   | 223        |
| 4.5 (v)                          | Summary.....  | 225        |
| <br><b>Chapter 5: Conclusion</b> |   |            |
| <b>5.1</b>                       | <b>Conclusion and implications.....</b>   | <b>227</b> |
| <b>5.2</b>                       | <b>Reflections.....</b>   | <b>233</b> |
| <br><b>Bibliography.....</b>     |   | <b>235</b> |
| <br><b>Appendix.....</b>         |   | <b>245</b> |

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.1 | Statement of the problem and purpose of the study |
| 1.2 | Research questions                                |
| 1.3 | Significance of the Research                      |

### **1.1 Statement of the problem and purpose of the study :**

#### The background to the study:

In Hong Kong, many parents are concerned about the quality of education their children are receiving in the mainstream education system. When the economic crisis hit in 1997, international and private schools expected the worst. But many began the new academic year with full classes and long waiting lists, while the English Schools Foundation (ESF) has more students at its schools than ever before (SCMP, 1998). There is a growing number of Chinese parents who are choosing to put their children to study in international schools in Hong Kong instead of the local schools for their primary education. One parent who chose to transfer his son (who is studying P.4) from one of the most prestigious local schools to an English Foundation School said that he was concerned about the fact that his son was too afraid of making mistakes, both in his school work and in his daily life routines. Another one said his son's ego suffered because he always just got 80+ marks in his tests and examinations at school while the rest of his class usually scored 90+ or even 100 marks and he expected that the "more

progressive methods” adopted by international schools can solve his son’s problem. The fact that these parents are looking to the English Foundations Schools or International Schools as an answer is an interesting phenomenon. Would a change of school have any impact on the learning outcomes of the students? To what extent is it a wise move on the part of the parents? What is the difference between the two types of schools? How are the schools different in the curriculum they have to follow their ethos as well as the cultures or classroom environments? Would a change of school have any impact on the learning outcomes of the students? In other words, what are the impacts or effects of a difference between the above mentioned items on the development of the children?

At the same time, the push for education reforms in local primary schools have been the focus for policy-makers over the past few years. There is a general impression that the education in Hong Kong needs a transformation in order “to achieve the overall aims of education for Hong Kong for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which should be :

“...To enable every person to attain all-round development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics according to his/her own attributes so that he/she is capable of life long learning, critical and exploratory thinking, innovating and adapting to change; filled with self-confidence and a team spirit; willing to put forward continuing effort for the prosperity, progress, freedom and democracy of their society, and contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large” (Education Commission, 2000, p.6).

It is stated in the reform proposals that the education system in Hong Kong needs an overhaul and that there is a need to “preserve the basic elements of traditional

Chinese education while absorbing the most advanced concepts, theories and experiences from modern western education.” (Education Commission, 2000, p.4). It also points out that “we (must) address the inadequacies within the existing education system to enable the majority of Hong Kong people to achieve lifelong learning and all-round education” (bid). The inadequacies in our present system include features like “...school life is usually monotonous, students are not given comprehensive learning experiences with little room to think, explore and create...”(bid). One of the visions of the reform aims at “creating an inspiring learning environment that is conducive to the creative and exploratory spirit” (Education Commission, 2000, p.5). One of the ways to achieve the above aims is to “develop an education system that is rich in tradition but cosmopolitan and culturally diverse: to help students develop and international outlook so that they can learn, work and live in different cultural environments” (bid). The intentions of borrowing policies and experiences from our western counterparts are made clear and loud from the reform proposals. As policy-makers are pushing for educational reforms in using success stories of our western counterparts as a point of reference, it is of paramount importance that we are aware of the different characteristics of the education settings, understand the concerns (priorities, fears and worries) of the major participants (teachers and students) of our own education setting and be informed about the possible problems that may arise out of policy borrowing and transfer on an international level.

What parents and government appear to find attractive in western schools seems to be the effect of a different approach to learning, of differences in classroom methods/processes and the environment as a whole offered by the school. They also appear to think that the environment as a whole has different effects on students’ motivation to learn, students’ willingness to put effort in learning and students’

perception about their own academic ability. The focus of this thesis is therefore to investigate whether these perceptions are justified and what conclusions might be drawn if they are.

### The two types of school in Hong Kong

To fully understand environmental effects on motivation of students, it is important to seek out schools and classrooms that vary on key environmental characteristics. Given the fact that the two streams of primary schools (local and international) in Hong Kong are thought to vary in school culture and organisation, classroom structures and practices such as method of evaluation, task organisation, ability groupings, and opportunities for student involvement, it is worthwhile to use these different parameters to find out the effects of these classroom environmental features on students' motivation.

It is generally believed that schools from the local primary education system and the international school education system are quite different in all aspects concerning school culture and organization. Firstly, it appears that pupils, parents and teachers from the two communities share different beliefs on what counts as good educational practices and 'what works' in education because of their different national and historical background. Secondly, there seems to be some differences in the classroom processes in the two types of schools. It is a generally accepted fact that the local education system is a highly competitive one. Tests and examinations are a part of the students' school life. Rote learning and memorisation are part and parcel of the system. Some local parents complain that the schools place great value on getting good grades in

public examinations and hence students treasure a reward system that glorifies outstanding academic performances. It is common to find parents spending their weekends and days doing homework with their children, preparing them for tests and rehearsing them for exams. The set-up in most classrooms (with rows of desks and chairs facing the front) reveals that frontal teaching is still predominate. It is perceived by many that the use of peer group discussion is not common and students are often not involved in any decision making process in the course of their learning.

On the other hand, the primary education system provided by international schools or English Schools Foundations is thought to be quite different. It is commonly believed that students have a more “enjoyable or happier” time in international schools. Students’ life is believed to be characterised by a variety of activities and experiences. It is a fact that there is no continuous presence of examinations and tests in the schools. At the end of the school year, instead of receiving a report card filled with grades, parents receive a detailed description of how their child has progressed throughout the year. Comments from teachers usually reveal that emphasis of evaluation is placed not only on the academic side of the child, but also the social and personal development of the pupil as well. There is a general feeling that in the classroom, more “exploratory or progressive” methods of teaching are adopted and pupils are given more opportunities to work in peer groups and take part in group discussion. The set-up of the classroom (with work tables or desks formed in a circle) reveals that students are often encouraged to work together. It is also perceived by some parents that students in the schools are allowed to take part in decision-making process in the course of their learning.

The two streams of primary schools offer an interesting comparison that will become the focus of this research. It would be of interest to find out, first, if the



perceived differences are real and second, if they are, what impact they have on students' motivation, which is believed by most researchers to be the key to students' learning and outcomes. However, it is also important that we consider what other factors might be interacting with these to contribute to the difference. Below is a preliminary overview of the literature which would lead to a further refinement of the two paramount questions under study.

### Factors that contribute to student outcomes and goal orientations

Before investigating systematically the environmental factors parents and government perceive to be significant, I will briefly show that there is existing evidence in the literature that they may well be right. The following chart shows how the effect of school can influence students' motivation. It is adapted and derived from the overview of school effects in Lee, Bryk, and Smith (1993).

### School Culture and Organisation

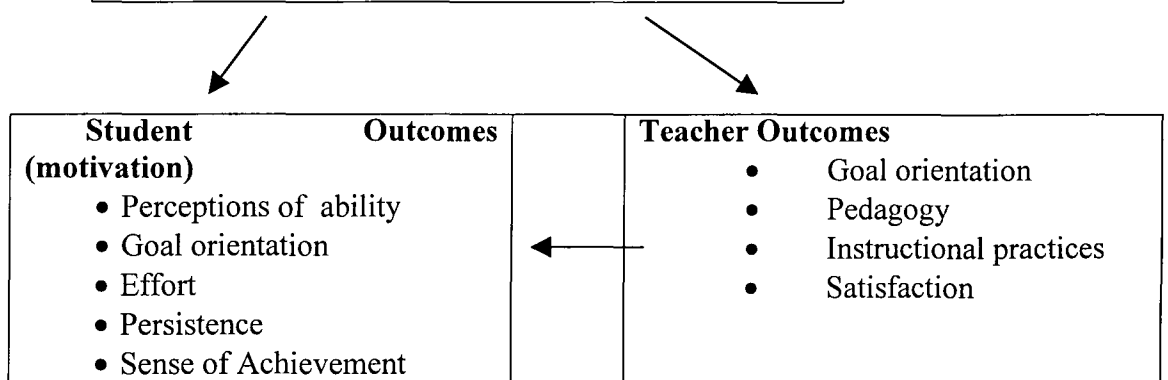
#### Home and classroom environments

##### *a. Culturally-derived values*

- Norms, values, shared beliefs and climate
- Policies, resources

##### *b. Classroom structures and practices*

- Task and work structures
- Authority and management structures
- Recognition and reward structures
- Grouping practices
- Evaluation practices
- Time use



Educational psychologists have used various models that include many cognitive, affective, and social factors to portray the complex process of school learning. The above model has highlighted the significance of the impact of school culture and organisation on students' outcomes and teachers' outcome.

One of the best elaborated and most widely tested of the models used to portray the complex process of school learning is Walberg's (1984) educational productivity model, which links nine variables of ability, development, motivation, amount and quality of instruction, home, classroom, peers and out-of academic learning environments as the

most significant factors in the process. Among the four classes of environmental variables (home, school, peer and the mass media) considered in a meta-analysis based on Walberg's productivity model, home environment and classroom environment had the largest average correlation with students' achievement (Fraser, Walberg, Welch, & Hattie, 1987).

The home and classroom environment refers to the norms, values and shared beliefs of the parents, principals and teachers of the schools that pupils are in. This makes up the culture of the school. Woods (1990) defined culture or cultures as “social, shared, systematic, cognitive, learned. They include values and beliefs, rules and codes of conduct and behaviour, forms of language, patterns of speech and choice of words, understandings about ways of doing things and not doing things” (p.27). Recent comparative studies on how different cultural values influence educational values have revealed that parents, teachers' and students' understanding of various educational practices and their goals such as teacher-student relationship, control over learning, autonomy in the classroom, and how to achieve them are related to national culture (Alexander, 2000; Dimmocks, 2000; Broadfoot et al., 1994; Planel, 1997;). These studies have suggested that culturally-derived values are embedded in the national traditions and historical background of the nations and are manifested in teachers' priorities and students' preferences for a particular kind of classroom pedagogy and interaction patterns in the school. As we can see from the chart above, it constitutes one major part under the column of school culture and organisation that affect students' and teachers' outcomes.

Another important source to influence students' and teachers' outcomes is the school's climate. Maehr (1984) defined this in terms of students' personal

interpretation of classroom events from their own perceptions. It is also coined as “psychological environment”(Maehr & Midgley, 1991, p.405). This concerns the importance of student perceptions in depicting classroom climate and their interpretations of events. Since students have different classroom experiences and prior experiences with them, they may interpret a teacher-student interaction or event quite differently (e.g., Meece et al., 1988). Children internalise the ground rules, values and expectations in the social world of their home and school. How students react to or respond to different classroom activities can affect their learning outcomes. Similarly, teachers contribute significantly to classroom climate through their views on the nature of the teachers’ job, their definitions of their professional responsibilities and objectives etc. Their views would in turn determine how they structure their classrooms and affect students’ motivation orientations and outcomes.

Alongside cultural values of teachers and students, another factor that influences teachers’ and students’ outcome is policies and resources. Government policies and ways of allocating resources have a strong impact on the teaching and learning process. The amount of funding government put in education affect class size, physical space and resource level, all of which contribute to different classroom environments for teachers and students. Also, public examination systems, selection criteria for higher education have direct effect on the teaching and learning process. As Dimmocks (2000) points out, government policy permeates the many tiers of the school organization and affect classroom processes as well as teaching pedagogy and students’ learning styles.

The next set of integral elements classified under the column of school culture and organisation are factors associated with classroom structures/processes. They include task and work structures, authority and management structures, recognition and reward

structures, grouping practices, evaluation practices and time use. They form an important source of influence on students' motivation outcomes. Theorists (e.g., Ames & Ames, 1984; deCharms, 1986; Ryan, Connell, & Deci, 1985) have conducted numerous researches to find out the relationship between classroom structures/processes and their impact on students' outcomes. Their research findings suggest that classroom structures/processes and conditions have a direct effect on students' motivation outcomes.

To sum up, there are multiple factors that contribute to students' motivation and learning outcomes. Among them are: (1) the cultural values of the community: firstly they predispose what teachers consider "works" in education and hence their ways in organising their classes; second, they constitute past experience and this determines how students respond to different classroom activities, which may in turn affect their learning motivation and outcomes. (2) government policy and resources allocation: they permeate the school organization and directly affect classroom characteristics such as class size and resource support level, which have impact on the teaching and learning process (3) the classroom structures/processes of the school: Various structures such as task and work structures, authority and management structures, recognition and reward structures, grouping practices, evaluation practices and time use have a direct impact on students' motivation orientation. From here, I can generate the next set of questions I would like to explore in this investigation. Apart from the first two questions which are:

- (1) Are the perceived differences in terms of classroom structures/processes in the two types of school real?

- (2) If they are real, what impact do they have on students' motivation and learning outcome.

The next questions that can be generated from here are :

- (3) What is the role cultural values play in contributing to or shaping the perceived/real differences in the two types of schools? These values include teachers' values as well as students' values.

#### A look at the experiences in other countries

In the United States, researchers like Ames and Ames (1984, 1992), Elliot & Dweck (1988), Hoyle et al. (1988) and Meece (1991) have conducted researches which link different classroom processes and structures to different motivation in students. Their findings have shown that characteristics of the learning situation itself are likely to influence students' goals in learning. In social psychological terms, classrooms can be characterised as strong situations with fairly explicit expectations, structures, and cues that govern behaviour. Researchers have identified certain classroom structures that would predispose pupils to adopt a particular goal orientation in learning. This orientation in learning would consequently affect how students think about themselves, their tasks, and their attitudes to learning. Specifically, the research findings suggest that when pupils are oriented towards task-mastery goals, they would report on a willingness to use more effort-based strategies in learning, an active involvement and engagement patterns in the classroom, positive self-concept of ability and longer persistence on challenging tasks. On the other hand, when pupils are oriented towards

performance goals, they would report on effort-saving strategies in learning and lower level of involvement and engagement patterns in the classroom. They would see learning as a means to an end. A sense of accomplishment is derived from demonstrating superior ability, avoiding challenging or difficult work that can result in negative ability judgement, and a preference to work hard only on tasks that lead to extrinsic rewards.

However, researchers are aware of the fact that specific classroom structures should not be viewed as autonomous or an independent contributors to student motivation (Ames 1992). According to Marshall & Weinstein (1984); classroom structures are interdependent on other factors like school and government policies. The impact of mastery-oriented structures on student motivation may be enhanced or even subverted by school practices that, for example, make performance salient (e.g. public recognition and award programs), or encourage social comparison (e.g. classification of schools into different bands according to students' examination results). Another movement that illustrates the fact that classroom structures interact in a multiplicative manner with other factors that contribute to the larger structures of schooling is the attention by researchers given to the role of student perceptions and interpretations of their schooling processes (e.g. Ames & Archer, 1988; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986). The importance of student perceptions in depicting classroom climate and how they give personal meaning to classroom events and experiences is now well recognised as one major factor shaping their motivational orientation. Ryan and Grolnick (1986) argued effectively for attending to the "functional significance" (p.550) of the environment, referring to the meaning children give their own experiences. In exploring students' thoughts, perceptions and interpretation of their school experience, it is essential to consider the effect of culture and social traditions on students. Social constructionist

theorists (e.g. Mercer, 1991) maintain that social and cultural values dictate the ways individual students react and respond to learning. An understanding of children's learning requires a prior analysis of the social and the cultural: "Human thought, perception and action must be approached in terms of meanings" (Ingleby in Richards & Light, 1986, p.305). The ways in which culturally-derived values can affect students' perceptions in classroom activities constitute a major factor contributing to student motivation.

Likewise, how teachers structure the classroom would have direct influence on student outcome and motivation. Teachers' goal orientation and pedagogy is in turn a result of the interplay of a number of factors. Teachers' beliefs about the efficacy of certain teaching strategies and instructional practices is influenced by what they believe works best in their education setting. Researches have shown that teachers' goals for children's learning, their belief systems, or broader views about schooling are strongly inter-related (Broadoot 1992; Marshall 1988; Nicholls, Cheung, Lauer, & Patashnick, 1989; Paris & Newman, 1990). What makes teachers 'tick' in their education setting is associated with their hopes and their fears, their expectations, their habits, their beliefs about what works in education and their prejudice and their sources of satisfaction. Again, their professional perspectives are mediated by an institutional setting that is shared with their immediate colleagues and a national setting that is shared by all other players (e.g. parents, students, principals). Thus, the ways in which culturally-derived values affect teachers' goal orientation and outcomes act as an important contributor to classroom structures/processes, and the way teachers structure their lessons have impact on students' motivation and outcomes. A study on what influences students' choice of goal orientation is not complete without knowing the teachers' values.



All this calls for an integrative approach to the study of the impact of different classroom environments on student motivation (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984). This study is concerned with the effects of different classroom structures and culturally-derived values on the motivational of pupils in two types of primary schools in Hong Kong. The focus is on using an integrative approach to find out to what extent different factors (e.g. culturally-derived values and classroom structures) contribute to student motivation orientation in the two types of school. Of particular interest is that this is a comparative study which looks at international comparisons of school culture and organisation within the same geographic location, i.e. Hong Kong.

## **1.2 Research questions :**

As a consequence of this preliminary review, we can now aim at addressing the following research questions by doing a comparative study of the two types of schools:

1. To examine whether there are differences in the classroom structures and practices between the two types of primary schools.
- 2a. To examine whether there are any significant differences in students' motivational orientations in the two types of primary schools
- 2b. To identify the relationship, if any, between different classroom structures on students' motivation orientation.
3. To examine how culturally derived values affect
  - teachers' interpretation of their professional values and definitions of good educational practices
  - students' perceptions of the classroom instruction and learning environment : how students react to their learning tasks and classroom instruction and how it in turn affects their motivation orientation

Thus questions 1 and 2 focus on the explanatory relationships among factors in schools and classrooms, and question 3 seeks to relate these, where they exist, to the wider social-cultural context.

### **1.3 Significance of the Research :**

The results of this exploration will reflect the subtle interplay of factors (e.g. culturally-derived values, teachers' pedagogy, students' perceptions of their learning, classroom structures) that contribute to students' goal orientations and outcomes. Patterns of classroom interactions and processes that may be favourable or unfavourable for individual children as they engage in learning activities would be explored in different school contexts. Problems of borrowing or transfer of 'what works' in one education system to another will be identified. Findings will hold implications for educators and curriculum planners as they plan for or review children's learning environments and classroom interaction processes.

Benefits to children and parents will include teachers' increased knowledge and understanding of favourable classroom interactions that may promote children's intrinsic motivation to learn. An increased awareness of classroom conditions that are: (a) more conducive to creating the motivational orientations that facilitate active involvement and engagement in classroom activities (b) that motivate students to invest time and mental effort to learning tasks. This knowledge would help teachers improve their teaching.

Benefits to educators, curriculum planners and policy makers as they plan for or review children's learning environments and classroom interaction processes include a heightened sense of awareness of the need to address issues that concern the larger structures of schooling (e.g. teachers' pedagogy, students' perceptions etc.) when they implement any changes to the already existing system.

## **Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Part 1 : The relationship between students' motivation and classroom processes***

#### **2.1 Introduction**

#### **2.2 The important role motivation plays in students' learning**

2.2(i) The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

2.2 (ii) Advantages of Intrinsic motivation

2.2 (iii) Optimizing intrinsic motivation in the classroom : enhancing students' perceptions of academic competence and perceptions of control

2.2 (iv) Factors that affect one's perceptions of academic competence and perceptions of control

2.2(v) How students' perceptions of their abilities affect their learning behaviour

2.2(vi) Goal Conceptions of Students

**2.3 Maximising intrinsic motivation, the salience of instilling in students a mastery goal orientation and a sense of belongingness: Classroom structures/instructional practices that can be mapped in relation to mastery and performance goals**

### ***Part II : The effects of culturally derived values in the classroom***

#### **2.4 Cultural influences on students' motivation and teachers' pedagogy**

**2.4(i) A Framework for comparing cultural differences**

**2.5 How teachers' professional perspective affect classroom structures/ processes**

## **2.6 How students' perceptions of classroom structures and processes affect learning**

## **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to review and analyse previous research which have been conducted both in Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world like Britain and the United States and consider their relevance in the present study. In the first part, I will start by reviewing the literature relevant to the relationship between the various motivation constructs and classroom instructions/processes. In particular, I will be focussing on the motivation constructs of academic self-concept; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; mastery and performance orientation; work-avoidant and self-regulation; and social self-concept. Since these constructs are the basics on which this research will be constructed, the literature review will attempt to analyse what other researchers have found out about these constructs and evaluate how they are related to classroom processes/instructions. By reviewing the relationship between these constructs and different classroom processes, issues that are relevant to the present study will be identified and used to formulate and refine the research questions in this study. In the second part, I will review literature on international comparison of how cultural values influence educational practices and priorities, especially as reflected in teachers' definition of a productive classroom and students' preference for a particular style of teaching or interaction pattern in the classroom. By reviewing how other researchers have attempted to approach the problem, a comparative framework on which this part of the present study is conducted will be identified.

## **2.2 The important role motivation plays in students' learning**

In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s there have been numerous researches on motivation, which is generally agreed to be the key to student learning. Concepts like intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, students' perception of their own competence and sense of control over their study, mastery-oriented goal or performance goal theories are much explored. Educators and theorists (e.g. Meece, 1991) agree that learning involves the active process of integrating and organising new information, constructing meaning, and monitoring comprehension. For even the most capable students, high levels of effort, concentration, and persistence are needed in order to develop a sound understanding of a subject matter. Yet classroom research indicates that teachers often find it difficult to motivate students to engage themselves purposefully and actively in the learning process (Brophy, 1983; Stake & Easley, 1978). Educators are keen to find out answers to the following questions :

- What are the factors that motivate students to allocate time and mental effort to learning tasks?
- What makes students want to succeed on school tasks?
- What are the variables that foster an intrinsic motivation and interest in learning in students?
- What orientates students to positive attitudes toward learning?
- What make students engage actively in the classroom and display high levels of task engagement?



- What inculcates a positive self-perception of ability and competence in students and helps develop their confidence in themselves as a learner?
- What make students persist longer on difficult tasks and be more ready to take up challenge?
- How can educators create classroom situations that develop self-regulated learning on the part of pupils?

To answer the above questions, we need to look at what are on students' minds in the classroom.

## **2.2(i) The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation**

The question of how to promote academic motivation and academic performance in classrooms has been the focus of research on motivation in the past years. Traditional researches on motivation has focused on individual differences in internal states and traits, such as achievement needs, motives, and values to account for student motivation.

### Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Theorists and researchers of human motivation point to two generic types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Lepper & Greene, 1978; Malone & Lepper, 1987).

Intrinsic motivation refers to the students' inner desire to accomplish a task successfully. Deci (1975) defines children as intrinsically motivated when they involve

themselves in activities or tasks they enjoy, because they enjoy doing them for their own sake ; they find a sense of personal satisfaction on completion of the tasks and not because of any extrinsic rewards.

In contrast, “extrinsically motivated children” refers to children who are motivated by external controlling variables (e.g. incentives like sweets, stickers ,money or avoiding punishment). While extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations are at work in most classrooms, some researchers observe that school systems and classroom practices across the world, especially those in the United States, are designed to promote extrinsic motivational orientations almost exclusively (Lepper & Hoddell, 1989; Ryan, Connell, & Deci, 1985). Good grades, colourful stickers, praise are used as extrinsic rewards for competent work and co-operative behaviour. In some schools, the right to play sports and be involved in other sorts of extracurricular activities is often used as an extrinsic reward for satisfactory grades. According to Spaulding (1992), high school students in the USA with a good record of extracurricular activities and top-level grades are rewarded with entrance into top-of-the-line university. In other words, there is a whole series of external rewards employed by schools in the U.S. to ensure desirable behaviour from students. Meanwhile, many teachers and principals seek to rely on a series of external punishments like loss of recess, detention after school, announcement at assembly, suspension or expulsion to make sure students’ undesirable behaviour is kept at bay. It seems that the use of these external controlling elements have become part and parcel of the present day education system.

However, researchers point out that we cannot rely too heavily on a system that promotes extrinsic motivation to nurture a new generation of individuals who are capable of independent choice, long-term planning, perseverance, and the maintenance

of confidence in the face of unclear outcomes or actual setbacks (Dweck & Bempechat, 1983). While we are not sure when a student does something because of an extrinsic reward or for intrinsic reasons, researchers have pointed out that students do need to have moments of internal pleasures and sense of satisfaction derived from their schoolwork in the process of learning to keep them going. In other words, teachers need to be aware of when to rely on extrinsic motivators and when to promote a more intrinsic motivational orientation. And more importantly, teachers need to know how to help their students move from extrinsic to intrinsic motivational orientations. Also, it is equally important that teachers need to provide opportunities, for all students during their days at school, to experience some level of intrinsic motivation for at least some parts of the curriculum. The more students recognise that academic pursuit can lead to pleasure and personal satisfaction, the more devoted and involved they will be in their schoolwork.

## **2.2 (ii) Advantages of Intrinsic Motivation**

Having identified the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, in this part we will look at the advantages associated with the enhancement of intrinsic motivation in students.

### Sustaining Positive Learning Attitudes and Desirable Learning Behaviour

Researchers consider intrinsically motivated achievement behaviour and learning attitudes more desirable than externally motivated behaviour and learning attitudes. The main reason is primarily because external reinforcement is not always available. If a student becomes dependent on external rewards or putting effort into her

work, she may not have positive learning attitudes or desirable learning behaviour. Take for example, a student who wants to ensure success in her school work and gain approval from teachers and parents – such a student may become dependent on external rewards offered around her. She may be tempted to invest effort in areas where external recognition is readily available but keeps herself from engaging in learning activities outside school, where grades and other forms of recognition are less available. She thus becomes keen to gain recognition by investing effort in areas where rewards are available. If learning is perceived as an activity that one does only to obtain rewards and avoid punishment, there is no reason for her to do it when no rewards and punishment are likely. She may also prioritise her school works according to the rewards or recognition attached to it. For example, if a high score in English would enable her to get into a ‘good’ class under a school system whereby students are streamed according to their ability, she may invest more effort in studying English, whereas she may not invest the same effort in another subject like Social Studies, the score of which is not counted in the streaming system. In other words, the student becomes dependent on external rewards and her learning attitudes and behaviour are affected by this dependence.

Also, intrinsically motivated students tend to be more task-focused and task (or learning, or mastery) oriented. Meece, Blummenfeld, Hoyle (1988) demonstrated that there was a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and a task orientation. They found that fifth and sixth graders’ scores on Harter’s measure of intrinsic motivation were positively associated with scores on a measure of performance orientation when working on science tasks. When the student is mastery oriented, her attention is focused on the process of completing the task or making sense of and mastering the material. On the other hand, extrinsically motivated students tend to be

more performance-focused and performance (or ego) oriented. The students' attention is focused on outperforming others and getting external reward or recognition. Numerous studies have proved that intrinsic motivation has all the benefits of a task-orientation such as more active problem-solving strategies, greater persistence, moderate risk-taking abilities and a preference for challenging tasks etc. (e.g. Boggiano, Pittman, & Ruble, 1982; Boggiano et al., 1988). These are desirable behaviour and positive attitudes that students need in order to achieve well in their learning.

### Effects on Conceptual Understanding and Creativity

Research suggests further that intrinsic interest or motivation is associated with greater pleasure and more active involvement than extrinsic interest or motivation (Harter, 1992). It was found that the conditions which produce interest and enjoyment (i.e. foster intrinsic motivation) facilitate conceptual learning, and conditions that engender an external locus of causality (such as an emphasis on evaluation) undermine conceptual learning. Researchers have also found that students learn better and understand more if they are intrinsically motivated to learn. Ryan, Connell, and Plant (1990), found that college students who reported relatively more enjoyment while reading a text had relatively greater comprehension. In another study, Benware and Deci (1984) compared two groups of subjects and revealed that intrinsically motivated students scored better on the conceptual part of an exam while extrinsically motivated students scored less well on the conceptual part but better on the rote-learning part. In the study, the first group of subjects were told that they would simply be tested on material they were asked to learn while the second group of subjects were told that they

were learning material to teach other students. The second group, who were considered to be intrinsically motivated, scored higher on the conceptual part whereas the first group scored higher on the rote learning recall part.

Other studies have found that conditions supporting intrinsic motivation foster greater creativity (Amabile, 1983) and cognitive flexibility (McGraw and McCullers, 1979). Amabile (1983) reported that the art work of female college students who expected to be graded was judged to be less creative than the work of those who did not expect to be evaluated. In the McGraw and McCullers' study, college students who were promised monetary rewards for solving a series of problems had more difficulty “breaking set” (solving a problem that had a different solution from the previous problems) than students who did not expect a monetary reward. In a study with children’s performance, Butler and Nisan (1986) found that when evaluative feedback was given in the form of grades, children’s performance on a quantitative task subsequently increased and their performance on a task assessing divergent (creative) thinking declined; written comments, in contrast, resulted in improved performance on both tasks.

To summarise, researches have shown that conditions associated with extrinsic motivation have a negative impact on conceptual and creativity thinking. The reason for this is unclear but Amabile (1983) suggests that extrinsic contingencies can create an instrumental focus that narrows attention and orients individuals to take the quickest and easiest solution. It is also possible that students are used to being evaluated on rote learning more than on conceptual understanding; as a consequence, those who expected to be evaluated in the studies described above focused their attention primarily on facts that could be memorised.

## Pleasure

Intrinsic motivation and a mastery orientation are also associated with greater pleasure and greater emotional involvement than extrinsic motivation or a performance orientation. In a study by Ames and Archer (1988), they found that students who perceived their classroom as supporting mastery orientation liked their class more. Similarly, another study by Elliot & Dweck (1988) revealed that children who had low perception of their ability but were placed in a performance-oriented classroom expressed negative feelings about the task with comments like : “ After this (task), then I get to go?” “This is boring”, “My stomach hurts” (p.10). Children who were task-oriented rarely made such comments, whether or not they believed they were competent at the task or not.

As summarised by D. Stipek(1998, p132) , student behaviour and learning attitudes which are associated with high intrinsic interest are outlined below:

### **Behaviour Associated with Intrinsic Motivation**

*Students who are motivated intrinsically:*

- ◆ Initiate learning activities on their own
- ◆ Prefer challenging tasks or pursue challenging aspects of tasks
- ◆ Spontaneously make connections between school learning and activities or interests outside of school
- ◆ Ask questions that go beyond the present task –to expand their knowledge beyond the immediate lesson

- ◆ Go beyond the requirements
- ◆ Are reluctant to stop working on tasks they have not completed
- ◆ Work on tasks whether or not extrinsic reasons (e.g., grades, close teacher supervision) are salient
- ◆ Smile and appear to enjoy working on tasks
- ◆ Express pride in their achievements

In summary, because of these benefits of intrinsic motivation, it is important to take good advantage of the vital role that motivation plays in education. One of the focuses of this research is to measure and compare the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of students from the two types of schools and find out whether students differ in their motivation.

## **2.2 (iii) Optimizing intrinsic motivation in the classroom : enhancing students' perceptions of academic competence and perceptions of control**

### Self-Perceptions of Competence and Intrinsic Motivation

In the last part, we discuss the importance and advantages of intrinsic motivation in learning. Now, we turn to look at ways that can optimise intrinsic motivation in the classroom. Over the years, researchers have found out that people tend to be intrinsically motivated in situations in which they feel competent and self-determining (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985). That is, if individuals perceive themselves as capable



of performing successfully in a given situation (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Schunk, 1989) and they also perceive that situation as one that they can control or regulate in some meaningful way (Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985 ; Stipek & Weisz, 1981; Weisz & Cameron, 1985), then they are more likely to be intrinsically motivated than if either or both of those self-perceptions were not present (Spaulding,1992). Intrinsic motivation, seen in this perspective, then is the psychological state that results when individuals see and feel themselves as having the opportunity to take control, or having the ability to control. Just as feelings of efficacy and competence engendered by success at challenging tasks reinforce mastery efforts and enhance intrinsic motivation for individuals to engage in similar tasks, feelings of incompetence undermine intrinsic motivation. Working on a task without achieving success destroys enthusiasm for working on similar tasks.

This link between mastery and intrinsic motivation is seen to be a pre-condition for academic success. Many studies have demonstrated that students who believe that they are academically competent are more intrinsically interested in school tasks than those who have low perceptions of their academic abilities ( Boggiano, Main, & Katz, 1988; Harter & Connell, 1984; Mac Iver, Stipek, & Daniels, 1991). Studies also revealed that students' interest in a subject increased in line with their self-perceptions of competence (Mac Iver, Stipek, and Daniels, 1991). Harter reviewed further evidence, suggesting that perceptions of competence engender positive affective experiences, which in turn engender intrinsic motivation.

In addition, perceived academic competence has been found to be a stronger predictor than actual academic competence of future interest in and engagement with related tasks (Bandura , 1977; DiClemente, 1981). In other words, if a person perceives

herself as having the ability to succeed in a situation (either because of similar encounters in the past or a friend whose ability is more or less the same as her own has succeeded in the situation), she will have a higher chance of investing more effort and being interested in the activity and having confidence to become successful in the task. On the contrary, if a person who has actual competence to succeed in the situation fails to believe or perceive that he can succeed in the activity, she has a lower chance of investing effort and having the confidence to become successful in the task.

To conclude, since self-perceptions of academic competence are such an important contributor to students' academic motivation and linked up with intrinsic motivation, we need to understand how such perceptions are developed and maintained, and this will be one of the areas of investigation in this study.

## **2.2 (iv) Factors that affect one's perceptions of academic competence and perceptions of control**

Having established the central role that one's perception of academic competence and perceptions of control play in enhancing intrinsic motivation, we will now look at factors that can affect students' view of their competence and control.

### Perceptions of Ability

Perceptions of ability play an important role in all cognitive theories of achievement motivation. In the following section, we will review theories that explain what are the factors that shape students' self-perception.

#### Teacher Expectancy Theory:

This theory rests on the assumption that teachers help shape their students' self-perceptions of competence through sometimes subtle and not so subtle behavioural cues (Brophy & Good, 1970; Finn, 1972; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Rubovitz & Maehr, 1973). Teachers can influence their students' belief in their own abilities by certain acts. For example, a teacher may always ask just some students whom they believe to be bright to answer their questions, thereby imparting to others that they are not smart enough to answer their questions or do anything challenging. In short, the teacher is making a kind of non-verbal statement about the students' abilities, which is then internalised by students. The teachers' perception of the students' abilities eventually becomes the students' self-perception of her own ability .

#### Social Cognitive Theory:

According to this theory, students often watch other people for signs of their own potential competence, looking especially for how well those people perform on specific tasks. This observing is an attempt to determine how they, the observers, are likely to fare on similar tasks. Bandura (1986), in his work on self-efficacy, points out that this is an important source of information that individuals use to construct their self-perceptions of competence. If a person whom a student perceives to be very much

like herself fails on the same task that she is undertaking, then she is likely to be affected by her and she is likely to perceive herself as likely to fail on the endeavour, too. In other words, she would have a low self-perception in approaching the task. To extend it further, students will tend to identify themselves with other students who look like they do, take the same classes they do, and expect to get grades similar to the ones they get. These peers will then become a reference group, a source of information about how to behave and what to expect of oneself in terms of both academic and social success and failure. Bandura calls this source of information vicarious experiences, meaning that others serve as vicarious models of what we are capable of doing ourselves.

But the greatest contributor to the development and maintenance of self-perceived competence, according to Bandura, is an individual's prior performance experiences. That is, if a person has succeeded on similar tasks in the past, then she is likely to believe that she will succeed on the current task and other similar tasks in the future. On the other hand, a person who has experienced repeated failures on similar tasks in the past would have less faith in success on the current tasks and other similar tasks in the future. Bandura's researches on participants' modelling confirms the effectiveness of a treatment designed to foster the development of perceptions of competence by means of performance attainments (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, Jeffery & Gajdos, 1975). All this points to the need for teachers to ensure that their students have success experiences in school. Once students have built up some confidence in themselves on tasks, their future perception of self-competence for similar tasks will be relatively high.

#### Attribution Theory:

Contrary to Bandura's social cognitive theory, Weiner's attribution theory suggests that a person's prior successes and failures on tasks do not directly influence her perceptions of competence and hence her subsequent motivation. Rather, the person's attributions for her successes and failures influence her expectations for future success and thereby her motivation. That is, her beliefs about "Why do I fail/succeed?" are more important for understanding her subsequent motivation.

According to Weiner (1986), students generally attribute their successes and failures to one of four causes - their ability, their effort, difficulty of task and luck. He states that students with the conception of ability as capacity are more likely than those without it to reduce their effort when they expect to perform worse than their peers. In other words, if individuals think that they fail because they do not have the ability to succeed, they will put in less effort on similar tasks in the future. Some interventions designed to help students learn to attribute successes and failures to effort have been successful in changing students' counterproductive attributions for success. Bandura (1986) finds that verbal persuasion seems to be an effective means to change students' attribution of success and failure from external factors such as luck and task difficulty to internal factors such as effort. Dweck (1975) also finds that her attribution retraining programs successfully modified children's counterproductive attributions. In her programs, children who tended to make ability attributions rather than effort attributions for their failures were given frequent success experiences coupled with some failure experiences. After each failure experience, the experimenter would make a comment attributing the failure to low levels of effort. The children who experienced this program were better able to deal with future failure experiences than similar children who were exposed only to success experiences for the same period of time.

These research findings point to the need for teachers to help students avoid any negative consequences of effort attributions for success. Teachers can help their students recognise the connection between effort and competence, especially pinpointing the fact that competence both precedes and develops from effortful behaviour.

### Entity Vs Incremental Theory:

According to Spaulding (1992), another important factor influencing the way students' perceptions of competence are formed is where they believe the standards for competence are located. Some individuals look to others, especially their peers, for their standard of competence. They compare their own performances with their peers' performance. If they perform better than their peers, they are likely to view themselves as having performed competently. Somehow, they believe that they have performed competently because they have done better than their peers, not because they have mastered their skills required.

Entity theorists believe that intelligence is a rather stable, global trait (Marshall, Weinstein, Middlestadt, & Brattesani, 1980). Children subscribing to this believe that they possess a specific, fixed amount of intelligence, and this intelligence is displayed through performance, and that the outcomes or judgement indicate whether they are or are not intelligent. People who subscribe to this view (entity theorists) also realise that virtually everyone can increase their knowledge, but they do not believe that people can become smarter. Thus people who subscribe to this idea tend to adopt a pragmatic goal

in achievement situations. They would be inclined to seek positive judgements and/or avoid negative ones, towards goals that involve “looking smart”-performance goals (Ames, 1990). They are performance-oriented and would tend to choose to work on tasks that would ensure success, avoiding challenging work that would make them look dumb and inefficient. They are keen on earning others’ credit (e.g. teachers’ praise). Their motivation is extrinsic and they are not likely to focus on the learning from the task itself. Their approach to tasks would tend to be surface-strategies, such as rote-memorisation of facts and immediately asking the teacher for assistance. Maehr & Anderman (1993) point out that there are some school practices that may foster different theories of intelligence (entity/incremental) in students. A school system with emphasis on keen competition, grades, rewards and streaming of students into classes of different abilities would undermine all efforts made by an individual on progress and genuine learning.

On the other hand, the “instrumental-incremental” theorists believe that intelligence consists of an ever-expanding repertoire of skills and knowledge, one that is increased through one’s own instrumental behaviour. They believe that everyone can become smarter (more skilful and knowledgeable) by investing effort. Children who subscribe to this idea tend to choose to work on tasks that are more likely to increase one’s skills because they believe that intelligence is a body of skills that grows through one’s investment in effort. They would be more likely to work on tasks that would make them “become smarter”- they tend to set themselves some learning goals (Bandura and Dweck, 1981). Very often tasks most suitable for learning are ones that are difficult, involve errors, confusion, or revelations of ignorance, and require a lengthy presolution period. These individuals will compare their current performances on a task with some earlier performance on the same or similar task, looking for improvement

relative to the earlier performance. When they do improve, their perceptions of competence are likely to increase, irrespective of how their performance compared with that of their peers. Theoretically, individuals who are task-involved, who focus on improving their performances relative to their prior performances or some absolute standard that denotes for them mastery of the task, are more likely to derive pleasures from the tasks and their own accomplishments. They are more likely to engage in deep cognitive processing, such as thinking about how newly learned material relates to previous knowledge and attempting to understand complex relationships.

### Self-determination Theory:

Another factor that contribute to students' perceptions of their competence is when they perceive the situation as one that they can control or regulate in some meaningful way (Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985; Stipek & Weisz, 1981; Weisz & Cameron, 1985). According to Deci and Ryan (Deci 1975; Deci 1980; Deci & Ryan, 1985), extrinsic rewards cause a decrease in the individuals' perceived control of situations and hence in their intrinsic interest in the rewarded task. Extrinsic rewards make individuals think that they are being rewarded for doing what they are being told to do and not because they want to participate. In other words, the person giving the reward undermines the self-perceived autonomy of the individual. Self-determination theorists predict that when students work with non-directive or autonomy-oriented teachers who encourage them to choose their own tasks, pursue their own learning goals, solve their own problems, then their perceptions of self-determination and their intrinsic motivation will be high. Research on the differential effects of autonomy-oriented and control-oriented teachers on students' motivational orientations supports this and suggests that an autonomy orientation, when compared with a controlling



orientation, promotes in students a greater degree of intrinsic motivation, stronger beliefs about their intellectual competence, and a higher level of self-esteem ( Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981).

To sum up, the above discussion focuses primarily on three broad questions that students always ask: “Can I succeed on the task?”, or “Do I have the ability to succeed on the task?” and “Why do I succeed/fail?” These questions capture many of the important motivational constructs in theoretical perspectives such as teacher expectancy theory, social cognitive theory, attribution theory and entity/incremental theory. Constructs relevant to these questions include students’ self-concepts of ability, expectancy for success, and perceived control. This self-perception of whether or not one’s ability can enable one to succeed on a task (academic self-concept) is closely associated with whether one has a sense of control over the task. These two criteria are important pre-conditions for students to approach tasks with confidence, become task-involved, invest sustained effort on tasks and engage in deep cognitive learning strategies, all of which are behaviour exhibited by intrinsically-motivated students. A general concept of oneself as being academically competent is extremely helpful in engaging students in productive learning behaviour. Also, high perceptions of academic competence enhance intrinsic motivation, while low academic competence dampens intrinsic motivation, and intrinsic interest declines along with perception of competence. Since one’s academic self-concept has such an important place in contributing to the positive motivation beliefs of students as well as positive learning behaviour, the focus of this research is to measure students’ academic self-concept in the two types of schools. It will be interesting to find out whether there is any difference in students’

self-perception about their academic ability; and if the answer is positive, to find out in what ways would it affect students' motivation beliefs and learning behaviour.

## **2.2(v) How students' perceptions of their abilities affect their learning behaviour**

Having considered that one's perception of one's abilities have a direct effect on one's motivation belief and learning behaviour, we now look at how students reveal, through their behaviours, information about their confidence in their abilities.

### *Covington's Self-Worth Theory:*

Deci, Ryan, Connell, and their colleagues proposed that individuals have a fundamental need to see themselves as being competent (Connell, 1991; Connell & Ryan, 1984; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Covington (1992) suggests that humans naturally strive to protect their sense of self-worth. Self-worth concerns people's appraisal of their won value. It is similar to concepts such as self-esteem and self-respect. Covington proposes that when one's self-worth is being threatened, such as in the case of public failure, one strives to protect it. As a result, students employ creative strategies to maintain a sense of worthiness when they face failure at school.

### *Work avoidant orientation:*

Covington and his colleagues believed that individuals' emotional reactions in achievement situations are influenced strongly by the implications that the outcomes have for their own and other's perceptions of their ability. In other words, individuals are much concerned about whether outcomes make them look competent or incompetent. Failure engenders shame and distress the most when it appears to reflect low ability, and it is just natural that individuals prefer to attribute reasons for their failure on some other cause. In a competitive classroom, students are inclined to take their classmates' performance into consideration when evaluating their own performance. When they know they are not going to be compared favourably with others, some students try to maintain their self-esteem by minimizing participation. Some students even do not try at all. Dweck & Elliot (1983) and Nicholls (1984) found out that students with low ability students and low intrinsic motivation may adopt a work-avoidant goal orientation in order to escape the negative implications of low ability in the event of poor performance. Performance with no effort provides no information about a students' abilities because no one can determine what she would have accomplished had they exerted more effort. Some other students publicise their refusal to work and downgrade the importance of studying. There are some others who give the impression that they did not try, even though they did (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1990). This work avoidant orientation is an undesirable learning behaviour, which is a result of students' effort to protect their self-worth. It is associated with students with low perceptions of ability and low intrinsic motivation. The phenomenon is more obvious in a competitive school system. In a competitive school system, students are constantly judged or evaluated by their teachers for placement into different classes according to their abilities. Some students may try to avoid attempting tasks because they want to protect their self-worth. One of the aims of this research is to find out

whether students from the two types of school adopt this orientation in response to their environment.

To sum up, students' who are confident in their ability to succeed, who have a positive perception of their ability would exhibit positive learning behaviour while students who lack self-confidence in their ability to succeed and who have low perception of their ability would exhibit undesirable learning behaviour. As summarised by Stipek (1998, p.89), below is a table which reflect students' behaviour associated with their perceptions of their abilities :

***Students who are confident in their ability to succeed***

- ◆ *Approach tasks eagerly*
- ◆ *Persist in the face of failure*
- ◆ *Seek help only after they have tried on their own*
- ◆ *Enjoy and choose challenging work*
- ◆ *Volunteer to answer questions and provide answers when called on in class*
- ◆ *Help other students*
- ◆ *Show pride in their work*

***Students who lack confidence in their ability to succeed***

- ◆ *Say things like "I can't, " and "It's too hard"*
- ◆ *Attribute success to external causes, such as help or luck*
- ◆ *Prefer easy work that can be done with little effort*
- ◆ *Are easily discouraged or distracted*

- ◆ *Give up easily*
- ◆ *Seek help without trying, or do not seek help even when they need it*
- ◆ *Do not volunteer answers to questions*
- ◆ *Volunteer to answer questions and then “forget” their answers*
- ◆ *Change assignments to something they can do*
- ◆ *Claim that the work is boring*
- ◆ *Make excuses for not completing work*
- ◆ *Procrastinate, then claim that they did not have adequate time to complete work*
- ◆ *“Overstrive” and repeatedly review and rewrite*
- ◆ *Obsess and have difficulty “letting go” of work*

The above has traced the development of research on how individual differences (e.g. dispositional traits, beliefs about one’s ability) contribute to different motivation constructs for students. We can see that these factors do not stand alone. They relate to each other and other aspects of schooling. For example, teachers’ praise and comments can affect students’ self-perception ability. We also see that how teachers structure their lessons can affect the way students invest their effort in learning and shape their behaviour while interacting with their peers. In other words, the effects of their environment also contribute to a difference in motivation of students. We now turn to look at these factors.

## **2.2(vi) Goal Conceptions of Students**

### Mastery and Performance Orientation

In the previous section, we consider how individuals are seen to engage in activities that result in increased competency to deal with the demands of life. Although there is merit to this view, it is important to recognise the role of the social environment. Many environment-oriented theorists focus on the demands and constraints of the learning situation to explain students' motivation (e.g. Ames & Ames, 1984; deCharms, 1968; Ryan, Connell, & Deci, 1985). Their research findings indicate that students pursue different achievement goals in different learning situations depending on their individual needs and competencies as well as on the demands of the situation. (Dweck & Elliot, 1983; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980, Patashnick, & Nolen, 1985). As discussed earlier, a student may engage in tasks for intrinsic reasons (for enjoyment or to develop competency). Her reasons for task engagement relate to her desire to develop mastery of the skills. She is mastery-oriented. Whereas another student may engage in tasks for extrinsic reasons (i.e. to achieve some goals unrelated to the task itself). The reasons for her task engagement relate to her desire to do better than the others, to gain approval or to demonstrate her intelligence. She is performance-oriented. In other words, according to these researchers, students' engagement in achievement activities is motivated by a complex set of goals. These goals are in a way shaped by the demands of the environment. Most goal theorists distinguish between learning goals (referred to by some researchers as "mastery" or "task" goals), which concern mastery and developing understanding and performance goals (referred to as "ego" goals by some researchers), which concern doing better than others, demonstrating more intelligence,

and winning approval (Ames,1992; Ames and Archer, 1988; Nicholls, 1983; Meece,1991,1994).

If a student adopts a mastery goal orientation, then she would be focused on learning, mastering the task according to self-set standards, developing new skills, improving her competence, trying to accomplish something challenging, and trying to gain understanding or insight (see Ames 1992b; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Maehr & Midgley, 1991). Negative outcomes of learning are attributed to a lack of effort, contingent on one's personal effort (Covington & Omelich, 1979). Error and mistakes are viewed as part of learning and necessary information in the process of acquiring mastery. There is a tendency for them to use a deep approach to learning and adopt more self-regulatory learning strategies including planning, awareness, and self-monitoring (Biggs, 1991a, 1993). They are more open to new and challenging tasks, more willing to take risks and more likely to attain higher levels of achievement.

On the other hand, if a student adopts a performance goal orientation, then she would be focused on the self, especially on external evaluations of the self (i.e. ego-oriented) ( Nicholls, 1979b, 1983). Learning itself is viewed only as a way to achieve a desired goal, like getting public recognition (Nicholls, 1979, 1989). A sense of accomplishment is derived from doing well with little effort, doing better than others, or meeting some other normatively defined standard of success. Students who subscribe to this view tend to prefer tasks that will show "how smart they are" and attempt to best others' performance (I got a better grade than everyone in the class,), and seeking public recognition of this performance level (Ames 1992b). Challenging tasks that needs a lot of effort may be seen as threatening to them because they are keen on avoiding failure. There is a tendency for them to choose easier tasks that guarantee success to work on,

use more surface or rote learning strategies (Biggs, 1991a, 1993) in the process of learning to obtain quick results.

To sum up, students may adopt different goals in their approaches that influence their engagement patterns, choice of achievement tasks, definitions and attributions for academic success, and selection of learning or problem-solving strategies in the classroom (Ames, 1984; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Nicholls et al., 1985; Nolen, 1986).

Pintrich (1996) summaries the definitions of mastery and performance goal orientations and their relations to other motivational and cognitive variables in the table below.

Goal Orientation and Other Motivational and Cognitive Outcomes: by P.R. Pintrich & D. H. Schunk (1996, p.240)

| Goal Definitions/<br>outcomes | Mastery goals   | Performance goals   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Reasons for effort            | Intrinsic and personal<br>meaning of activity                                 | Demonstrating one's<br>worth  |
| Success defined as            | Improvement, progress,<br>mastery, creativity,<br>innovation, learning        | High grades, better<br>performance than others,<br>higher achievement on<br>standardized tests, winning<br>at all costs |
| Value placed on               | Effort, attempting<br>challenging tasks                                       | Avoiding failure  |
| Affect                        | Pride and satisfaction for<br>effortful success<br>Guilt associated with lack | Negative affect following<br>failure  |



|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | of effort<br>Positive attitudes toward learning<br>Intrinsic interest in learning   |  |
| Outcomes associated with different goals attributional patterns | Adaptive, failure attributed to lack of effort, outcome is seen as contingent on personal effort                              | Maladaptive, failure attributed to lack of stable ability  |
| Errors viewed as  | Informational, part of learning   | Failure, evidence of lack of ability or worth  |
| Evaluation criteria   | Absolute criteria, evidence of progress   | Norms, social comparison with others   |
| Behaviour   | Choice of more personally challenging tasks<br>More risk-taking, open to new tasks<br>Higher levels of achievement            | Choice of easier tasks<br>Less willing to take risks, try new tasks<br>Lower levels of achievement |
| Cognition   | Use of “deeper” processing strategies<br>Use of self-regulatory strategies including planning, awareness, and self-monitoring | Use of more surface or rote learning strategies  |

As we can see, a mastery goal is associated with a wide range of motivation-related variables that are conducive to positive achievement activity and motivational beliefs that are necessary mediators for self-regulated learning. A mastery goal orientation promotes a motivation pattern likely to promote long-term and high-quality involvement in learning. On the other hand, a performance goal orientation is associated with a wide range of motivation-related variables and beliefs that are not desirable and may lead students to adopt study strategies that do not promote self-regulated learning, deep learning and foster an intrinsic love for learning.

### Self-regulated learning

Another benefit of fostering a mastery goal in students is that students who are mastery-oriented are more likely to make good use of effective problem-solving strategies and deep-processing learning strategies, which are associated with an intrinsic love for learning. In a study by Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, (1988), it was found that students scoring high on a measure of mastery orientation in science reported relatively greater use of active metacognitive strategies (e.g. reviewing material not understood, asking questions as they worked, making connections between current and past problems), and less use of “superficial engagement” (e.g. copying, guessing, skipping questions) than children who claimed to be relatively more performance-oriented. Elliot and Dweck(1988) further revealed that performance goals undermine effective problem solving strategies for children. When performance-oriented children who had low self-confidence encountered difficulty, their problem-solving strategies deteriorated. In other studies, mastery orientation has been linked to the use of active learning strategies (e.g., planning, organizing material, setting goals) that are known to facilitate learning (Ames & Archer, 1988) and “deep” processing strategies (e.g., discriminating information from unimportant information trying to figure out how new information fits with what one already knows, monitoring comprehension) (Nolen, 1988; Meece, 1994). Finally, goal orientation affects what as well as how much students learn. Graham & Golan (1991) and Benware & Deci (1984) found out that students who are performance-oriented showed poorer word recall at deep processing levels(i.e. having to do with meaning), but not at shallow processing levels (i.e., having to do with the sounds of words). Biggs (1991a, 1993) found out that performance-oriented students use more surface or rote learning strategies in the process of learning to obtain quick results when they are performance-oriented.

One of the focuses of this study is to find out whether there are any significant differences in motivational orientation (mastery versus performance) between students from the two types of schools. Also of interest is whether students from the two types of school differ on their self-regulation ability, which is closely associated with their motivational orientation. In other words, two of the questions to be considered in this research include the following: “Do students from the two different schools adopt a different motivation orientation?” and if they do, “Does it have impact on their self-regulation abilities?”

### **2.3 Maximising intrinsic motivation, the salience of instilling in students a mastery goal orientation and a sense of belongingness: classroom structures/instructional practices that can be mapped in relation to mastery and performance goals**

Having considered the favourable factors to learning associated with a mastery goal orientation and the strong ties between intrinsic motivation and a mastery goal orientation, the next question is then: “How and when is a mastery goal orientation evoked in the classroom? What aspects of classroom structure influence the salience of a mastery or performance goal, and as a consequence, elicit positive motivational beliefs and behaviour in children?” There is now a literature converging on the critical role classroom structure plays in influencing student motivation (e.g. Ames & Archer, 1988; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987a). Researchers have pointed to the crucial role classroom structures/processes play in eliciting a mastery goal orientation and positive motivational patterns in students (Brophy, 1986, 1987; deCharms, 1976; Johnson & Johnson, 1985).

Some literature ( Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Meece, & Wessel, 1982; Good & Brophy, 1987) suggests that the mastery orientation in many elementary school classrooms in the United States is weak. They have linked the cause of it to a whole range of instructional practices that contribute to this phenomenon. Uniform tasks, few opportunities for choice, normative evaluation, and public social comparisons are commonplace. Extrinsic rewards and incentive programs are pervasive and are used with little or no attention to children's level of interest or capacity. Within-class ability grouping has become the venue for instruction. Students often pay little attention to the purposes of specific learning activities (Brophy, 1986). Many children, especially those who are low achieving, are faced with a repetition of drill and practice tasks, rarely see their effort as increasing their competence at school tasks, and as a result, they tend to view school as "joyless" and "arduous" (Levin, 1990). In other words, research has suggested how the structures of the classroom can make certain goals salient to students. There are certain patterns of classroom interactions and processes that may not be favourable for children as they engage in learning activities. These structures/patterns foster a performance goal orientation in students. On the other hand, there are certain classroom structures and practices that are favourable for children as they engage in learning activities and they contribute to foster a more mastery orientation in students as they engage in learning.

Below is a summary of classroom structure and instructional strategies supporting a mastery goal orientation. It is adapted and derived from Ames (1992).

| <b>Structure</b>            | <b>Instructional Strategies</b>   | <b>Motivation Pattern</b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Teacher roles and Authority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers as facilitators, with affective dimensions seen as intrinsic to the teaching role</li> <li>• Focus on helping students participate in the decision making</li> <li>• Provide “real” choices where decisions are based on effort, not ability evaluations</li> <li>• Give opportunities to develop responsibility and independence</li> <li>• Support development and use of self-management and monitoring skills</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on effort and learning</li> <li>• High intrinsic interest in activity</li> <li>• Attributions to effort</li> <li>• Attributions to effort-based strategies</li> <li>• Failure-tolerance</li> <li>• Positive affect on high effort tasks</li> <li>• Feelings of belonging to the school</li> <li>• Active engagement</li> </ul> |
| Task                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the meaningful aspects of learning activities</li> <li>• Design tasks for novelty, variety, diversity, and student interest</li> <li>• Emphasis on the realisation of inherent learner capabilities through subject-integrated and learner-controlled activities, such as projects</li> <li>• Help students establish short-term, self-referenced goals</li> <li>• Support development and use of effective strategies</li> </ul>                       |   |
| Grouping                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for co-operative learning and peer interaction</li> <li>• Using heterogeneous and varied grouping arrangements</li> </ul>  |   |
| Evaluation /Recognition     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on individual improvement, progress, and mastery</li> <li>• Recognise students’ effort</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• Encourage view of mistakes as part of learning</li> <li>• Make evaluation private, not public</li> <li>• Use criterion-referenced assessment</li> <li>• Students’ products are taken to indicate a stage of cognitive, affective or social development instead of indicators of performance.</li> </ul> |   |
| Time Use                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusting task or time requirements for students who have difficulty completing their work</li> <li>• Allowing students opportunities to plan their schedules, and progress at an optimal rate</li> </ul>  |   |

As we can see from the chart above, researchers have identified certain instructional strategies that foster a motivation pattern in students that focus their attention on effort contribution while learning, promote active engagement in the classroom, foster positive academic self-perceptions in students that support an intrinsic love for learning. These instructional strategies include the dimensions of : Teacher roles and Authority; task; ability grouping; recognition/evaluation; and time use (TTGRT). These dimensions would help create classroom situations that emphasise self-improvement (Ames & Archer, 1988; Butler, 1987; Graham & Golan, 1991), discovery of new information (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984), and the usefulness of learning material (Elliot & Dweck, 1988). These measures can induce mastery or learning goal states. Under these situations, high effort attributions result in high perceived competence, which enhances intrinsic motivation. Now, let's look at these classroom dimensions and instructional practices one by one.

#### Teachers' role and authority:

According to Spauling (1992), teachers in most classrooms in the United States stand at the front of the room telling students what they should know, students commit that information to memory, repeat that information on a quiz or test in the form in which it was originally given, and then the teacher moves on to some new body of information while the students promptly forget most of what they have committed to memory. This form of instruction is termed "frontal teaching". Goodlad (1984) pointed out that the whole cycle does little to increase students' actual competence at anything

other than committing isolated bits of information to memory. If students are to develop competencies that can be transferred to situations beyond the classroom, then the focus of instruction will have to include much more than factual bits of information. Students need to develop competence in selecting and using the kinds of skills, strategies, and procedures that lead to competent performance on academic tasks. They should be given tasks to do in lessons that lead them to master these skills, strategies and procedures. This calls for the need of the teacher to treat herself as a facilitator in students' learning.

When teachers see themselves as a facilitator instead of an evaluator, it helps to reduce students' perception of the teacher as someone who is controlling their behaviour through extrinsic rewards (i.e. grades). When teachers work with students in collaborative mode, students are likely to experience heightened levels of self-perceived control, which is an important element in mastery orientation. Evidence (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987a, 1987b; Ryan et al., 1985) suggests that children's feelings of self-competence tend to be higher in classrooms that are "autonomy-oriented." This autonomy-oriented climate is described as one where teachers involve students in the learning process by giving them choices (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987a). The strategies teachers use to encourage students to take on challenging tasks and to participate affect children's attitudes toward their own ability, toward school, and toward the learning process (Ryan et al., 1985).

The positive relationship between an autonomy-oriented environment and students' mastery motivation and perceived competence has been discussed in the previous section. Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, and Ryan (1981), found that elementary school teachers' orientations toward autonomy were related to children's perceived

competence and mastery motivation. Moreover, positive changes in children's motivation over time have been related to teachers' orientation toward autonomy (Deci, Nezlek, & Sheinman, 1981). Children have been found to make significant gains in feelings of self-determination when in classrooms of autonomy-oriented teachers (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987b).

Classroom structures that provide students with choices and opportunities for decision-making appear to increase the quality of student engagement in learning (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987b; Ryan et al., 1985). They also found that when children were given a task focus (i.e., minimising external controls and presumably creating a situation where children should feel a sense of autonomy), conceptual learning was enhanced.

To sum up, an autonomy-oriented classroom where the teacher takes up the role as a facilitator and provides students with opportunities to develop responsibilities and independence for their learning would elicit a mastery goal orientation in students.

#### Nature of Tasks:

Researchers have pointed out that teachers pay little or no attention to children's level of interest or capacity in completing assigned tasks that do not offer any choice. As a result, students often pay little attention to the purposes of specific learning activities (Brophy, 1986). Uniform tasks, few opportunities for choice are prevalent in many classrooms. It has been argued that tasks should have the following characteristics: variety, novelty, and conducive to active participation in the classroom. The design of



the tasks should be such that they induce task interest for appreciation. According to Malone and Lepper (1987), tasks should be “motivating” and should offer personal challenge, include variety, and appeal to students’ interests. Similarly, Corno and Rohrkemper (1985) describe “meaningfulness” and “variety” as task conditions that facilitate an interest in learning.

To extend it further, students could use these skills, strategies and procedures for tackling tasks in the classroom to guide their own learning, solve their own problems, and create their own products. In other words, the teacher helps students acquire the skills, strategies and procedures they will need in academic pursuits by involving them in meaningful and interesting tasks. Hence, students learn by doing instead of listening; they are active learners instead of passive learners. The teacher, who is now not transmitting factual knowledge directly to students, becomes a collaborator, someone who work alongside the students when they need assistance in completing their tasks.

The design of tasks can influence students’ perceptions of their own and others’ ability. Rosenholtz and Simpson (1984a, 1984b) defined uniformity of tasks as one factor that contributes to what they labelled as an unidimensional classroom structure. In classrooms of this type, students tend to use the same materials and have the same assignments. Within a unidimensional structure, students are likely to translate performance differences into ability differences. By contrast, in multidimensional classrooms, students tend to work on different kinds of tasks or have different assignments, and there is less opportunity or need for students to compare their performance with others. Hence, students develop a sense of their own ability that is not dependent on social comparison. In their work, diversity in tasks diminished the likelihood that students perceived a hierarchy of ability in the classroom. Variety, as

well as choice, of tasks can reduce social comparison among students and the use of comparative information in the process of self-evaluation (Marshall & Weinstein, 1984, 1986).

Corno and Mandinach (1983) contended that the quality of students' cognitive engagement is determined by their ability to utilise organising, planning, and monitoring strategies. Children with learning difficulties are often unable to organise their work, plan for its completion, and monitor their progress toward completion. Task design, instructions, and modelling can facilitate the development and application of these skills (Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985).

Encouraging students to set their own learning goals through different task structures can help students develop mastery orientation in the classroom. Since different students have different academic backgrounds, they don't have to proceed at the same pace, completing the task with the same level of difficulty. Schunk (1989) points out that when tasks are structured in such a way that students are involved in goal-setting, they are more likely to experience a sense of self-efficacy. Whether the goals are established by students or teachers, when they are specific and short-term, the result is enhanced effort on the part of the student (Schunk, 1985). Students' confidence in their ability to do work is reinforced as they observe their progress toward the goal. At the elementary-school level, a long-term goal might involve an assignment that is given on Monday and due on Friday. Even when time is set aside each day to work on the assignment, some children are likely to become overwhelmed with the whole task in front of them and still others may approach the assignment without planning or organisation in mind. For these children, the assignment typically isn't completed at the end of the week, and the teacher blames the child because he or she

had the entire week to complete it. Breaking down the week-long assignment into short-term goals is likely to enhance work completion and children's beliefs that they can do the tasks (see Schunk, 1989).

To extend it further, it would be unfair to ask students of different abilities to be assessed on the same task using the same set of criteria. Rather, students should be allowed to set their own goals under the teacher's guidance. When students establish their own criteria for success - when there are distinct standards for distinct individuals - then each student is less likely to compare his or her performance with someone else's performance. Instead, students will be encouraged to compare their past performance with their current ones and they will be able to see their own progress and achievement on the current task. This would help build up their confidence on their own abilities and foster a sense of satisfaction and achievement for successfully meeting the criteria of their tasks.

To sum up, the design of tasks and how teachers perceive their roles can affect students' motivation orientation in the classroom.

### Evaluation and Recognition:

Evaluation practices can establish very different motivational climates, can orient children toward different goals, and, as a result, can elicit different behaviour in the classroom.

Much literature (Butler, 1987, Covington, 1984; Covington & Omelich, 1984; Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984, 1987) suggests that evaluation practices can have deleterious effects on student motivation when they are normatively based, public, and linked to ability. Evaluation systems that emphasise social comparison tend to lower children's perceptions of their competence when they compare favourably and cause them to engage in much self-defeating cognition like avoiding work or not trying at all on tasks. This undesirable learning behaviour may have considerable negative effects on their motivation to learn (Ames & Ames, 1984).

Normative evaluation establishes a performance goal orientation that focuses children on evaluating their ability. Children's self-worth becomes linked to ability, and as a consequence, they often engage in failure-avoiding behaviours to protect their feeling of self-worth (Covington, 1984). Normative-based grades, the most common form of evaluation in school, have been found to reduce children's interest in learning even when the evaluation conveys positive feedback (Butler, 1987; Butler & Nisan, 1986).

By changing the form of evaluation from the norm-referenced assessment to criterion-referenced assessment, students will no longer be tempted to adopt performance-goal strategy. By clearly articulating the criteria for successful completion of an assigned task and then evaluating the students' performance relative to these criteria, students will not concentrate too much on social comparison. Rather, the comparison being made is between the students' grade and the criteria for successful completion of the task. All students would get grade A if they can accomplish what is stated in the criteria, not just the top 10% as stated in some norm-referenced classrooms. Children are more likely to adopt a mastery goal orientation when evaluation is based

on personal improvement, progress toward individual goals, participation and effort (Ames, 1984a). Children tend to focus on their effort, not ability, and utilise specific task strategies that will contribute to improvement and mastery. Covington and Omelich (1984) found that when students were given opportunities to improve their performance and grades on tests, the connection between ability and feelings of self-worth was severed. Offering students opportunities to improve their grades suggests to students that mistakes and errors are part of the learning process and not indicative of failure to learn. Covington and Omelich (1984) compared the effects of different forms of evaluation on student interest in learning, and found that task-specific comments had a more positive influence on interest and commitment than did praise or grades.

In other words, if we use an evaluation system that de-emphasises the appearance of an ability hierarchy, students would be encouraged to concentrate on the task itself and shift their attention away from the teacher's judgement of them or the comparison among their peers. Their attention would be on the quality of their performance. Students should be encouraged to work hard and produce good work because they take pleasure in performing them competently. The pleasure is inherent in the successful completion of the task and in developing new competencies, not in another person's response or from social comparison. According to Ames and Savell (1986), Maehr (1983), and Nicholls (1984), this inherent pleasure in the successful completion of the task is consistent with a mastery-orientation, meaning that the students' concerns are focused on mastering the demands of the task instead of other motives. Also, students would learn to attribute and see their success and failure in a new light - objective sets of standards that can be accomplished and achieved. Students now realise that they are capable of changing the situation that led to their failure. They are more likely to put in more effort in their work the next time to obtain success.

Another concern is the indiscriminate use of extrinsic rewards to motivate students to learn in schools. The incentive system used in schools can affect students' sense of self-perception of control. Lepper and Hodell (1989) outline the negative short and long-term consequences that extrinsic rewards can have on children's intrinsic interest in learning. When perceived as "bribes", extrinsic rewards can serve to undermine children's interest and participation over the long term. Ryan et al (1985) point out that rewards can become the reason for one's engagement and participation, and when perceived as such, the rewards are controlling and detract from the intrinsic value of the task. The use of incentives in schools is pervasive (e.g. reading incentive programs). Bulletin boards and charts, for example, that display children's accomplishments, work or progress towards goals invite social comparisons. Covington & Beery (1976) remark that rewards given to recognise individual goals can have negative effects on children's feelings of competence and interest in learning when goals are viewed as externally imposed and when recognition is made public. The fact that their individual progress and attainment is in the eyes of the public elicits a negative form of recognition in children (Covington & Beery, 1976). Similarly, emphasising and rewarding perfection (e.g. charting 100% in spellathon, redoing work to attain 100%, posting of A papers on school boards) makes ability a highly salient dimension of the classroom learning environment. It will discourage students to concentrate on the tasks themselves and work towards mastery-goals.

On the other hand, when recognition of accomplishment or progress is personal and private, between the teacher and the child, feelings of personal pride and satisfaction do not derive from doing better than the others. However, recognising students' effort can be an important way of enhancing students' feelings of efficacy

when they begin new tasks (Schunk, 1989). Nonetheless, in an analysis of teacher praise, Brophy (1981) showed how verbal reinforcements could convey a range of different (and sometimes unintended) information to a student. According to Brophy, praise is too often directed toward the very general and unimportant aspects of the child's work. When given, praise can also have negative effects on students' motivation when it is used in such a way that elicits social comparison. "Praise can provide encouragement and support when made contingent on effort...when directs students' attention to genuine progress or accomplishment" (Brophy, 1983, p.21).

To sum up, the incentive and assessment system in schools can be manipulated in such a way as to focus students' attention on individual improvement on progress and mastery during the process of learning, which is an integral feature of a mastery goal orientation.

#### Ability Grouping:

The way students are organised to work in the classroom can affect their motivation. Researchers have suggested that ability groupings and keen competition in the school system would create an environment whereby students place their value on getting merits or rewards from teachers and the school administration rather than getting satisfaction from doing the school task itself. As Ames (1984a) points out, while operating in a system where social comparison is made salient, students tend to focus more on their ability and often engage in debilitating self-evaluations and cognition and this may affect their social self-concept. According to the entity/incremental theorists, these students would tend to be very pragmatic, seeking opportunities that earn them

positive judgements from teachers and avoiding negative ones. In an effort to stay in the group with the highest ability ranking, they become performance-oriented. They would concentrate on getting good grades and all the benefits that are associated with that. They would choose to avoid challenging tasks and they would see the completion of tasks as chores that they have to complete before they can get what they really want – praise, prizes or status at school. To the self-determination theorists, these students don't feel that they are in control and they are not really doing what they want to do. They have low self-perception and see themselves as belonging to different classes: the more-able group and the less-able ones. According to the attribution theorists, students may attribute their success or failure to different causes. Repeated failures and the fact of belonging to a less-able group would make some students believe that they lack the ability to become smarter. Their experience of repeated failures on similar tasks in the past would give them less faith in success on similar tasks in the future. They may be more prone to feel depressed, have a low self-concept of competence and control and do not expect any future successes and hence put in less effort on similar task in the future. Furthermore, they may not develop positive relationships with each other when they suffer from a low social self-concept. When competition is keen, conflict may arise among peers as everyone strives to outperform each other, and this can interfere with students' enjoyment in their school work and their ability to engage and concentrate on academic tasks.

By contrast, when students work toward individual goals or within a co-operative structure, children would focus more on their effort and positive effects deriving from trying hard or working successfully with another (Ames & Ames, 1984). According to Johnson and Johnson's (1985) analysis, co-operative structures promote an interest in learning and a focusing on the value of joint effort. Peers' respect, trust



and positive regard is just as important as those of teachers, and a supportive classroom climate that fosters feelings of security and develops positive social skills and relationships are all pre-conditions for intrinsic motivation to learn. They also point out that a small group approach has the advantage of eliciting more student involvement, and “active” learning because it poses substantially less risk for individual students. Meece et al (1988) found that small group learning enables students to assume more control over their learning which fosters task involvement. To sum up, by providing opportunities for co-operative learning and peer interaction and using heterogeneous/varied grouping arrangements, teachers can build up a constructive working environment where individual differences are accepted and all students develop a feeling “I belong here”, and then, differences in abilities do not translate into differences in motivation. Students become more mastery-oriented and attribute their success to hard work and effort attribution.

The theme of “social self-concept”, which can be shaped by the learning environment as discussed, will also be explored in this research. The aim is to find out whether a co-operative learning structure will positively shape students’ social self-concept while a competitive learning structure will negatively shape students’ social self-concept. Since one group of students (those coming from the local school) is seen to be operating under a very competitive school system, it would be interesting to find out whether there is any difference in the social self-concept of this group of students from the other group (the international school). If the answer comes out positive, then I will look at whether the above discussion can offer any explanation for the differences.

Time Use:

The time aspect concerns the appropriateness of the workload, the pace of instruction, and the time allotted for completing learning activities and assignments (see Epstein, 1988). The TIME area is closely related to the design and structure of tasks because the design of assignments and time allotted for completion must accommodate different entry skills, attention spans, and capabilities. Priorities in the workload and assignments need to be adapted for the individual students' skill level, learning rate, and available time for out-of-class learning. The strategies in this area include adjusting task or time requirements for students who have difficulty completing their work and allowing students opportunities to plan their schedules, and progress at an optimal rate.

### Summary

To sum up, there is now a broad base of literature in the field of motivation that provides a conceptual framework for creating a school culture or environment that enhances a mastery goal orientation in students. The above measures are ways suggested by researchers on motivation that can help create/shape conditions that lead students to adopt a mastery-oriented approach to learning. They include 5 dimensions: teachers' role and authority; nature of task design, recognition and evaluation practices, grouping arrangements, and lastly time allocation(TTGRT). These areas were identified and described by researchers (e.g. Epstein, 1988; Stipek, 1998) as manipulative structures of school learning environments that have a direct impact on children's motivation and development. These structures are inter-related and sometimes overlap and form the multifarious aspects of various classroom structures. It has been suggested that by manipulating these structures like reducing the social comparison in the classroom, students can be encouraged to be more intrinsically interested in the tasks they are doing. When they are more intrinsically motivated to learn, they may be more

willing to engage in and commit themselves to academic endeavours. They may show more persistence at tasks and this may lead to more cognitive engagement, especially the use of deeper processing strategies and self-regulated learning. With classroom structures that aim at helping them to focus on their own progress, students will have a positive academic self-concept, a higher self-conception of competence and control in the classroom, thus further promoting their willingness to learn.

The concern of this research is to examine the influence of two classroom environments (the international school and the local school) on the various motivational constructs of students as discussed. The constructs which are to be explored include: intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation; academic self-concept; work avoidant orientation versus self-regulated learning; mastery versus performance orientation; and social self-concept. These constructs are inter-related and would be influenced or determined by different classroom structures.

The first specific focus is to examine whether there is a difference in classroom structures or processes in the two types of school. The second specific focus is to examine whether or not there is significant difference between the various motivational constructs of students from the two types of school. The next focus is on identifying the relationship between motivational constructs/orientations of students and classroom structures/processes in the two types of school.

## ***Part II : The effects of culturally derived values in the classroom***

### **2.4 Cultural influences on students' motivation and teachers' pedagogy**

In Part I, I looked at how students' motivation and motivation orientation may affect learning outcomes. I have discussed how their different motivation orientation is strongly associated with the TTGRT dimensions of their classrooms. Yet, the TTGRT (teacher roles and authority; task; ability grouping; recognition/evaluation; and time use) dimensions may not be the only factors contributing to the differences in students' motivation. The discussion in part I thus far may lead one to perceive that classroom structures/processes provide a common experience for all students. Actually, there are other factors such as cultural differences that may be another source for the differences in motivation as well. Some researchers like Planel suggest that cultural influences have some effect on students' motivation and teachers' ways of shaping and structuring the TTGRT dimensions in their classrooms. While my investigation in part 1 relating to the TTGRT dimensions (such as teacher roles and authority; task; ability grouping; recognition/evaluation; and time use) , where they exist, may lend some insight into the different socio-cultural context of the participants, it is of interest to complement these findings, if any, with data gathered from another important source-how the specific characteristics of a culture influence the participants(who come from different cultural backgrounds).

The study of the culture of a school can be approached from a number of dimensions. One way is to look at the objective facts in a school including dimensions

of the school such as classroom organisation(including task design, work structures etc), and teacher-student relationship. This is part of the working-out of culturally embedded values of a school. The culture of a school has been described by Dalin (1993, p.29) as ‘what we experience as the “ways things are” in an organisation, the written and unwritten rules that regulate behaviour, the stories and the “myths” of what an organisation has achieved, the standards and the values set for its members’. Deal and Kennedy (1982,p.18) have put it more simply as the ‘system of informal rules that spells out how people are to behave most of the time’.

Another way to study the culture of a school is to focus on the subjective dimensions of the participants involved: the views, beliefs, values and perceptions of teachers and students. In this part, I will try to look at the how teachers’ values/beliefs reflect culture specific traits that influence their ways of organising the classroom and how students’ values/beliefs affect their motivation. It has been argued by researchers (e.g. Planel, 1997) that students’ understanding of educational values such as authority, control over learning goals and educational goals and how to achieve them are related to national culture and in turn, they have an effect on student motivation. Cultural values can sometimes be more significant than pedagogical styles in influencing teaching and learning outcomes because underlying educational values and hidden codes of a society give meaning to styles of pedagogy (Planel, 1997) and preferred instructions by students. What works in one culture may not be extended to another. Similarly, what works in one classroom may not be applicable to another because students (given the fact that they come from a different background or a different education experience) may not respond in the same ways. Likewise, teachers may choose to structure their classrooms differently because they have different goal orientation i.e. they may cherish some goals, beliefs and values that are related to the

particular cultural value systems in their society. These influence their classroom-decisions and actions as well. In order to evaluate the role that cultural values play in shaping the teaching and learning experiences of each school, we need to probe into the minds of the students and teachers.

#### **2.4(i) A Framework for comparing cultural differences**

Given the fact that students from the two classes compared in this study came from different cultural backgrounds, one class mainly made up of Chinese and the other British and European, it is envisaged that cultural factors would play a major role in shaping the differences between the two groups. As Dimmocks and Walker (2000) suggest, “culture are the enduring sets of beliefs, values and ideologies underpinning structures, processes and practices” (p.43). However, culture is a difficult phenomenon to measure, gauge or even describe. In order to offer core axes for comparative framework, Dimmocks and Walker (1998a) suggest a few dimensions along which significant sets of values, beliefs and practices cluster. “They provide common benchmarks against which cultural characteristics at the societal level can be described, gauged and compared” (Dimmocks, 2000). In other words, there are some dimensions that enable societal cultures of different countries and states to be compared in terms of their influence on their respective education system.

##### The Self system (Self-oriented – group oriented):

One of the most important dimensions is the distinction between group-oriented (collectivist) and self-oriented (individualist) cultures. According to Dimmocks (2000), both of these schemata describe whether people within a given culture tend to focus on self or on their place within a group, hence the preference for the label ‘group-oriented’

and 'self-oriented'. Most western societies are individualist or self-oriented whereas most Asian societies like Hong Kong are collectivist or group-oriented. This dimension can be taken to describe the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups and the closeness of relationships between persons. In individualist societies, people are driven by an 'I' consciousness and obligations to the self, including self-interest. People in such societies primarily regard themselves as individuals first, and members of a group second. This does not mean that people in such societies are selfish; rather, they perceive themselves as more independent and self-reliant. In collectivist societies, by contrast, family members are brought up with a 'we' consciousness, opinions are predetermined by the group, and strong obligations to the family emphasise harmony, respect and shame. People in such societies primarily regard themselves as members of a group first, and individual second. They perceive themselves as more dependent and reliant on others in the group. To relate this general difference in orientation to issues of motivation, several studies by Yang (Yang, 1982/1985; Yang and Liang, 1973) have sought to distinguish between two types of achievement motivation: self-oriented and group-oriented. Self-oriented achievement motivation is viewed as a functionally autonomous desire in which individual strives to achieve some internalised standards of excellence. In contrast, group oriented achievement motivation is not functionally autonomous; rather, individuals persevere to fulfil the expectations of significant others, typically the family (Bond, 1986).

Hazel, Markus and Kitayame (1994) added a fine distinction between the perception of the self and the nature of the self-system in different societies. Their research findings also point to the suggestion that the perception of the 'self' influences the cognition, emotion and motivational processes of the people. First, those with independent selves (i.e. people from self-oriented cultures) are driven by the need to

express one's internal needs, rights and capacities, and to withstand social pressure. The cultural imperatives are to maintain independence and separateness. Assertion is taken as a virtue, and selling oneself, decisiveness is valued. On the other hand, those with interdependent selves (people from group-oriented cultures) are driven by the need to be receptive of others, to adjust to the needs and demands, and to restrain one's inner needs or desires. To them, striving to excel, to accomplish challenging tasks may not be in the service of achieving separateness and autonomy, but instead in the service of more fully realising one's connectedness or interdependence. This claim was supported by evidence from Bond (1986). Bond summarises several studies exploring the motive patterns of the Chinese and found that the levels of various motives are a fairly direct reflection of the collectivist or group-oriented tradition of the Chinese. Thus Chinese respondents show relatively high levels of need for abasement, socially oriented achievement, endurance, and order, moderate levels of autonomy, deference and low levels of individual or self-oriented achievement, aggression and exhibition.

Dimmocks (2000) further points out that in group-oriented cultures, ties between people are tight, relationships are firmly structured and individual needs are subservient to the collective needs. Important collectivist values include harmony, face saving, and filial piety. Status is traditionally defined by factors such as age, sex, kinship, educational standing, or formal organisation position. Extending this dimension which describe the differences between societal-level culture to that of an organisation level like that of a school, Dimmocks made the following suggestions, which makes up another dimension on which to compare cultural differences:

#### Control and linkage



An important part of organizational or school culture concerns the way in which authority and control are exerted and communicated between members. There are two aspects that are worthy of our consideration here.

i. *Formal - informal*: In an organisation, practice varies in the extent to which they are guided by rules, regulations and ‘correct procedures’ on the one hand, and the extent to which they reflect a more relaxed, spontaneous and intuitive approach on the other. Highly formalised organisations conform to the classic bureaucracies; they emphasise definition of rules and roles, tend towards inflexibility and are often characterised by austere interpersonal relationships. Staff-student relationships stress politeness and respect and reflect a certain distance. By contrast, informal organisations have fewer rules dictating procedures, roles are often ill-defined, they display flexibility in their modes of work and interpersonal relationships tend to be more relaxed. Schools characterised by informality rely more on spontaneous decision making, rules are minimised and applied only when needed, staff roles may not be clearly defined so that teachers are expected to undertake a range of diverse tasks which may frequently change, and relationships between staff and students are casual.

ii. *Tight – loose*: this aspect gauges the degree to which members feel there is strong commitment to the shared beliefs, values and practices of an organisation. Such strong commitment might come through supervision and control by superordinates or through members’ own self-motivation. An organisation which has strong homogeneity and commitment in respect

of its members' values and practices is tightly controlled. Conversely, a loosely controlled culture is one with only weak commitment to, or acceptance of, shared beliefs, values and practices, and little or no control is exerted to achieve homogeneity either by superordinates or by members themselves. Schools with tightly controlled cultures have principals, teachers, students and parents believing in and working towards the same goals and sharing many of the same teaching and learning practices. In the opposite case, teachers in schools with loosely controlled cultures are inclined to 'do their own thing', resulting in a wide range of heterogeneous practices.

The above discussion has outlined the possible dimensions that can provide conceptual tools for making culturally based comparisons between schools possible. They are useful baseline on which to measure and gauge the differences in culture of different schools and classroom structures, which is one of the focuses of this study.

In the following section, I will review the literature on research concerning how students' perception and interpretation of the classroom and teachers' professional perspective affect students' motivation and classrooms structures. In a study like this: one which compares two classes from two schools (coming from different education systems), it is paramount that we take into consideration the effects of cultural values on teachers' pedagogy and students' perception of what learning means.

## **2.5 How teachers' professional perspective affect classroom structures/ processes and hence learning outcomes**

As discussed, the views, values and beliefs of the students serve as a background dictating much of their classroom actions or reactions and hence constitute the culture of the school. At the same time, the importance of teachers' perspectives on teaching in shaping the culture of the school is also picking up momentum (e.g. Broadfoot, 1992). To help explain teachers' classroom actions and decisions, we have to probe into their minds and find out what factors are behind their actions. As Floden and Klinzing (1990) and Nespor (1987) point out, research on teachers' beliefs has been seen as a valuable complement to traditional approaches to the study of teaching. The information obtained from such studies clarifies the nature of teachers' knowledge and belief systems, their views as to what constitutes good teaching, and their views of the systems in which they work and their roles within it: such beliefs serve a background to much of the "culture" of teaching (Brousseau, Book and Byres, 1988; Feiman-Nemser and Floden, 1986).

Teaching has never been an easy job. Just what it is exactly that motivates teachers, how teachers themselves see their work and how their conditions of work are likely to affect their pedagogy are all questions that have come to assume increasing importance in the research literature of recent years. Researchers are aware that teaching is a creative, often intuitive response of an individual to a diverse range of external pressures and requirements. Thus, in seeking to understand the way different teachers individually or collectively approach their work, we need to take into account a number of factors. They include the personality of the teacher, her family background,

her professional experience including her training and subject discipline, and above all, her professional perspectives i.e. her expectations, habits, goals in education that may be mediated by an institutional setting that is shared with her immediate colleagues. Some researchers have started to explore the significance of teachers' thinking and how their view of professionalism informs their classroom actions and is in turn related to the context of their lives as a whole. As Ball and Goodson (1985, p.8) put it:

Alongside the recognition of the complexity of the teacher's tasks and the importance of the interplay between initiating and responsive acts in the classroom, greater attention has been directed to teachers as human beings, as rounded social actors with their own problems and perspectives, making careers, struggling to achieve their ideals or just struggling to "survive".

What defines teachers' goals of education and priorities are fundamentally social in character. As Acker (1987, p.14) pointed out:

The content of what is to be learned; the conditions under which the encounter takes place; the characteristics of the parties concerned all reflect the social and cultural arrangements of a given society in a particular era...

Educational practices need to be conceptualised as part of a particular social context and culture. Teachers' professional values are a reflection of what is treasured in their social context. Every education system has its own identity. There are social and cultural messages that define the meaning of a particular educational activity in different societies and they will in turn influence the interactive process between teacher and student, student and text, teacher and policy (Broadfoot, 1997). In order to understand the impact of teachers' pedagogy on students' outcomes, it is necessary to consider the ways in which particular national traditions and social settings can influence how the task of teaching is seen. As Acker (1987, p.20) puts it:

Teaching can be seen as a task or a role, performed with others; as a profession or career; as an activity shaped by historical, social and economic forces... Thus the work of the primary teacher, however concentrated on day-to-day roles and relationships, cannot escape the influence of social, economic and political change. These factors by no means determine her every move, but provide the context and constraints within which she makes her choices and finds her satisfaction.

There have been relatively few significant researches done on a cross-cultural level on the beliefs and values of teachers in different education settings. In Hong Kong, Richards, Tung and Ng (1991) reported on a study of the culture of teachers of English in Hong Kong. They used a questionnaire to identify the beliefs, goals, practices and judgements about their teaching and the teaching of English in Hong Kong secondary schools. Results of the study are analysed in terms of teachers' view of the English as a Second Language curriculum, of language and language teaching, classroom practices, the role of teachers, and teachers' view of their profession. The role of experience and training in determining attitudes, choice of teaching methods, and teachers' sense of professionalism are also discussed. In Britain, Broadfoot (1994) investigated the different perceptions of teaching of teachers in England and France. She found that the professional profiles of primary school teachers in the two places differed in terms of different notions of accountability and responsibility. Results of the study are analysed in terms of teachers' background, teachers' conception of their roles as primary school teachers and of their professional responsibilities. Teachers' goals of teaching, possible factors (such as their personal experiences, their students, their colleagues and their own reading and independent study) that influence teachers'

practice are also explored. Also, factors that contribute to the constraints on teachers' practice are discussed.

This brief literature review has helped me to identify a number of parameters for investigating into the different sources that influence teachers' actions/decisions in the present study. They are, namely:

- ◆ Teachers' goals
- ◆ Teachers' conceptions of their roles
- ◆ Definitions of professional responsibility and accountability
- ◆ Views and values on classroom practices and possible factors (such as their personal experiences, their students, their colleagues and their own reading and independent study) that influence their classroom practice

In order to identify the cultural differences, if any, that exist between the two classes, teachers' goals, definitions of professional responsibility and pedagogy will be analysed according to the comparative framework identified earlier in the section "A comparative framework for comparing cultural differences".

To sum up, one of the aims of this study is to investigate how culturally derived values guide teachers in employing certain classroom structures that help them achieve their teaching objectives. The next aim of this study is to find out how culturally derived values predispose students to prefer certain learning situations. Put together, the data and findings will help reveal the role culture plays in defining classroom processes.

## **2.6 How students' perceptions of classroom structures and processes affect learning outcomes**

It is believed by some researchers that the individual student experiences classroom structures and reacts to them differently according to their backgrounds and past experiences. Markus and Kitayama (1991) believe that the influence of culture on students' motivation may be large. Todd (1995) suggests that informants' answers on questionnaires will be affected not only by factors such as their "true" attitudes, attributions, and expressions of interests, but also by their conceptions of and ideal self, which are particularly individualistic but also heavily influenced by their cultural values. So far, the review on literature on motivation in the Literature Review has been heavily based on that of western research (especially those done in USA), and these theories may be culturally-biased and are applicable in a western society context only. In fact, there has been a charge levelled against theories of achievement motivation (Castanell, 1984; Maehr and Nicholls, 1980) and attribution theory (Duda and Allison, 1989; Kashima and Triandis, 1986; Murphy-Berman and Sharma, 1987) that they are culturally-specific and not universally applicable i.e. that some notions of motivation are culturally-conditioned and reflect the values and beliefs of people in a particular culture. Komin (1990) comments that since people's values and belief systems are culturally-conditioned, "thus, American theories reflect American culture, and Italian theories reflect Italian culture, etc." (p.702). Weiner (1991) emphasises that theories of motivation typically reflect culturally-based metaphors, for example, person as machine (in Freudian and drive theory), person as a rational decision maker (in value/expectancy theories), or person as scientist (in attribution theories).

Also, the discussion in part I of the Literature Review on motivation may lead one to perceive that classroom structures/processes provide a common experience for all students. Yet, the importance of students' perception in depicting classroom climate is now well-recognised and evidenced by the shift away from observational approaches to studying classroom processes. More attention has been directed toward the role of individual student perceptions and interpretations (e.g. Ames & Archer, 1988; Ryan & Grolnick, 1986). Over the years, researchers have observed that students' perceptions of instructional and classroom learning environment have explained a significant amount of variance for both students' cognitive and affective outcomes (Fraser, 1986, 1989; Fraser, Walberg, Welch, & Hattie, 1987; Haertel, Walberg, & Haertel, 1981; Walberg, 1976; Waxman, 1989; Waxman, Huang, Knight, & Owens, 1992). Research on how classroom learning environments affect the students' outcome has also emphasised the student-mediating or student cognition paradigm (Knight & Waxman, 1991; Wittrock, 1986). According to this paradigm, students actively process information and interpret classroom reality (Weinstein, 1989). From this perspective, students are not viewed as passive recipients of instruction; rather, classroom activities and instructions are mediated by the attitudes and perceptions of students (Doyle, 1977). One of the major assumptions of this paradigm is: what students perceive about their classroom and teacher may not match the teachers' intent or observed instructional activities (Anderson, 1987; Weinstein, 1989). This suggests that the classroom environment experienced by the student may be different from the observed or intended instruction (Waxman, 1989; Wittrock, 1986). The other major assumption of this paradigm is that how students perceive, understand, interpret and react to their learning tasks and classroom instruction may be more important than the quality of teaching behaviours, pedagogy or teaching styles in influencing student outcomes (Knight & Waxman, 1991; Walberg, 1976). In other words, this paradigm assumes that better



understanding and improvement in teaching can only emerge if we take into consideration how classroom instruction and learning environment are viewed or interpreted by the students, because they ultimately respond to what they perceive is important (Doyle, 1977).

What forms an integral part in influencing students' perception of classroom structures and the environment is their cultural values. There are hidden codes in every society that define the ways on how individuals approach learning. The theoretical framework that lies behind this comparison of cultures and educational values is social constructionism. Social constructionism prioritises the social in its theory of learning and development :

The essence of this approach is to treat human and cognitive development as a process which is culturally based, not just culturally influenced; a process which is social rather than individual; a communicative process, whereby knowledge is shared and understandings are constructed in culturally formed settings. It...does suggest that cognitive development is saturated by culture. (Mercer, 1991, p,61)

Social constructionist theory maintains that the social and cultural dictate learning. Social constructionists focus on the social and cultural meanings embedded in the codes that individuals use in their interaction, in order to understand learning. In order to understand how students perceive their learning requires a prior analysis of the social and cultural:

Human thought, perception and action must be approached in terms of meanings (Ingleby in Richards & Light, 1986, p.305)

Children internalise the ground rules, values and expectations in the social world of their homes and school. To understand students' perceptions of their school experience, it is important to look at their respective cultural values and expectations. Comparing English and Japanese pupils' perceptions Simmons & Wade (1988) found that English pupils were more motivated by prospects of paid employment, and they were more negative about school and that their values were more individualistic and affected more by social class than those of Japanese students. The Japanese pupils were more motivated by factors such as prospects of studying, entering high school and passing examinations. They had more respect for learning and their values were more concerned with group solidarity. McPake & Powney (1995) found that Japanese students studying in England had difficulty with the emphasis that they found in England on "skills for learning" rather than the more Japanese emphasis on "acquiring knowledge". They also reported that Japanese students were more likely to attribute success at school to hard work rather than accepting that there were a natural spread of ability and that failure was inevitable for some. Schmidt and Savage (1992) investigated whether Csikszentmihalyi's prediction that challenge and skill are the primary determinants of motivation could apply to a group of Thai learners of English. They found out that results did not support the theory. In that study, there was evidence that some learners were intrinsically motivated, but there were no significant correlations, either positive or negative, between learners' ratings of the level of challenge in a particular activity or their skill in doing it and on-line measures of motivation, affect or psychological activation. Schmidt and Savage concluded that the balance between the challenge of an activity and one's ability level may be one factor contributing to motivation, but it is not of overwhelming importance for Thai learners of English. Instead of arising from a single variable that outweighs all others, whether or not an activity is considered enjoyable and intrinsically motivating by Thais seems to

depend on a large number of factors, including their performance orientation, the importance of smooth interpersonal relationships and harmony, a competence orientation characterised by a perception of education as a means to climb the social ladder. Based on these findings, it seems that Csikszentmihalyi's model of intrinsic motivation is too simplistic, because intrinsic motivation and its associated psychological states arises from many interacting factors rather than one or two alone.

There is now a growing concern about the important relationship between national culture and student learning. Planel (1997) analysed the perceptions to learning of English and French students and revealed that students in the two contexts differ in their motivation and attitudes towards education. Their respective education values form part and parcel of the contemporary culture and historical traditions of the two national contexts and are related to pedagogy which is itself related to national culture and traditions. Planel argued that cultural values predispose students to learning and act as the medium through which students relate to styles of teaching and make their experience of school meaningful.

One of the objectives of this research aimed at assessing students' perceptions of the classroom processes. How students perceive their classroom structures/environment will be explored. The investigation framework will be focussed on students' views on the following:

- ◆ Views on curricular activities
- ◆ Views on student control or autonomy in the classroom
- ◆ Views on relationships with the teacher
- ◆ Views on friendships with classmates
- ◆ Views on hierarchy in achievement

The focuses relate to students' perception of classroom structures and are to some extent parallel to the TTGRT dimensions discussed in Part I of the Literature Review. How students' perceive their classroom processes is particularly important and relevant to this study since the aim of this study is intended to compare the reactions of two groups of students operating in two different contexts and cultural settings. By finding out their views on the above, I will be able to see to what extent cultural values affect students' motivation and their responses to various classroom structures. This will shed light on whether the American oriented motivation theories discussed in the Literature review in Part 1 can be applied to an Asian context. When doing the comparisons of their views, the discussion would evolve around the dimensions/axes identified by Dimmocks as outlined in the earlier section on "A Framework for comparing cultural differences".

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Methodology**

### **3.2 Instrumentation**

- 3.2(i) Getting a comprehensive view of the classroom processes in the two classrooms by using the SCOTS Schedule
- 3.2(ii) Gauging students' motivation and finding out whether or not there are significant differences between students from the two classrooms using the Students' Multi-dimensional Measure
- 3.2(iii) Gauging students' perception of the classroom processes using semi-structured interviews
- 3.2(iv) Gauging teachers' pedagogy/professional perspectives and perception using semi-structured interviews

### **3.3 The Piloting Stage**

### **3.4 Characteristics of the schools where the two classes are based**

### **3.5 The Data gathering Schedule**

### 3.1 Methodology

The general purpose of this investigation is to examine the interplay of a number of factors which may affect students' motivation and teachers' pedagogy in two types of schools in Hong Kong. The two types of schools are namely, the local education system and the international school system. Two classrooms (one from each education system) are chosen for the purpose of this study. These two classrooms will serve as case studies in this investigation. As discussed in chapter 2, the focus of this study is as follows:

1. The first focus is to examine whether there is a difference in classroom structures or processes in the two classrooms studied.
2. The second specific focus is to examine whether or not there is significant difference between the various motivational constructs (in terms of academic self-concept, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; mastery and performance orientation; work-avoidant and self-regulation; and social self-concept) of students from the two classes.

After considering these two questions, I will try to identify the relationship, if there is any, between motivational constructs/orientations of students and classroom structures/processes in the two types of school.

3. The next focus will be on: Evaluating how culturally derived values affect:

- teachers' interpretation of their professional values, definitions of good educational practices and how to structure the classrooms
- students' perceptions of the classroom instruction and processes: how students react to their learning tasks and classroom instruction

To do the above, this research aimed at:

1. Getting a comprehensive view of the classroom processes of the two classes studied. Characteristics of classroom instruction and structures/dimensions of classroom learning are focussed on. They include:

- Teachers' roles and authority/degree of autonomy in learning for students
- Task structures
- Grouping arrangements
- Recognition and evaluation procedures
- Time use

2. Gauging students' motivation through a questionnaire and finding out whether or not there are significant differences between students from the two types of schools.

The two types of classrooms are compared to find out whether there are any significant differences between them in the two aspects of classroom structures and students' motivation. The aim is to identify possible relationship, if there is any, between classroom structures and students' motivation.

3(a). Gauging students' perception of the classroom perspectives.

(b). Gauging teachers' pedagogy/professional perspectives.

The aim here is to find out how culturally derived values may affect student's motivation and teachers' pedagogy in shaping classroom structures.

Since the nature of each of the research question is different, a different instrument is used to achieve the purpose of data collection. The research is divided into three main parts according to the three research questions.

### Sampling

In this research, two primary classrooms, one from each education system, were analysed. Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) have suggested that case study can play a vital role in comparative research in examining the differences that may exist between practice of schooling. Case study of schooling can expose the gap between rhetoric and reality and lead to theories about the processes of schooling. By comparing the subjective realities of different populations, one can use these as the basis for generating new conceptual frameworks through which to analyse education. The two schools chosen for this study are matched cases in that they fall in nearby geographical areas. Both of them are situated on Hong Kong island. One of them belongs to Central-western district and the other Southern district. The two schools are within five-minute drive from each other. Students from both schools come from backgrounds of similar socio-economic status, with either privately owned/company owned houses or more



luxurious blocks of flat. A high proportion of parents from the two schools belong to the professional and managerial class.

Subjects chosen for the study are students from one classroom of each school. One is a Primary five class and the other one is a primary six class. They are children between the ages of 8-10 years old. They are chosen because the investigator thinks that they are old enough to be able to understand the research questions and to give reliable answers to the questions. Since the focus of this research is on primary education, therefore children in secondary school are not chosen.

### **3.2 Instrumentation**

In this section, I would introduce the instrumentation for each stage one by one.

#### **3.2(i) Getting a comprehensive view of the classroom processes in the two classrooms by using the SCOTS Schedule**

In order to answer research question 1, we needed to get a comprehensive view of the classroom processes. As discussed in chapter 2, I had identified a number of factors which need to be considered in outlining the specific structures or dimensions of classrooms (section 2.2 (v) and 2.2 (vi)). The TTGRT structures identified were related to each other and were multifarious in nature. For the purpose of this study, the classes were observed using a combination of field notes and a systematic, highly detailed observation schedule adapted from Powell (1985). The SCOTS Schedule could capture the multifarious aspects of the classroom and could gauge the differences in classroom structures, if there was any, between the two classrooms under study (See Appendix

1A). It was a systematic observation schedule designed to document observed scheduled student behaviours in the context of ongoing classroom instructional learning processes. It could reflect different aspects of teacher behaviour and teacher-student interaction. The items in the Schedule closely coincided with the classroom dimensions identified (TTGRT) in the literature review. In this study, the researcher would shadow the two classes of students chosen for two weeks to get a comprehensive view of their classroom processes. The data collected should be able to reflect the classroom processes and characteristics of each type of classroom. In short, the reason for choosing this schedule for use was because the items were multi-faceted in nature and could review the complex processes of the classroom (the TTGRT dimensions) as identified in our previous discussion.

In order to use the Schedule to get the data, the researcher spent one quarter of a school day (for a period of five consecutive days) doing the recording. There were five columns to the right of all items on the SCOTS Schedule (see example below) for recording the observer’s coding. The observer had to decide which column to take for each item after each morning’s observation. At the end of the five days of observation, she had collected five codings. On completion of the set of five codings on the same item, the observer had to make a summative coding on each item basing on the five observations.

Item 1: Variation of treatment according to students’ needs

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. No variety of treatment amongst students (level of work may vary but approach is identical for all students. |              |   |   |   |   |

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| b. Some variety of treatment, but for low or high ability students only. | √ | √ | √ |   | √ |
| c. Treatment varies with instructional groups.                           |   |   |   | √ |   |
| d. Treatment varies with students grouped in pairs.                      |   |   |   |   |   |
| e. Treatment varies with individual student need.                        |   |   |   |   |   |

In the above example, the observer ticked option “b” on four of the days while she chose option c on one of the day. Therefore, the summative coding for this item was option b. As we could see, the option was a structured description of the classroom structure (e.g. teacher objectives) under observation. In order to complement this description and to justify the observer’s reasons for choosing this option, field notes of the lessons were taken under several categories (Appendix 1A) so that findings from the observation data could be discussed in contexts. Unstructured interviews were conducted with teachers after the recordings were done to clarify issues that might come up as important (e.g. teachers’ justifications in organising the class in a particular way)

The categories in the present instrument were classified according to the TTGRT dimensions identified and aimed to correspond to the structured items from the SCOTS schedule. E.g. items like “Variation of treatment according to students’ needs” and “Praise/Blame approach” were put under the first category : those relating to teacher’s roles, teacher and student interaction patterns, autonomy of students(Appendix 1A) . The lesson observation results, the field notes, together with data collected from the unstructured interviews with teachers, would then be analysed and interpreted to identify patterns of the classroom structures that might potentially explain classroom characteristics that was particular to the classroom under study.

### Characteristics of the SCOTS Schedule

The 43 items in the original Schedule was compiled by John Powell and Mabel Scrimgeour (Powell, 1985 p.10). To document the on-goings in the classrooms, they made classroom observations and made extensive notes of everything that occurred in the classrooms, and as far as possible things said by teacher or students were taken down verbatim. Since both of the observers were recording the same lessons, they could discuss the lessons afterwards and note areas which seemed both to characterise particular classrooms and the teaching in them and to differentiate them from others. Once any such area was noted, they endeavoured to define a five-point scale of the range of variation that had been observed or was thought by the two observers- on the basis of their own previous experience as teachers- to be the range that would be found in other classrooms. They tried to describe the two extremes (normally options 1 and 5) and then to fit in these intermediate points at what seemed subjectively to be approximately equal intervals. The aim was to define the five options in largely behavioural terms. The supposition was that if one described behaviour, it would be easy to see which teachers were alike in particular respects. The choice of variables in constructing the Schedule was done on a judgmental basis, with reference to potentially important things that struck the observers and from their previous survey of a large number of other classroom observation instruments. The complete Schedule was tried and put to test for repeated use.

All the items in the Schedule were essentially descriptive and are neutral. Yet they could be seen as extending along a continuum of those favouring the development of a mastery goal in students and those which were not too favourable to it. As Powell

(1985) pointed out, it might be possible to see them as extending from ‘good’ to ‘bad’. However, it was important to remember that an extreme might be seen by one person as ‘good’ while it might be seen by another as ‘bad’, and that the midpoint might be seen by a third as the optimum. Every reader might place her own value judgements : the descriptive options in the schedule were themselves neutral.

15 items from the SCOTS Schedule were chosen to be used in the present study. These items were chosen because they could document descriptions which largely parallel the TTGRT dimensions in the classroom as described in Chapter two. By describing the TTGRT dimensions in the classroom, the instrument could reflect how the classrooms were structured. Since the options reflected a range of behaviour that could be observed in the classroom, the research could use that to reflect the differences in classrooms observed basing on the options. From there, the researcher could see where each classroom was placed on the continuum between that of a performance-oriented classroom to that of a mastery-oriented classroom. In order to do that, scores were attached to each option to reflect the degree favouring the development of a mastery goal in students. “1” point is given to option “a” and “2” points is given to option “b” etc. If a class gets a high raw score, that means the classroom structures identified are favourable to the development of a mastery goal or orientation in students. If the raw score is low, it is not favourable to the development of a mastery orientation in students.

### Strengths of the SCOTS Schedule

Another important reason why the SCOTS schedule was chosen was because it allowed the observer freedom of inference within well-defined limits. The observer, in

using the Schedule, had to make use of her understanding and professional judgement to judge what she saw occurring. In this lay her strength as well as some obvious danger, unfettered subjectivity and bias. As Powell (1985) notes, there can be no absolute protection against these dangers, but the SCOTS schedule sought to minimise them. When compared with other methods of collecting data, like schedules by Ned Flanders in the United States, (e.g. Flanders-type schedule) which recorded data in a machine-like way, the SCOTS Schedule was seen to be more comprehensive, could capture the multifarious nature of the classroom and reflect classroom ongoings more truly than these instruments. Other instruments, which tended to record behaviour in the classroom in terms of pre-determined categories and measured them in terms of the frequency of duration of each category of behaviour observed, were subject to interpretation, too. As Powell (1988) points out, there were a number of characteristics that can determine both its usefulness and limitations of machine-like data collection, they were:

- ◆ Classroom behaviour that were recorded and counted were ones that could be unambiguously defined and recognised-and were therefore fairly simple ones.
- ◆ The number of behaviours that could be categorised and recorded were, at any one time, quite small in number, and thus what was recorded was very small sub-set of the total range of behaviour occurring.
- ◆ The behaviour recorded had little meaning in themselves and it was therefore necessary to interpret the data collected after the action was over.(Although the recording itself might have been 'objective', subjectivity was involved in the subsequent interpretation of the data)
- ◆ When the interpretation was carried out, all behaviours placed in a category had to be treated as identical. Thus, for example, all initiations of verbal

interactions were treated as identical events unless another simultaneous recording permitted some degree of sub-categorisation (e.g., according to what was going on at the time), and even then was in practice limited by the amount of simultaneous recording practicable.

In contrast, the SCOTS schedule offered something more comprehensive. The merit of using the SCOTS schedule was that it permitted the recording of a wide range of coincident behaviours or events happening at the same time. The role of the observer using the SCOTS schedule was to observe classroom on-goings and make judgement on which option to tick in the different categories which reflect the various aspects of the classrooms. If the observer employing the SCOTS schedule used subjective judgement, she did so on very narrow fronts. The recordings were the result of what might be regarded as a large number of small subjective judgements rather than a smaller number of single wide-ranging and possibly simplistic ones. The observer's freedom was disciplined by procedures and defined requirements.

### Ways of collecting the data

To collect data using the Schedule, the researcher would divide each day's observation into two parts. During the first part, she would use the SCOTS schedule (Appendix 1a) as an observation instrument. She would give a coding to each item on the instrument at the end of the observation. During the observation, she would also take field notes according to the criteria in Appendix 1b to complement the data in the SCOTS schedule.

### Using the SCOTS Schedule

The two halves of the morning and the short session in the afternoon-usually separated by a timetabled interval provided “natural” units for the systematic observation and avoided the disruption of an observers’ arrival during a period of teaching. The researcher made every effort to be present from the very outset of a period of teaching, since the instructions given to students at the time typically provided a context that was important in the interpretation of subsequent events.

The number of observations was fixed at five: three morning ones and two afternoon ones. The reason why it was fixed at five was based on Powell’s (1985, p32) suggestion:

Obviously the more observations undertaken, the more that can be learned, but experience showed that there was a rapid fall-off of new information obtained after a fifth observation...

To prevent any bias arising from various types of work undertaken at particular times of the day, each of the three quarters of the day was observed at least once.

### The observer in the classroom and the technique of observing

It was important that the observer be placed in the classroom where she could both hear and see well, while not being obstructive to the teacher or the students. Optimum positions differed according to student seating arrangements and classroom organization, but in any case the observer always observed any teacher request



concerning where she should sit. The observer never changed position once she had settled down on an appropriate spot except when the pupils moved their positions or moved to another room for their lesson. In this way, observations could be done as unobtrusively as possible.

The use of the systematic observation schedule required its own observation techniques “since every action, gesture, or speech unit is potentially a source of evidence germane to the coding of one or more of the schedule items...” (Powell, 1985 p.34). Since there was no means of fore-telling the order in which units of evidence would present themselves, it was necessary for the observer to record any events that can supplement or explain the actions in the classroom. Events were recorded and grouped under different items as in Appendix 1b. Since actual words might constitute important clues, they were noted selectively. Codings for items were recorded shortly after the end of each observation while memory was still fresh. Completing the record for an observation consisted primarily of ticking the category judged most appropriate for each item, but when uncertainties existed, question marks were used, or alternatively, ticks were placed on the boundary between two categories. At the end of the five observations, the observer would give a “summative” coding to the whole set of five observations. However, in the case of items where coding varied from one observation to another on account of the teacher practice, the final assessment was to take account of the extent of variation as well as of the average level.

Although the instrument was designed as an observational instrument, it was recognised that some data needed could not be obtained accurately by observation alone. Thus, for example, although an observer could see students operating in groups, she might not be able to infer with any certainty the basis on which the groups were

formed. It was therefore necessary to ask the teacher about certain matters and to use observation to check whether there was any consistency between what the teacher said and what actually happened. Therefore, it was important that unstructured interviews took place after the recordings, to clarify issues as well as to find out the teachers' rationale behind their actions. In other words, unstructured interviews with teachers observed would be conducted after the fourth observations. The aims were as follows:

- ◆ To seek to tease out teachers' intentions for, and accounts of, the lesson in focus, as well as to probe wider aspects of their thinking.

It was suggested by Powell (1985) that the timing of asking the teacher the questions should be by the end of the fourth observation because:

- By then there had been plenty of time to observe what was observable before the teacher was alerted to the observer's interest
- The observer could frame her questions indirectly by asking specific events that she had observed, instead of asking the question openly and bluntly.

It was noted that in no case would the observer code the teacher's responses to questions in the presence of the teacher. A question about a particular student was often used as a starting point for initiating enquiries and essential questions were worked in as opportunity arose or was made. All these actions were considered necessary to keep an informal and easy relationship with teachers and to ease their apprehension.



### Method of Analysis

As discussed before, the 15 items of the Schedule provided a profile of how teachers conducted their classes and organised their lessons. It should be able to reflect the various dimensions (TTGRT) of classroom structures in the two classrooms. The information would be analysed together with field notes (contextualizing notes) that the researcher took during the class observation, as well as with information from unstructured interviews with teachers observed after the observations were over.

#### **3.2(ii) Gauging students' motivation and finding out whether or not there are significant differences between students from the two classrooms**

In order to answer research question 2, I need to measure students' motivation in each of the classroom to find out whether there were any differences between the students. As discussed earlier, one of the main aims of this study was to find out the relationship between students' motivation and classroom structures. In the literature review, I had documented the previous research done by other researchers on what constitute the basic elements that were involved in the study of students' motivation. The motivation constructs of: academic self-concept (section 2.2 (ii)); intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (section 2.2 (i)); work avoidant orientation (section 2.2 (iv)) and self-regulated learning (section 2.2 (v)); mastery and performance goal orientation (section 2.2 (iii) & (iv)); social self-concept (section 2.3) had been identified. These constructs were inter-related and sometimes overlapped each other. They would serve as the basis on which students' motivation would be measured in this study.

### Measures to assess students' motivation

Previous researchers had come up with different measures to gauge students' motivation. Some of them had chosen to study the different motivation constructs by looking at them a general level while others were more interested at studying specific subject areas. Firstly, for the measure of perceived ability, Harter (1982) developed a measure for students above the second grade that had been used in many studies. The thirty-six item scale included three subscales that measured self-perceptions of cognitive, social, and physical competence, and a fourth general self-worth subscale. They were all concerned with the motivation constructs of students on a general level. On the other hand, Marsh & Holmes (1990) developed a measure of perceived competence that differentiated between subject areas. Their 66 item Self-Description Questionnaire (SDQ) included subscales for perceived competence of students in different subjects like reading, mathematics, and all other school subjects, as well as subscales for non-academic subjects like physical abilities, appearance, relations with peers etc.

Second, for the measure of intrinsic motivation, some researchers had developed questionnaires to assess relatively stable individual differences in students' intrinsic motivation to engage in academic work at school in general while others are interested in assessing intrinsic interest in specific subject areas. Harter (1981b) developed a measure to assess five general dimensions related to intrinsic motivation (e.g. preference for hard work, learning motivated by curiosity versus learning motivated by a desire to please others etc). On the other hand, Gottfried (1990) developed the

Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory, which assesses intrinsic interest in specific subject areas (reading, Math, social studies, science).

Since one of the aims of the present study was to find out the overall effect of school processes on students' motivation, the researcher had decided to replicate measures that gauged the various students' motivation constructs on a general level. For that purpose, Uguroglu, Schiller & Walberg (1986) multidimensional motivation instrument was chosen to measure students' motivation in this study. The multidimensional motivation instrument was the result of a meta-analysis of approximately 50 instruments measuring motivation constructs of social, emotional and physical self-concept; locus of control; intrinsic motivation; performance goal-orientation etc. After identifying the various factors from different measures, Uguroglu et al developed a 23 item questionnaire using a five-point scale to investigate students' various motivation constructs. It had test-retest reliability, the predictive validity of a multidimensional instrument and showed correlations of motivation to academic achievement.

Based on the 23 items from this instrument, the researcher had chosen items which were relevant to this research for use in the present study. Other items from other measures were added to it in order to get fuller picture of the constructs under study. The items were mainly taken from Ames and Archer (1984) Assessment of Students' Goals. Ames and Archer had conducted studies to find out how specific motivational processes were related to the salience of mastery and performance goals in actual classroom settings using the measure. The measure aimed at reflecting and finding out students' goal orientations in the classroom, gauging their use of study strategies, preference for tasks, attitude towards the class and beliefs about one's success. It had

been used in different studies on motivation (e.g. Ames 1992) and results were consistent.

#### The Students' Multidimensional Measure:

As discussed above, this measure is used to gauge 'students' motivation. It would gauge students' views on the following:

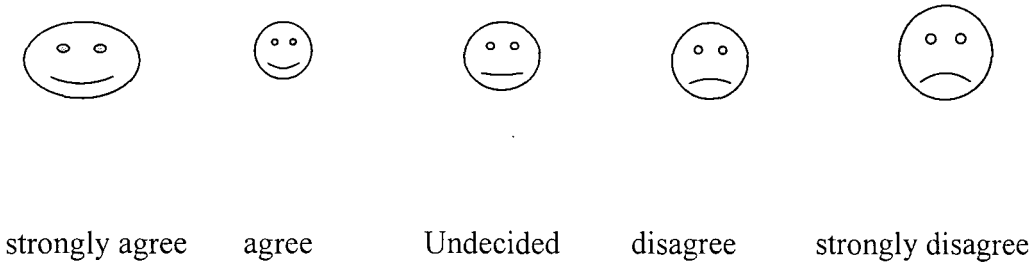
- academic self-concept
- mastery orientation
- performance orientation
- intrinsic motivation
- extrinsic motivation
- work-avoidant orientation
- self-regulated learning
- social self-concept

A Chinese version of the questionnaire was developed for students from the local education system (See Appendix 2A).

The instrument has been modified in the following ways:

- to make it relevant to Hong Kong classroom context
- to be simple enough for primary five and six students to manage. For example, since the children involved in this research are aged between 8-10, the investigator had adapted the questionnaire into a pictorial form. Instead of asking the children to fill out the questionnaire on their own, the experimenter would individually ask the

child the questions and the child would respond by marking the picture that shows how she/he feels/thinks. (e.g. The worst thing about making mistakes in my class is that other students may notice.)



A brief description of the scales and a sample item from each were listed below:

Mastery Orientation: the extent to which students feel that their work in school in general is a direct result of their own effort and prior planning. Their focus on learning is on mastery, creativity, innovation (e.g. Item no.1: “I do the work in my class because I want to learn new things”.)

Performance Orientation: the extent to which students feel their work in school is a means to an end, e.g. getting recognition and approval (e.g. Item no.7:“ At school, I try to do better than the other students.”)

Work-avoidant Orientation: the extent to which students feel they want to avoid difficult work. (e.g. Item no. 14: At, school, I like it best when there is no hard work.)

Intrinsic Motivation: the extent to which students value learning in itself.  
(e.g Item no.16 :“I find school work very boring.”)

Extrinsic motivation: the extent to which students look to external reinforcement to boost their morale for learning.(e.g. Item no.23 :“I work hard in school so I can have things I want someday.)

Self-regulation : the extent to which students rely on themselves to plan for their work (e.g. Item no.27 :“ “I get help from my parents/private tutors very often for my work.)

Academic Self-concept : the extent to which students exhibit pride in their reading work and expect to do well in the school work. The general feeling of doing well or poorly in school. ( e.g Item no.28 :“ “ I am satisfied with my work in school.” )

Social Self-Concept : the extent to which students think their teacher is pleased with their performance in school (e.g Item no. 35:“ I find it easy to work with other kids in the class.”)

### Ways of collecting the data

80 Students in Key stage 2 (primary five and six students), 40 from each type of school were chosen to do the questionnaire. They were students from the same classes whom the observer observed. As mentioned earlier, they were chosen because they are old enough to understand the questions and give reliable responses.



## Methods of Analysis

### *1. The MANOVA Test:*

In order to find out whether there were any significant differences between students from the two types of schools, a MANOVA would be conducted to find out the overall significant multivariate effect i.e. whether there were differences between the two groups of students, based on the 8 scales in the questionnaire.

### *2. The ANOVA Test:*

After establishing whether there were significant differences between students from the two classes on the eight subscales in the questionnaire, it was of interest to find out if the overall difference between the two groups existed for each subscale and see on which subscales they had the greatest differences. To do this, univariate ANOVAs would be conducted to find out, if there was any, on which sub-scales (items) there were significant differences between the two groups.

### *3. The Discriminant Analysis:*

This analysis could tell us the contribution of each subscale to the overall differences, if there was any, that existed between the two groups. The purpose was to further describe the MANOVA results. If it was found out that there were significant differences between the two groups, then it would be of use to know which subscales

contributed most to the differences, if there was any, which existed between the two groups. In other words, this test could inform us of this: based on what factors (or on which subscales) might we discriminate the two groups of students from one another? . While the ANOVA test could tell us on which subscales the two groups might have the greatest differences, the descriptive Discriminant Analysis could determine the extent to which the two groups differed with respect to the 8 subscales.

#### *4. The Inter-correlations Test:*

One central hypothesis in the study was that a mastery motivation orientation should be related academic self-concept and intrinsic motivation. That means children with an intrinsic love for learning and oriented towards a mastery goal would have more positive or higher perceived academic self-concept (stronger feelings of academic competence), a stronger inclination on intrinsic motivation and a stronger tendency towards self-regulated learning. Conversely, children with an extrinsic motivation to learning, children who regard learning as a means to an end, and are oriented towards a performance goal would demonstrate a less positive or lower perceived academic self-concept (lower feelings of academic competence) in the classroom, and a weaker tendency towards self-regulated learning. Previous researches (e.g. Brophy, 1986, 1987; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987a; Ames & Archer, 1988; Epstein, 1988, Stipek, 1998) as discussed from (section 2.2 (vi)) had confirmed this. In order to see whether the outcomes of the present research followed the same pattern, an Inter-correlations test was conducted. The result of the test could serve the following purposes: (1) inform us on whether there was internal and external validity consistency of the test items (2)

explore whether there was construct validity in the measurement and help evaluate the reliability of the instrument.

### **3.2 (iii) Gauging students' perception of the classroom processes**

The next aim of this research was to find out how culturally-derived values affect teachers' interpretation of their professional values, definitions of good educational practices and how to structure the classrooms. As discussed in the literature review, the TTGRT dimensions might not be the only factors contributing to the differences in students' motivation. Classroom structures/processes might not provide a common experience for all students. Actually, there were other factors such as the cultural differences that might be another source for the differences as well. Researchers had observed that students' perceptions of instructional and classroom learning environment (section 2.6) had explained a significant amount of variance for both students' cognitive and affective outcomes and this was associated with the cultural background of the students.

As discussed earlier, in assessing students' perceptions of the classroom processes, we needed to look at how students perceived their classroom structures/processes and the investigation framework would be focussed on students' views on the following:

- ◆ Views on curricular activities
- ◆ Views on student control or autonomy in the classroom
- ◆ Views on relationships with the teacher
- ◆ Views on friendships with classmates
- ◆ Views on hierarchy in achievement

The focuses were related to students' perception of classroom structures and somehow ran parallel to the TTGRT dimensions discussed in Part I of the literature review. How students perceived their classroom processes was particularly important and relevant to this study since the aim of this study was intended to compare the reactions of two groups of students operating in two different contexts and cultural settings.

To achieve this purpose, semi-structured interviews (See Appendix 3) were arranged for targeted students. As Drever (1995) points out, semi-structured interviews encourage people to talk at some length, in their own way and at the same time allow the interviewer to structure and control the interviews by setting main questions to be discussed in advance. The overall structure of the interview was created by the interviewer beforehand but has the flexibility to allow the interviewees a fair degree of freedom: what to talk about, how much to say, how to express it etc. 20 students from each class were interviewed to gauge their perception of their schooling experience. The reason for choosing to work on the same students is that the researcher may be able to triangulate the findings in this section with those in the previous part for further analysis. The questions used were based on and selected from the PACE project (Broadfoot et al 1994). The questions were used because they could capture the main themes in the investigation framework of this study. However, these questions were just used as a guide and the interviewer would conduct the interview with a lot of flexibility, following up on.

### Ways of collecting the data

Most of the interviews took place during break-time or lunch time. Targeted students were invited to sit in a quiet corner of the school with the researcher to conduct the interview. Most children appeared to enjoy the interview and some of them even asked whether they would appear in the newspaper the next day. In order to make the interviews more personal, the first few questions were usually embedded in the students' experience. The first questions the researcher discussed with the students were usually some work/tasks that they just did during the lessons observed earlier. Students were then asked whether they felt the activity was enjoyable and the reasons for their judgement, what they saw as the teacher's reasons for giving them the activity and their views of their own achievement on this and in other curriculum areas. Then the interview would move on following the questions set out in Appendix 3a. The interviews were tape-recorded for reference and notes were taken.

### **3.2 (iv) Gauging teachers' pedagogy/professional perspectives and perception**

The next aim of this research was to find out how culturally-derived values affect teachers' professional perspectives and pedagogy. As discussed in the literature review(section 2.5), in order to help explain teachers' classroom actions and decisions, we have to probe into their minds and find out what factors are behind their actions. The information obtained served to clarify the nature of teachers' knowledge and belief systems, their views as to what constituted good teaching, and their views of the

systems in which they worked and their roles within it: such beliefs served a background to much of the “culture” of teaching.

To gauge teachers’ professional perspectives, semi-structured interviews (See Appendix 3b) were conducted with 5 teachers from each school, to gauge their attitude on the learning process, their pedagogy, teaching styles and professional perspectives. These teachers were all involved in teaching the classes that the researcher observed. The questions used were adapted from the Britol-Aix Study Teachers’ Questionnaire (Broadfoot, 1993). This source was chosen because it contained a comprehensive survey of teachers’ conceptions on their professional responsibility, and the items were relevant to the purpose of this research. The questionnaire covered the following areas:

- Personal and professional information about teachers themselves
- Socio-demographic description of the classes
- General perceptions of the nature of the teacher’s job
- Professional responsibility and objectives
- Influences, constraints and degree of freedom in the teacher’s work
- Accountability

Several questions that directly addressed the concerns of teachers were added to help gauge the cultural values of teachers in the choice of their teaching style and pedagogy. They were: “What do you think of the discipline of students in your school? Do you think teachers need to tighten/relax measures in controlling the discipline of students in your school?” and “Do you think the amount of homework given to students

is appropriate? Do you think you should add more/cut down on the amount of homework given?”

### Ways of collecting the data

Semi-structured interviews with 5 class teachers involved with the classes the researcher observed took place in the afternoons of the first week and mornings of the second week. Notes were taken during the interview, and the whole conversation was tape-recorded for reference. Since teachers in the local primary schools interviewed were all University graduates and had a good command of English, the questionnaire was not translated to keep its original flavour. In order to make the atmosphere of the interview easier and informal, Cantonese was used in addition by both the researcher and the teachers interviewed during the conversation.

Unstructured discussions (with teachers observed), throughout the two weeks, supplemented these pre-specified interviews. The researcher took whatever opportunities arose to seek clarification or ask questions suggested by observation or field notes, and teachers' views were written up in full as soon as possible afterwards.

### **3.3 The Piloting Stage**

The study was carried out with the full support of principals of the two schools. Permission was sought from three months in advance. Staff from both schools were informed in advance about the arrival of the researcher. Staff from the local school was particularly briefed by their Principal before the researcher met the teachers for the first

time. Two weeks before the observation, the researcher spent one week in each of the schools familiarising herself with the teachers and piloting the instruments.

### Pre-meeting with teachers

Teachers were in general apprehensive about being observed. While students could take the observer as someone who was unthreatening and unimportant rather quickly, this did not always happen to teachers. Therefore, the researcher had a meeting with teachers involved in each of the schools before the start of observation. Teachers from both of the schools were forewarned by their Principals of the researcher's arrival. During the first meeting with teachers, the following was done:

- Assurance that everything observed would be kept confidential
- The researcher maintains an easy and informal relationship with teachers
- The research demonstrates herself to be understanding, non-threatening
- Teachers were asked not to prepare special lessons, but to undertake whatever they would have done had there been no observations

Teachers from both schools were very co-operative and willing to open their doors to the researcher.



### Trying out the Scots Schedule

In order to familiarise herself with the working of the schedule, the researcher went to the two schools chosen for observation to do the piloting on two consecutive days. It was found that the items served as a good framework for describing classroom structures within discernible parameters. The multifarious aspects of the schedule were very useful and appropriate to the present research in finding out the differences in classroom structures between the two types of schools. However, there were two points that should be considered:

- Owing to the complex nature of the schedule, not all the items were useful in identifying the classroom structures of the schools. Therefore, only 20 items were selected for use instead of the original 43 items. The items were then grouped under categories that match what this research intended to find out in terms of classroom processes. Hence, items were grouped as follows :
  - Items relating to teacher's roles, teacher and student interaction patterns, autonomy of students and time use: 1-13
  - Items relating to Task orientation and structures (types of activities, types of materials) : 14-17
  - Items relating to grouping arrangements: 18-20
  - Items relating to evaluation and recognition: 21-22

- Items 15 and 16 were added by the researcher to the original schedule because they could gauge important information (concerning the amount of time students spent on different activities) that were not present in the schedule.
- As described earlier, although the schedule offered a good framework for describing whether there were any difference between the two types of schools, the list was by no means exhaustive. There might be things that were not included in the schedule items but were important to the findings of the study. Therefore, the part on “Notes” (Appendix 1A) was added to the Schedule for that particular purpose and the researcher could record the contextualizing notes as well as happenings that were considered relevant.

#### Piloting the Students’ Multidimensional Motivation Measure

Two weeks before the observation, the researcher took the questionnaire to each of the schools and invited 8 students from each school to fill up the questionnaire to see whether there were any problems of transfer from other research to this one. These students did not come from the actual sample of the research but were students from other classes of the same level. Although students from the local school knew English, the investigator felt that a Chinese translated version could make sure students understand the questions and give reliable answers. Therefore, a Chinese version of the questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was first translated from English into Chinese by the researcher. Then the researcher paid a professional translator (someone who works full time as a translator translating English into Chinese) to cross check the questionnaire for her. The aim was to get a translated version of the original work keeping most of its original flavour. After the translated

version was ready, the researcher tried out the Chinese and English version in both schools. Since the questionnaire was originated from the United States, the researcher could foresee that there might be some difficulties involved in directly using the questionnaire in the Hong Kong situation. Below were some of the difficulties encountered:

- Linguistic equivalence: Obtaining linguistic equivalence through translation is difficult, especially when trying to do it from English to Chinese. Warwick and Osherson (1973) offered some suggestion to solve this problem. They suggested that the primary emphasis in translation should be on conceptual equivalence-comparability of ideas-rather than words per se. This is the approach that is used in this research.

Below was a summary of the problematic items and show how the original versions have been adapted for use in this research:

| Original version  | Finalised version   |
|---|---|
| <b>Mastery goals:</b><br>I feel good at school when I score higher than other students. | <b>Mastery goals:</b><br>I feel good at school when I do the work better than other students.<br>當我比其他同學的學業表現更佳，我在校內會很有成功感。 |
| At school, I want to look smart to my friends.  | At school, I want to look clever to my friends.<br>在校內，我會在朋友面前表現得很聰明。   |
| <b>Performance goals</b><br>At school I try to get a higher score than other students.  | <b>Performance goals</b><br>At school I try to do my work better than other students.<br>在校內，我嘗試爭取比其他同學更高的成績                |
| I feel successful at school when I do the work better than other students.              | I feel good at school when I do the work better than other students.<br>當我比其他同學的學業表現更佳，我在校內會很有成功感。                          |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| At school, I want to look smart to my friends.        | At school, I want to look clever to my friends.<br>在校內，我會在朋友面前表現得很聰明。                                     |
| In class, I try not to be among the poorest students. | In class, I try not to be among the students who are very weak in their study.<br>在校內，我會盡量表現到自己不是最弱學生的一群。 |
| I am proud of my work at school.                      | I am satisfied with my work at school.<br>在校內，我滿意我的的學業表現  |
|   |   |

- Conceptual equivalence: One of the biggest problems of doing cross-cultural research is whether concepts from one culture had any equivalence in another. This problem was accentuated when the two schools operated in very different modes. For example, students in the international school did not register statements like “I try to score higher than other students” or “In class, I try not to be the poorest students.” That was because the competition element was not present in their school and they have never been given grades for any work. Also, they would have problems in understanding the phrase “I feel successful...” because they had never been praised like that before. When they had done a good job, their teachers would say: “That’s brilliant” or “That’s marvellous” but not “successful”. The same applies to “I want to look smart to my friends”. Does it mean “to look clever”?

After talking to the eight students involved in the piloting stage and learning about the problems they encountered, the researcher was in a much better position to adapt the original questionnaire for use in Hong Kong. The Students’ multi-dimensional measure (Appendix 2A) was finalised after much consultation with piloted students from both schools. Some major points that needed adaptation were centred around cultural interpretation of some wordings. Since students came from different cultural background, they might interpret the questionnaire in a different manner. As Jiang

(1998) points out, there were certain concepts which can pose as a problem for Chinese students and could affect their ratings on their scores on their self-competence. He stressed that cultural attitudes might lead the students to give themselves a rating on certain items. For example, on the item “I am proud of my work in school work”, Jiang said that students might not want to indicate or admit that they were “proud” of themselves. It had something to do with the norms in their society. There was no doubt that Chinese parents placed high expectations on their children. They were expected to get good grades in school, but not to be proud of their accomplishments. Chinese culture treated pride in one’s accomplishments as a fault. Young children at a very young age were taught to be modest about their accomplishment. Saying that you were proud of yourself equalled boosting in front of others, which was something that an educated person should not do. Therefore, Jiang suggested that cultural attitudes might affect students’ scoring on items with wordings like that inside. In order to overcome this, the Chinese translation of the item had been modified into something that was acceptable to the norms of the Chinese society. Instead of translating the word “proud” literally into “自豪”, the investigator modified it while keeping some of the flavour of the original meaning. Hence it came out as “满意”, meaning “satisfied”. In this way, it was hoped that students’ rating on the item would not be affected too much by their cultural interpretation of the item.

Consultation with teachers and students involved during the piloting stage reviewed that some techniques were required in administering the questionnaire in order to minimise the problems arising from inadequate reading skills and mis-interpretation of some items by some of the students. It was decided that the test should be administered in this way: the class teacher would read aloud each of the items while

The reading aloud had another important advantage, for it was possible to eliminate, or at least reduce, differences of interpretation of the words by individual students. Therefore, it was decided that in the actual data gathering stage, the questions would be read aloud to students in the presence of the class teacher and the researcher.

### **3.4 Characteristics of the schools from which the two classrooms were based**

The local school (from which Class P was based) chosen for the observation was situated in an upper middle class area. The school building had been converted from an old colonial building and had a quiet setting. It was a whole day school. There were 20 teachers in the school and 450 students on roll. The spread between boys and girls was even. There was a small library, a computer room(with 40 computers) and an open air playground in the school. Yet, there was no Art room or music room owing to the lack of space. The school hall served as a multi-purpose venue for school assembly, music lessons and physical education lessons on rainy days. Adjacent to the school is an Annex where there were some audio-visual rooms and a swimming pool. The facilities in the Annex were shared by two of its sister schools in nearby locations. The average size of each class was 38.

The international school (from which Class K was based) chosen was situated in a quiet corner in Southern district. The school was built about 20 years ago. It was also a whole day school. There were about 30 teachers and 300 students on roll in the school. The spread between boys and girls was even. There was a big library, a computer room (with 25 computers), two open air playgrounds, a covered area for play, a parents' room, a cooking room, an Art room, a music room and a resources room for teachers. There were no swimming pool nor audio-visual rooms in the school. The

school hall also served multi-purpose for school assembly and PE lessons. The average size of each class was 22.

The table below reflected the population composition of the two schools:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| School “K”, the international school  | School “P”, the local school  |
| There were 21 nationalities in the school. The four largest demographic groups were:  | 100% of the population was ethnic Chinese, although some of them might hold foreign passports like British, Australian or American.               |
| <div>British48%</div> <div>American13%</div> <div>Australian16%</div> <div>Scandinavian8%</div>   |   |
| School “K” : Teachers’ qualification (of teachers’ interviewed and observed)  | School “P” : Teachers’ qualification (of teachers’ interviewed and observed)  |
| 100% graduates of Colleges of Education e.g. King Alfred’s College of Education, Liverpool College of Art, Derby College of Higher Education, Notre Dame College of Education | 100% graduates of Colleges of Education e.g. Northcote College of Education, Sir Robert Black College of Education, Grantham College of Education |

### 3.5 The Data gathering Schedule

The researcher stationed in each school for a consecutive period of 2 weeks to do the classroom studies and interviews. The following time-table was observed.

| School A                      | Morning  | Afternoon  |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 (November 6-10, 2000)  | In-class observation<br>(Observations 1-3 made)                            | Interviews with teachers<br>and administering<br>questionnaire to students |
| Week 2 (November 13-17, 2000) | Interviews with students<br>and administering<br>questionnaire on students | In-class observation<br>(Observations 4-5 made)                            |

| School B                        | Morning  | Afternoon  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 (October 20-24, 2000)    | In-class observation<br>(Observations 1-3 made)                            | Interviews with teachers<br>and administering<br>questionnaire to students |
| Week 2 (October 27-Nov 1, 2000) | Interviews with students<br>and administering<br>questionnaire on students | In-class observation<br>(Observations 4-5 made)                            |

These weeks were chosen in consultation with the Principals of the two schools. They represented natural weeks for the school and should be able to reflect the true on-going in the school for the academic year.



## **Chapter 4 : Research Findings**

### **4.1 Are there significant difference in classroom processes in the two classes studied?**

- 4.1 (i) Class “P”(the local school) : Dimension on Teachers’ role and authority
- 4.1 (ii) Class “K”(the international school) : Teachers’ role and authority
- 4.1 (iii) Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Teachers’ role and authority
- 4.1 (iv) Class “P”(the local school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation/ recognition and Time use
- 4.1 (v) Class “K”(the international school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation /recognition and Time use
- 4.1 (vi) Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Task Orientation and; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use

### **4.2 Are there significant differences in students’ motivation orientations in the two classes studied?**

- 4.2 (i) The MANOVA Test
- 4.2 (ii) The ANOVA Test
- 4.2 (iii) The Discriminant Analysis
- 4.2 (iv) The Inter-correlation Test
- 4.2 (v) Summary

### **4.3 Are there significant relationships between motivation orientation and classroom structure?**

### **4.4 How do culturally-derived values influence teachers’ perception of teaching?**

- 4.4 (i) Findings 1: Perception on the degree of freedom in defining the curriculum
- 4.4(ii) Findings 2: Perception on Discipline
- 4.4(iii) Findings 3: Perception on homework
- 4.4 (iv) Summary

### **4.5 How do culturally-derived values influence students’ responses to learning?**

- 4.5 (i) Findings 1: Perception on criteria for success
- 4.5 (ii) Findings 2: Perception on Control in the classroom
- 4.5 (iii) Findings 3: Perception on task orientation and structure
- 4.5 (iv) Findings 4: Perception on their relationship with teachers
- 4.5 (v) Summary

#### **4.1 Are there significant difference in classroom processes in the two classes studied?**

As discussed in the Introduction Chapter, one of the aims of this study was to find out whether the perceived difference in classroom processes by parents in the two types of schools were real. Therefore, the researcher set about to find out the answer by studying the two classrooms. As discussed in chapter 2, classroom processes could be identified along the following criteria: Teacher roles and authority; task; ability grouping; recognition/evaluation; and time use (TTGRT). From the literature review (pp58-60), the TTGRT dimensions can be manipulated to favour the development of a mastery goal orientation in students, a key feature in instilling intrinsic motivation for students to learn. A successful classroom should include the following characteristics:

- ◆ Teacher as facilitator
- ◆ Teaching methods are varied, emphasising student activity, development of self-management skills , student-autonomy, co-operative and group work, with minimal frontal teaching
- ◆ Content is presented in a meaningful context and tasks are interesting and varied
- ◆ Classroom focus on individual improvement, progress, and mastery; provide opportunities for students' improvement; encourage a view of mistakes as part of learning
- ◆ Use criterion-referenced assessment and make evaluation private

In this section, classroom observation findings would be presented and discussed to evaluate whether there were significant difference in classroom processes of the two classrooms.

### Sources of data

Data was obtained from the SCOTS Schedule, which was a systematic observation instrument. As discussed in the Methodology chapter, a comprehensive view of the classroom processes was needed in order to determine whether there were significant differences between the two classrooms. As discussed in chapter 2, a number of factors should be considered in outlining the specific structures or dimensions of classrooms (section 2.2 (v)). The TTGRT structures identified were related to each other and are multifarious in nature. The SCOTS Schedule (Powell, 1985), which could capture this multifarious aspects of the classroom, was adapted to gauge the difference in classroom structures, if there were any, between the two classrooms under study (See Appendix 1A). It was a systematic observation schedule designed to document observed scheduled student behaviours in the context of ongoing classroom instructional learning processes. The items in the Schedule closely coincided with the classroom dimensions identified (TTGRT) in the literature review. The data collected from the SCOTS Schedule should be able to reflect the classroom processes and characteristics of each type of classroom. Results documented in the Schedule would be complemented with detailed contextualizing field notes. Any questions or issues arising from the observations would be discussed with teachers for clarification after the observations. Raw notes were taken from these interviews with teachers. After analysing the notes, the researcher will compile the ones that appear useful together and put under different

categories which were parallel to the TTGRT structures. Written-up versions of teachers' account, descriptions or justifications for classroom decisions were compiled by the researcher and were used to supplement the observations in the classrooms. They were used in conjunction with more detailed comments by the researcher and were then added in the contextualizing notes to reflect the situation more accurately and to give a richer description on the whole documentation.

### Characteristics of the SCOTS Schedule

As discussed in the Methodology chapter, all the items in the Schedule were essentially descriptive and are neutral. Yet they could be seen as extending along a continuum of those favouring the development of a mastery goal in students and those which were not too favourable to it. As Powell (1985) pointed out, it might be possible to see them as extending from 'good' to 'bad'. However, it was important to remember that an extreme may be seen by one person as 'good' while it may be seen by another as 'bad', and that the midpoint may be seen by a third as the optimum. Every reader might place her own value judgements: the descriptive options in the schedule were themselves neutral. For ease of reference, scores were attached to each option to reflect the degree favouring the development of a mastery goal in students. "1" point is given to option "a" and "2" points was given to option "b" etc. If a class got a high raw score, it reflected that the classroom structures identified were favourable to the development of a mastery goal or orientation in students. If the raw score was low, it reflected that it was not favourable to the development of a mastery orientation in students.

#### **4.1 (i) Class “P”(the local school): Dimension on Teachers’ role and authority**

Item I: Variation of treatment according to students’ needs. This item relates to the extent to which the teacher varies her treatment of students to meet what she perceives to be their individual instruction needs, e.g. by varying type of explanation, amount of reinforcement, or type of materials used. The prerequisite of such matching is that the teacher be aware of students’ differences. Observation clues to this item include: (a) the amount of time teacher gives to selected individuals/groups within the class. (b) whether the level of concreteness or abstraction varies according to student ability or learning style. For obvious reason, the coding of this variable is very difficult until after the discussion with the teacher to find out what is really on his mind. Therefore, the observer made provisional coding for the first four codings and talked to the teacher after the fourth observations. After the discussion, she arrived at a summative coding during the fifth observation.

From the observation, a summative coding of “a” was given to Class P for this item. That means the teachers were observed to give no variety of treatment amongst students. In general, the teachers adopted a frontal teaching approach, with the teacher standing in front of the classroom doing the exposition. Most of the time, teachers spent time interacting with the class as a whole. Teachers were observed to be very well-informed and well-prepared, guiding their students through the material. Lessons were well-structured: each lesson started with a purpose and finishes with a summary. The same level of materials were distributed to the whole class and students were seen to be given clear guidance on how to work on them. Often the answers to the materials were checked together when the whole class had finished working on them. When approached by the observer after the fourth observation, teachers explained that there

was no need to vary treatment to students in the class because the students were already streamed into different classes according to their abilities, therefore, treatment for everyone in the class was the same and identical approach could be used for all students. They also stated that it was an efficient way to handle a class of 40 using this method. They pointed out two factors which were of utmost importance in conducting a good lesson in which everybody could follow. They were, firstly, clarity of exposition. It was reported to be most important in making sure that all students could follow the lesson closely. Teachers made sure that this was accomplished with the help of a microphone connected to the PA system in the classroom. From the observations, there were many teachers who preferred making use of the system to help project their voices to the back of the classroom. Second, a well-structured lesson was seen to be the most important factor for a successful lesson in which everybody could follow closely. Below was an excerpt taken from a music lesson for the P5 class. It could reflect the way in which the teacher structured her lesson:

The teacher started by playing a piece of music. After she finished, she asked the class this question:

“What is the characteristic of this piece of music?”

“The notes start from high and then glide on to lower ones,” answered one student.

“What is the name given to this kind of music?” teacher asked.

“Variation,” another student replied.

“Can you give me some other pieces of music written with this technique?” the teacher asked.

The importance the teacher placed on logical presentation and development of teaching points was considered as highly important in the planning of lessons. Value was placed on systematic elicitation of materials and main points. According to the teachers, students would find it easy to follow the lessons closely if the lesson was well-structured, systematic and clear.

Item 2 : Praise/Blame approach. This variable focuses on the emphasis the teachers give to wrongdoing or errors in the learning process of the students. The idea is to describe how the teachers act or react to students' work and the characteristics of their overall approach in giving feedback. After the observations, a summative coding of "c" was given to teachers in Class P. That means teachers were observed to adopt neither a positive nor a negative approach; both were approximately equal. The situation could be reflected by the following 'vignette' :

Teacher :X, that's not the correct answer. Can anyone help Alex?

Bobby:I think the answer is ...

Teacher : That's right. The answer should be Y. Now let's go on to the next question.

Throughout the lessons, there were numerous instances of these types of interaction between teachers and the students. Teachers were observed to take the answers in a business-like manner, either accepting the answers or rejecting them. They were more concerned with pressing on to the next stage of the lesson in an efficient way. They were neither notably negative or notably positive with students' wrong answers. However, any non co-operation was reprimanded by teachers immediately. In the Literacy hour, a student was reading another book instead of working on the worksheet given. The teacher caught sight of him and was upset by it. She said:

"Bobby, what do you think you are doing? Oh, you are reading a comic book. Now, give it to me. It is confiscated. You are not concentrating. Oh, you have finished your work already? Well, even though you have finished your work, it doesn't mean that you can read a comic book in class. This is not tolerated. You have to come and see me in my office after school today..."

When interviewed after the lesson, the teacher explained that she had to be firm with students and made sure that they had good behaviour in the classroom. She said that these days students had forgotten about their manners and some were spoilt by

parents. She said that it was the school's policy to ensure good discipline from students inside or outside classrooms.

Item 3: Teaching for memorization/understanding. This variable relates to the teachers' concern on which sequence of learning should happen first in the classroom: understanding of subject matter or memorization of information. It appears to be almost universally accepted by teachers that students should be able to recall accurately at least some facts, ideas, etc in the process of learning. Where they tend to differ most obviously is in the procedure: which one should come first, understanding or memorization? Some teachers believe that memorization can help students acquire and apply the skills faster, while others believe that the process is more important than the products, and students should explore the concepts first, leading to understanding, then memorization of information. Therefore, some teachers are seen to encourage repetitive-learning in students because they believe that can help students learn, while others believe that the development of skills and deep learning comes after exploration, making mistakes and understanding. This variable aims at describing teachers inclination to teach in the classroom based on the above description.

After the observation, a summative coding of "c" was given to Class P. That means teachers were observed to give some emphasis to students' acquiring an understanding of underlying principles and concepts relating to the areas of competence with which their learning was concerned. Nevertheless, repetitive-learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) and the acquisition of mechanical competence was also prominent. The situation could be reflected in the following 'vignette' :

In a P5 Chinese Literacy lesson, the teacher was explaining the use of different literary techniques to create special effect in a text. These techniques were more or less like the use of 'imagery' in a western text but they could be subdivided into three types, namely '□□□' (blow-



up technique), ‘□□□’ (animated technique) and ‘□□□’ (comparable technique). This is how she began :

T: Class, can you tell me which sentence on the board was written in the blow-up techniques?

S: The first one.

T: Why?

S: Because the person is not giant, he is described as a giant soldier because he is so strong he can move the truck all by himself.

T: That’s correct.

There were numerous other attempts made by the teacher to make sure the students understood the concept and characteristics behind each particular technique. After the exposition stage, the teacher gave the class a long worksheet with 15 sentences on it, each written with a special technique. The class was asked to identify which sentence was written with which technique. This kind of decontextualized drills was commonly used in this school. When the teacher was asked why students had to do drills on discrete points like that, she answered that it would prepare the students well for examination. Although she knew it was important that students should be given the opportunity to appreciate the use of these techniques within a literary context to improve understanding and appreciation, she commented that it was more pressing to do the drills. She believed that drills could help students learn the skills quickly and to apply them for use. It was normal to find students given a lot of homework to do everyday in the school, with the aim of familiarizing students with the topic they were learning through repetitive learning. Teachers in the school were seen generally to believe that by asking students to do similar exercises repeatedly, students could come to a deep-memorization, which was an aid to understanding and a base for higher cognitive skills. In students’ homework diary, it was common to find entries like these:

“ Memorise 9 times table.”

“ Dictation in English and Chinese this Friday”.

“Recite poems on page 3 of textbook”

Although mundane drills and practices filled students' homework, students tended to accept and take it for granted that repetitive-learning and memorisation was part and parcel of successful learning. Their parents, too, felt contented that their children were kept busy with a demanding schedule of dictation and tests. As one of the teachers said:

"Students know the importance of doing those exercises. In fact, their parents are asking for more homework so as to make sure that they make good use of their leisure time to consolidate what they learn in school."

In a way, teachers and students in the school shared the belief that 'hard work with sweats and tears' was an unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. Academic success came with hard work and practice. Hard work and repetitive learning might be painful, but it would lead to successful learning.

Also, the assessment method was seen to have a lot of influence in determining the process of learning in the classroom. In their school system, it was important that the students could be seen to have mastered the skills by performing in a test or an examination e.g. being able to match the sentences to the kind of technique used. Teachers were hard pressed to show results, and they tried to find the most efficient method to accomplish their goals. As a result, they were seen to concentrate their time on activities that could yield quick results. For example, in a Mathematics lesson, the following was observed:

The class was learning "division". The teacher started by giving several examples and then gave the class fifteen sums to work on. When it was time to watch an education television programme on "division", the teacher realised that they had to move to another room to access the video-recorder. Considering the fact that most of the class had not finished their sums, the teacher resolved to cut out watching the program, much to the dismay of the students.

When interviewed afterwards, the teacher explained that although the teacher knew that the class would have enjoyed the TV programme, she thought that completing the drills and making sure that the syllabus was covered were more important than relaxing for a while by watching TV. She said that her priority was on spending the class time in a way which would benefit students the most. As for watching TV, the class had plenty of time to do it after school.

In fact, the students in the class were well-drilled and well-trained to be able to perform very well whenever they were required to do so. For example, in one of their Mathematics lessons observed, the teacher told the class that she would time them when they were working on sums. She was glad that one of the students could tell the answer of the sum  $694-398$  just in three seconds. She commended the student by saying that he should be able to score good marks in an examination.

Item 4 : Teacher-student relationship. This variable describes the social relationship between the teacher and students. The relationship can vary from being very distant and formal to being informal and friendly. On completion of the observation, a summative coding of “b” was given to teachers teaching the Class. That means teachers were observed as distant but approachable within constraints of teacher-imposed formal procedures. The situation was best illustrated by the sense of hierarchy and social order observed in the school. The hierarchy in the school was well-defined and pronounced in every corner of the school. Students were seen to treat their teachers with utmost respect and humility. It was a common scene that students were seen bowing to their teachers at ninety degrees along corridors, in the school playground and around the school premises. This was regarded as good behaviour. Teachers were seen to address each other according to their ranks. E.g. the head of P.E. was addressed as

(主任), her official title was used together with her surname so others were conscious of her official capacity. Students as well as staff were observed to address the Principal as Principal Lee (李校長) instead of Ms.X, and the Vice-principal as Vice-principal X(何副校長) instead of Ms.X. Inside classrooms, teacher-student relationship was a formal one. Students raised their hands before they could speak and they patiently waited for the teacher to call out their names to take their turn in asking or answering questions.

Although hierarchy was evident, it did not mean that teachers were aloof and cold towards their students. Despite a class size of 40 or more, teachers managed to find time to chat with students during break time and shower them with warmth and care. They could remember all the students' names and address them in person whenever they were asked or permitted to do something. The students, in turn, showed their respect to their teachers by trying their utmost to do what their teachers asked of them and behaved in an obedient and co-operative manner.

In the classroom, teachers were observed to take up the role of knowledge-giver or provider. Teachers were observed to see their role as “deliverer of knowledge” and they tried to give their best to the class by trying to “cover the course” in a competent and responsible manner. They saw it as their responsibility to find all the necessary information and facts relating to the topic in their lesson preparation. They took themselves as mentors to the students. They were very hardworking and strive to prepare good and well-structured lessons for their students. One teacher said:

(每天我七時左右才離開學校通常會看兩三本參考書備課

“ Everyday I stay at school until 7:00pm to prepare for my lessons the next day although school ends at 2:30pm. Usually, I read two or three reference books and try to identify information that helps me organise my lesson and to prepare for worksheets...”

Teachers in general saw their roles as taking up the sole responsibility of structuring the lesson efficiently and effectively out of their own effort. They aimed at designing lessons with a tightly-defined structure. A lesson with a lot of informative facts crammed in was regarded as a good lesson. Other agents of teaching like books, magazines, dictionary, video were not regarded as an essential part in the teaching and learning process. In other words, teachers in the school were observed to be used to and contended to go about structuring their lesson out of their own effort, regarding themselves as the sole agent in the process of teaching and learning. The classroom setting had a lot to tell about this point. Except for the standard chairs and tables for children and two white boards in the classroom, there were no magazine/book racks or video and cassette recorder available. Nor was the school library often used by the students. On average, students from each class was assigned half an hour to visit the school library once a week, and the time-slot usually fell within playtime. As a result, not many students were seen using the library. In fact, for a school with a population of 450, there were just about 3000 books in the library. When the researcher asked the Principal why there were so few books in the library, she replied that was because most of the books were too outdated and had to go in the bin. This reflected that provisions in the library had never been regarded as a high priority by teachers and the Principal in the school.

Although teachers took on the role of knowledge-giver, they enjoyed good rapport with students in the classroom. Despite the fact that they acted like gurus taking up all the initiatives in the classroom and transferring their wisdom, they did it in such a way that set up a subtle mentor-mentee relationship with students. Their role in the relationship took on a pastoral role that was blended with love, care, concern and high

expectations of students' outcomes. There was no doubt that they were regarded highly by students. In school, students were seen to move about in an orderly manner, with their teachers keeping a watchful and concerned eye on them from close behind.

Item 5: Average time of students spent listening to teacher talk. As the title suggests, this variable intends to describe the extent to which the teacher dominates the class in the lesson. After the observations, a summative coding of "b" was given. It means that on average, the class spent more than 2/3 of the lesson listening to teacher talk. It reflected that the teacher adopted a frontal teaching method and had the tendency to adopt a whole-class teaching approach and dominate the classroom talking time.

Item 6: Directness of teacher control of students' learning activities. Most teachers see it as their duty to control students' activities so that they are enabled to learn effectively. Not all of them, however, seek to do so by direct means such as the issuing of instructions and constant reminders. This variable is concerned with whether teachers seek to control students' work activities directly, by the use of commands and imperatives or indirectly, by training students to depend on their own judgement and initiative in working and maintaining a work flow. It thus relates to how the teacher achieves her control. The extent to which a teacher seeks to control directly may reflect not only her wish to do so but her intentions to train students to be independent or dependent on constant directions from her. After the observations, a summative coding of "c" was given, meaning that teachers were observed to supervise students closely to maintain the operation of the working system. Also, owing to the nature of activities given (which often require students to work on exercises on their own), teachers were

seen to be in control of students' pace of work all the time. Teachers were always seen to tell students that they should finish their tasks in two/three minutes so they could check answers together. From the observations, teachers were seen to adopt a pastoral role, which was one characteristic of the style of teachers in the school: they were keen to make sure that students are given enough guidance on their work. They were very concerned about the students' progress in the lesson. When interviewed, teachers expressed a strong inclination to make sure that students do their exercises or worksheets properly, because they wanted to ensure that they were doing fine. In general, they reflected that it was important that students got the right approach or answer the first time they tried working on task so no time was wasted in the process and they could press for further progress. One teacher said:

"If we give students good guidance on how to complete their tasks, they should be able to do it well in good time. If there is anything that they don't understand, it is important that they ask us immediately so we can help them. In this way, they can complete their tasks efficiently and move on to the next stage..."

The situation was best reflected in music and art lessons. Teachers believed that learning was an imitation skill and the task of teachers is to guide and "hold the students' hand" through each stage to render successful learning performance. The ambience in the classroom was a caring and concerned one.

Item 7: Encouragement/prevention of difference. This variable relates to whether the teacher encourages or permits independence of thinking on the part of students. A teacher who, for instance, says to a student, "Yes, that is the right answer, but that is not the way I told you to do it" is in effect inhibiting independent thinking and seeking a rigidly uniform performance in all her students. She is, moreover, encouraging convergent thinking at the expense of creativity and the depth of understanding that can come from thinking something out for oneself. It is important to

distinguish such a teacher from another who might, for instance, say, “ That was clever of you to think out your own way of doing that, but can you see why it may lead you to go wrong”, for this latter teacher will be trying to help the student to discover for herself whether the method earlier demonstrated by the teacher was better or merely different. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given. That means teachers were observed to give class work to students which was characterised by a fair degree of conformity and that the teachers did not focus too much on encouraging inventiveness, discovery, or doing things differently. Difference was therefore able to occur but was unlikely to manifest itself often or in many students. The observations revealed that teachers came to their classes with a highly structured lesson plan, and answers for questions prepared well in advance. The following ‘vignette’ could reflect a scene which was found in the classroom.

Teacher: Alex, can you tell me the characteristics of a whale?

Student A : It can swim.

Teacher: No, this isn't the answer I am looking for.

Student B: It is black and white in colour.

Teacher: No. Can others give it a try?

Student C: It can talk.

Teacher: No. Now, let me tell you the answer, it is a mammal.

In this case, obviously the teacher was looking for a particular answer to help her elicit part of the lesson and she had the answer written on her sheet. In the process of eliciting her points, she was not too prepared to accept the students' answers (which were also part of the characteristics of a whale). This reflected on the one hand, the adverse side of having a highly structured plan. On the other, it reflected that the teacher might be inclined to think of what they had to teach as being fixed or pre-determined. They were not keen on encouraging inventiveness or independent thinking because they might lead to side-tracking. In fact, the nature of the exercises given could further reflect this point. From the observations, most of the tasks were in the form of exercises

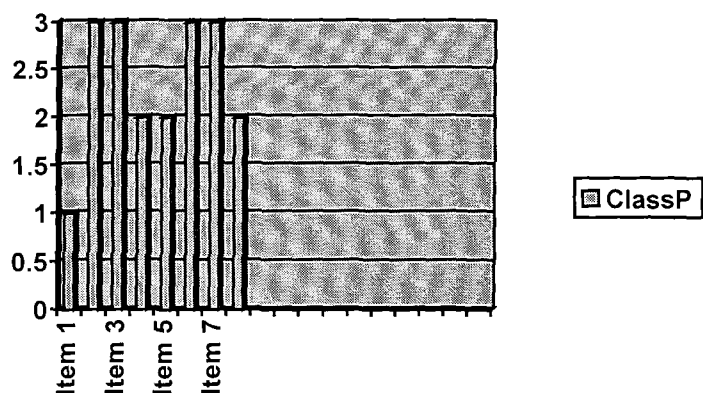


which were closed-ended, looking for a definite answer. They are mostly multiple choice questions, filling in blanks, Yes/No questions or matching exercises. When students got one answer correct, they scored one point, if they got it wrong, they scored no point. In the literacy hour, students were observed to work extensively on exercises relating to analysis of sentence structures and poem-recitation skills. Exercises that encourage creativity or open-ended answers were not commonly used.

Item 8 : Encouragement /prevention of inter-pupil co-operation. This variable refers to the element of co-operation in the classroom and the extent to which teachers are seen to encourage students' co-operation. Clearly, co-operative learning is a context in which student responsibility can be developed. However, co-operation may be encouraged by some teachers not for this reason but because they believe it to be a good way for children to learn, and similarly, some teachers who see co-operative learning as possibly a good thing in itself may reject it because they feel that it may give rise to disorder or because they believe that some students will use the situation as a shield for laziness and non-application. After the observations, a summative coding of 'b' was given. That means teachers were observed to "tolerate" students' co-operation, but prevent it when it exceeded modest limits. In some cases, the teacher might allow a small minority greater freedom and/or totally inhibit co-operation amongst members of another such minority. Again, this phenomenon could be reflected in the nature of tasks given to the class. The majority of class activities were set in such a way that required the students to work on their own e.g. filling in a worksheet, completing an exercise etc. Students were not often asked to take part in a discussion in order to arrive at an answer or find solutions to a problem by putting their heads together. Chances for inter-student co-operation are not always present in the classroom.

When interviewed, teachers revealed that they did not prefer to give group or pair work for students although they were aware of the benefits of co-operative learning. They said that it was easy for students to manipulate the chances of co-operation to slip away from their work or rely on others for answers. They stressed that if students were serious about their work, they should concentrate on their own work instead of chatting with others. Teachers were observed to be keen on maintaining a strict control over the pace of work and task time. They were seen to be always concerned about pushing for progress and covering the course. Students were constantly reminded by teachers that they had to quicken their pace so they could finish the task by the required time. As a result, students were eager to work through the exercises efficiently on their own, wasting no time for chatting with each other, and managing to keep up their pace with the rest of the class.

Teachers also indicated that activities like class discussion might lead to a loss of disciplinary control. In general, teachers were observed to be quite sensitive and intolerant to the noise level in the classroom. They were worried that if their class make “too much noise”, it might affect or disturb the work of other classes. Moreover, the physical setting of the classroom alone did not encourage a co-operative learning model, since the tables and chairs were closely lined up in rows, all facing the front. It was observed that during class time, most students were not allowed to leave seats unless instructed by teacher.



#### Summary of scores of Class P on the dimension ‘Teachers’ role and authority’

Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of Class P on the Teachers’ Role and Authority Dimension

#### **4.1 (ii) Class“K”(the international school) : Teachers’ role and authority**

Item 1: Variation of treatment according to students’ needs. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given to Class “K”. That means teachers were observed to give different treatment to students according to the instructional groups. Teachers usually started the lesson with a short exposition of about 15-20 minutes. They often invited the whole class to sit on the carpet right in front of them to do that. After the exposition or elicitation stage, the class would be asked to work on tasks relating to the topic. Students were usually given different materials to work on. While the class was working, teachers moved from one table to the next, giving help and guidance. This was seen to be essential because students worked on tasks of different levels and they had different questions for the teachers. Teachers were observed to move from table to table answering different questions and giving different guidance. When approached by the observer after the fourth observation, teachers explained that there was the need to give the class different levels of materials to work on and students were usually grouped according to their abilities for different subjects.

Student A might be on green label in the Literacy hour but move to pink in the Numeracy hour. Students were used to getting to work with different groupings on different subjects. Teachers felt that students would benefit most when they worked on something that suited their own level. Different names or colour were given to each group. Teachers explained that this way of arrangement could help students achieve improvement at their own pace. Obviously, this arrangement was facilitated by the fact that there were just 22 students in the class. Also, an assistant teacher would sometimes come along to help individual students do their reading during the Literacy hour.

Item 2 : Praise/Blame approach. After the observations, a summative coding of “e” was given to teachers of Class K. That means that teacher were observed to seek opportunities to praise good or improved work/conduct and emphasize what had been achieved. Criticism and prohibitions were always avoided, substituted by positive comments and instructions. The situation could be reflected by the following ‘vignette’.

In the Numeracy hour, the teacher had assigned students to work on the task of compiling a chart reporting on the hours their classmates spent on different activities after school. One student came up with a chart which looked quite funny, with all the bars closing in on each other. The teacher’s first response to the student’s work was: “ That’s great. Well done. But let’s take a look at what’s gone wrong here...”.

Several minutes later, there was another student who was clearly distracted from the task and was scribbling on the chart instead of working out how to compile it. The teacher caught sight of him and said: “ Alex, what do you think you are doing? Let me see your work.” “ Oh, you have not started doing your work yet. You’ve just been scribbling.” Then, the teacher caught sight of the student’s distressed face and the fact that he had already put some initial calculations on one side of the worksheet, the teacher at that moment deliberately calmed herself down and said to the student: “ Now, what do you think we should do here? I can see that you have done a good job in adding up the sums here, what do you think should be the next step?”

When interviewed after the class, the teacher explained that she tried every effort in the classroom to praise success of students and not blame them or reprimand them for their failures because she thought that it was important to maintain the self-esteem of

students in front of other students. Even though sometimes they might not be co-operative or may be naughty, she tried not to scold them severely in public because she knew it had consequences on their self-image. The least thing she wanted to do was to make students feel depressed about their non-co-operation or failure to do a task. Only very special cases of non-co-operation would she refer the students to the Vice-principal for necessary action. When asked why she always praised students, she said that it was important to build up confidence of students in attempting to answer questions and to recognise their effort.

Item 3: Teaching for memorization/understanding. After the observation, a summative coding of “d” was given. That means teachers were observed to place emphasis of the lesson predominantly on the acquisition and understanding of underlying principles and concepts. Nevertheless, repetitive-learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) did occur to some extent. The situation could be reflected in the following ‘vignette’:

In a Mathematics lesson, the class was revising mental Maths on “subtraction”. The teacher started by giving several examples to the class on how to mental subtraction effectively. He demonstrated to the class a variety of ways to solve the problem  $369-257$  effectively by talking aloud what was in his mind. He said;

“I can do it by adding 1 to 369 so it becomes 370. Then I can add 3 to 257 to make it become 260. After that, I use 370 to take away 260. The answer is then in the region of 110... But I can always do it in another way, like taking away 4 to make 369 becomes 365...”

He ended by reiterating that students should choose his own way that he felt comfortable to do the sums and that there was no “absolute way” to solve the problem. The class was reminded to use the ways that suit them best. Then, he gave the class several sums to do and asked them to think aloud the procedures involved and shared that with their classmates.

When interviewed after the lesson, the teacher said that it was most important that students understand the concepts and procedures behind the problems and that was why

he thought the discussion and think aloud should help. In another Mathematics lesson, the following was observed:

The teacher brought along a stack of cards into the classroom to explain the concept of “division” with students. Through the help of the cards, he illustrated visually to the class the concept of division. E.g. Sharing cookies among children or putting sheep into different barns. Since he spent most of the class time on the illustration, students did not have a lot of chances to practise putting these concepts into practice.

When interviewed, the teacher said that it was more important for the class to master the concept, mastering the skills can come later through familiarity in usage. In the next few lessons, he was seen to encourage students to memorise necessary facts of the times-table to facilitate efficient results. Yet, his approach was centred on familiarity in usage and he was also keen on instilling a fun element in even the hardest chores. For example, the following was observed in the classroom:

To familiarise students with the use of times-tables, the teacher would play a game with the class in an attempt to integrate an enjoyment factor into the task. The game was like this. Two students would be asked to stand up, one as the ‘king’ and the other as a challenger. The teacher would say e.g. 7 times 8, then the two students had to give the correct answer as quickly as possible. The ‘king’, who was usually very good at his times-tables, got to stay in the game if he came up with the right answer first, or else the challenger would take his place.

In other words, when it came to drills and practice, the teacher would try to disguise the mundane practice with a lively and jolly element. Games and quizzes were very popular in achieving this purpose. Another game that the teacher used for the same purpose of familiarising the class with the timetables was like this:

Students were asked to line up facing the teacher. When they were practising their 6 times table, each one in the line would call out their number as it went along until it came to the sixth person. The sixth person had to keep quiet, nodded her head and passed on to the next person, who would continue with the number 7. If she didn’t do it, she would be out. The game picked up its speed as it went along until the one who was best with the numbers remained the only one on the scene.

In the interview, the teacher revealed that he believed if the children enjoyed their task, they could learn well.

In fact, it was observed that teachers in the school shared the common view that understanding of subject matter should come before memorization of information and good performance. The following “vignettes” could illustrate this:

In an Art lesson, students were asked to find out the life history of Monet and present it to the class. During the class presentation, each student had to tell how he identified the materials as well as report the findings. One of the students used a CD Rom to locate the necessary facts but he just cut and pasted the materials from the CD Rom onto his own work. His work was very impressive and everyone clapped their hands, except the teacher. The teacher commended the student's effort in identifying the CD Rom, but he asked if the student had written out the facts in his own words. When the student said no, the teacher said that he had to do that again. This reflected the importance the teacher adhered to the process of learning.

When interviewed, the teacher said that he asked the student to do the work again because he wanted to make sure he had understood every word he wrote. He said that it didn't matter how much the student had written, the most important was he had written that by himself after trying to understand the materials.

Going hand in hand with this stress on developing an understanding of the subject matter was the emphasis teachers laid on developing self-referencing skills and study skills in students. In general, teachers in the school were keen to develop self-referencing skills and study skills in students such as the use of dictionary, study of texts and the use of books and other multi-media resources for reference. Activities aiming at supporting the development and use of effective learning strategies were observed in the classroom.

In a Literacy lesson, students were asked to scan the text they were working on and make a list of words that end with 'ies' (e.g. discoveries) and a list of words which ended with 's' (e.g. toys). Then they had to come up with an explanation to account for the question: “ Under what condition would some words end in 'ies' while others end in 's'.”

In the feedback stage, the teacher spent a lot of time getting students to account for how they came up with the explanation and conditions. His priority was on getting students to justify their classification with reasons. Getting the right answers were only of secondary importance.

Item 4 : Teacher-student relationship. On completion of the observation, a summative coding of “d” was given to teachers in the school. That means teachers were observed to be approached on social as well as school topics; they appeared to be friendly although not treated as equal. Students addressed their teachers by calling them “Mrs. A” or “Ms. B”. The Principal was addressed as “Mrs. C”. The teacher-student relationship was seen to be warm and friendly. The sense of friendly atmosphere was experienced by the researcher on the second day of her visit to the school. When the researcher went in to the class for her second observation, two girls in the class came up and held her hands. They started a friendly chat with the researcher. The conversation ended when the teacher arrived. Before the girls went back to their seats, they commented that they liked the pendant the researcher was wearing.

While a constructive working atmosphere was strictly maintained in the classroom, teachers were observed not to be overtly concerned about the discipline of students. Since most of the activities the class engaged in required co-operation between students, noise level was tolerated as long as it did not lead to a faltering of engagement and work level.

Teachers were seen to regard the role of facilitating the activity of students as an important part of their jobs. For a substantial amount of time (about 1/2 of class time,



see next item) spent in the classroom, they were seen moving around helping and giving guidance, or making sure that students have the necessary reference books, resource materials like pens, paper, charts to do their tasks. Students were seen discussing with teachers in their groups, and the overall atmosphere of partnership between teacher and students was observed in the classroom.

In general, teachers were observed to be keen on making good use of resources while structuring their lesson. They aimed at creating classroom experiences that would enable students to find out for themselves what things were. Instead of taking up the responsibility of knowledge-giver or provider, they took on the role of a partner or facilitator who ensured that students learned with help from them. The kind of help given was in the form of getting the necessary resources and reference materials ready, making sure that everyone understood what had to be done in completing the tasks assigned etc. They tended to see that there were diverse agents involved in the process of teaching and learning. Other agents like books, magazines, dictionary videos, posters and games were all considered important resources in the process. The classroom setting reflected their priorities. Apart from the long tables and chairs for students and the boards surrounding the walls, there were book/magazine racks, dictionary stands, video cassette recorder and a computer port for students' use. The focus seemed to be on encouraging students to seek out for themselves knowledge that they needed and to find solutions to problems. One teacher said this:

“We want students to find out or themselves the answers to questions. The process was important although it takes a little time and requires good preparation on our parts. When students find out their own answers, they have the sense of ownership and the knowledge would stay with them for a longer time...”

Teachers were seen to be keen on “opening windows beyond what was being taught”, so students could explore on it further by themselves. For example, in the

General Science lesson, instead of spoonfeeding the class with all the necessary facts about the human body, the teacher asked the class to read up different reference books on the topic in small groups, then listed out five important facts on a finger-pattern paper. Afterwards, the class shared their findings together.

Item 5: Average time of students spent listening to teacher talk. After the observations, a summative coding of “d” was given. It means that students were observed to spend half of the time listening to teacher talk. It reflected that the teacher tended to distribute the time between teacher talk and students’ time spent on tasks equally in the lesson. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, teachers were seen spending a substantial amount of time (about 1/2 of class time) in the classroom moving around, helping, giving guidance and discussing with students, or making sure that students have the necessary equipment/tools to perform the tasks.

Item 6: Directness of teacher control of students’ learning activities. After the observations, a summative coding of “e” was given, meaning that teachers were observed to exert very few signs of direct teacher control over students’ activities. Very often, teachers were seen to keep the wheels turning by visiting groups, answering questions that students ask. Yet, apart from that and the basic instructions concerning work given, the majority of students were seen to work purposefully, clearly knowing how to operate the system in use.

When interviewed, teachers explained that the class was used to working and operating in a self-running way from previous experience. Starting from Primary one, students were used to working in groups and making reference to self-explanatory

instructions on the worksheets to do the tasks. In fact, teachers in the school said that it was important for students to learn to be independent learners and acquire skills like managing their own work and using referencing skills. They believed that students should be given the opportunity to be responsible for their learning and time to think and explore. One activity given to the class during a Science lesson was like this:

The teacher asked the class to read up different reference books available from the class library on the topic "The human body". Then the class had to list out ten important facts about the human body that they have learned on a finger-like piece of paper. After they had finished, they shared their findings with their classmates.

One teacher gave this comment:

"Students learn by exploring and making mistakes. It's alright if it takes them a little while to figure out what to do and how to do it. It doesn't matter if their answers are right or wrong. The important thing is for them to try on their own first. I never encourage my students to ask me how to do things without trying to solve the problems by themselves..."

Teachers in this school were seen to encourage exploration first, and then subsequently the development of skills. From the interviews, it was found that the teachers thought the control over students' progress should be kept to a minimum in the process of learning.

Item 7: Encouragement/prevention of difference. After the observations, a summative coding of "d" was given. That means teachers were observed to encourage students to suggest ideas for work and ways of carrying out work. Inventive individuals were encouraged to try out their ideas and consider the appropriacy of them. The following "vignettes" could be found to support the claim.

In a Mathematics lesson, students were asked to use information from an opinion survey to compile a chart showing the preference of students in the school. Although the teacher suggested some basic approaches on how to do the task, students came up with various formats of compiling the chart. After looking at them, the teacher accepted the various formats used, with the pros and cons of each approach commented on to show their relative strengths.

From the observations, students were encouraged to discover and find out for themselves the way/procedure to approach a task. The teacher was seen not to insist on conformity of work and work method. Instead, she was ready to let students' thinking led wherever it might and to capitalise on whatever might come forth. In cases where students were devoid of ideas to participate, the teacher was always ready to suggest basic approach to work.

Item 8: Encouragement/prevention of inter-pupil co-operation. After the observations, a summative coding of 'e' was given. That means teachers were observed to encourage implicitly and/or explicitly pupils' co-operation whenever it was possible. This phenomenon can be reflected in the nature of tasks given to the class. The majority of class activities were set in such a way that required the students to work with a partner or in a group e.g. compile a chart after doing a simple survey (Mathematics lesson); read and discuss the important facts about the human body (Science lesson); find out and discuss the imageries used in describing the scene and devise dialogue for a play(Literacy).

When interviewed, teachers revealed that they liked giving group or pair work to students because they think that students can help each other learn. They can talk things out and in the process be more aware of what they were learning. As one teacher said;

“ There is a lot happening in students' minds and they need to talk to their peers to figure things out... If you let them discuss it, they can help each other a lot...They can remember things better if you have talked it out themselves...”

The set-up of the classroom was designed in such a way that could well facilitate co-operation among students. Four or five students were seated around a rectangular

table so students could have eye-contact with each other easily. Also, they could talk among themselves without having to turn around.

Summary of Scores for Class K on the dimension of ‘Teachers’ Role and Authority’

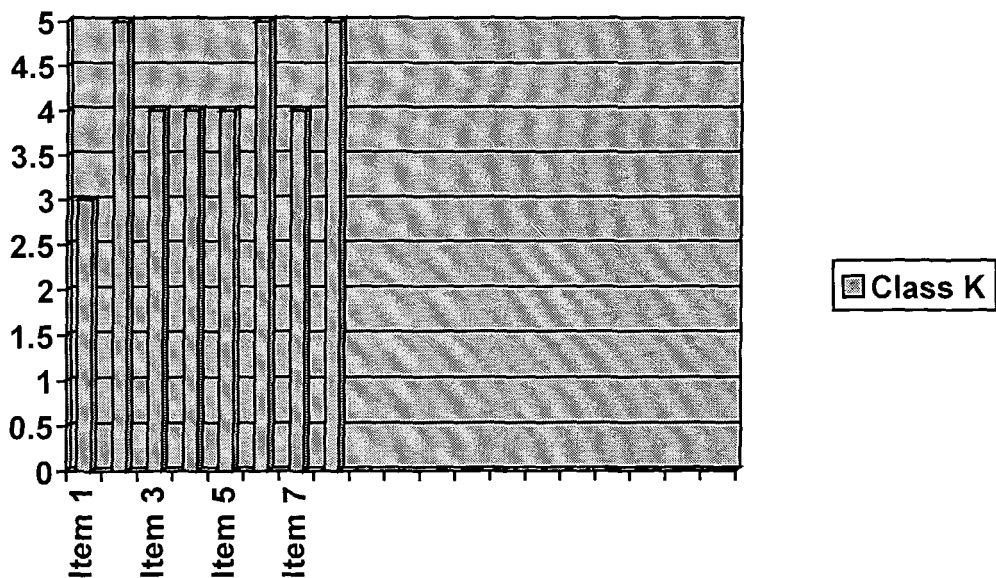


Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of each class on the Teachers’ Role and Authority Dimension

**4.1 (iii) Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Teachers’ role and authority**

Based on the above description, we can now compare the findings from the two classrooms and find out whether there is any difference between them on this dimension. As pointed out earlier, the options on the SCOTS Schedule can be seen as extending along a continuum of those favouring the development of a mastery goal in

students and those which are not too favourable to it. Below is the summary of the findings:

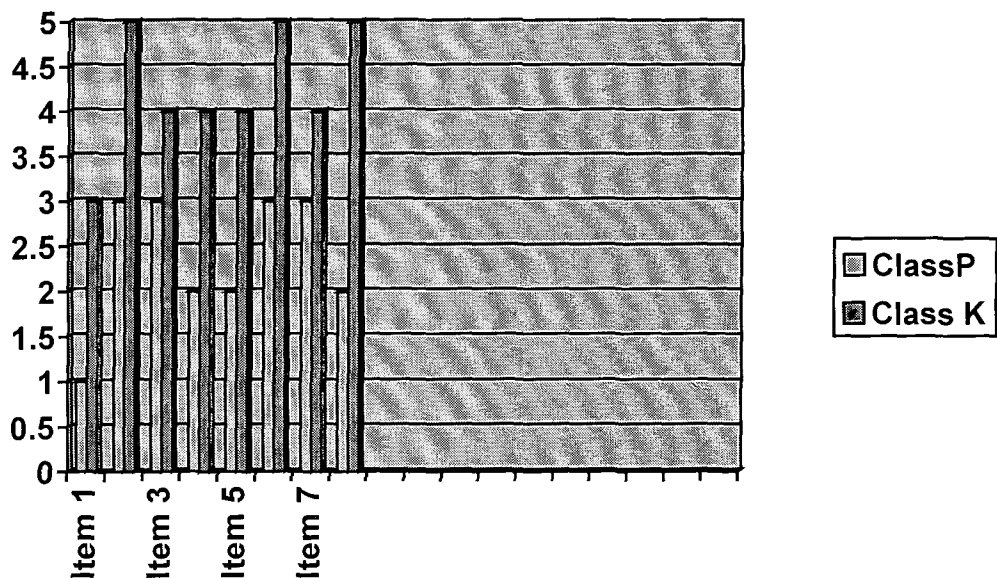


Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of each class on the Teachers’ Role and Authority Dimension

The discussion on Teachers’ role and authority would be based on the following categories:

- 1. Teaching styles and skills (item 1, 2 and 3)
- 2. Relationship with students (item 4)
- 3. Class control (item 5, 6, 7)
- 4. Development of student responsibility(item3, 8)

## Teaching styles and skills

Teachers from both classes observed were very serious and dedicated to their work, with a very considerable degree of competence. They were teachers who gave much thought and planning to how best to teach what they had to. Yet, they differed in their approaches, their priorities and what they believed as ‘what works’ in education. Firstly, they were seen to differ in their approaches to teaching in their classes. In Class P (local school), teachers saw that there was no need to vary treatment for students in the same class because students had already been streamed into classes of more or less the same ability in advance. They reported that it was an efficient way to run a class of 40 students by making use of the same set of materials for everyone. In Class K (international school), teachers thought that there was the need to give the class different levels of materials to work on. Students were usually grouped according to their abilities but stayed in the same classroom. Teachers felt that students would benefit most when they worked on something that suited their own level. This could help students achieve improvement at their own pace.

Second, teachers from the two schools seemed to have different priorities on what was important in running the class. While teachers from both schools felt that a constructive working atmosphere was essential to keep the class running smoothly, teachers from Class P thought that it was important to be firm with students during lessons and went about conducting the class in a business-like manner. They were keen to cover the course competently and efficiently. While teachers in Class P were observed to be neither notably negative or notably positive with students’ wrong answers and more concerned with pressing on with the progress of the lesson, teachers in Class K were keen to praise students’ achievement and seize opportunities to

recognise students' effort. They believed that building up the self-confidence of students by recognising their effort and progress was important in the course of learning.

Also, teachers from the two classes seemed to differ in the way they saw the sequence of learning. They differed on their views on what should happen first in the classroom: understanding of subject matter or memorization of information. It appeared that teachers in Class P believed that memorization could help students acquire and apply the skills faster, while teachers in Class K believed that the process was more important than the products, and students should explore the concepts first, leading to understanding, then memorization of information. Therefore, teachers in Class P were seen to encourage repetitive-learning in students because they believed that could help students acquire skills faster, and repetitive practice of the skills eventually would lead to deep-learning; while teachers in Class K believed that the development of skills and deep learning came after exploration, making mistakes and understanding of the basic concepts.

While teachers from both classes felt that somehow mechanical practice and drills were necessary to help students develop familiarity with subject matter (like spellings and times-table), teachers in Class P shared the belief that hard work with 'sweats and tears' was an unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. To them, academic success came with hard work and practice. Hard work and repetitive learning might be painful, but it was a pre-condition for successful learning. This resonated what Hau & Salili (1991) found out in their study. They pointed out that there was a special connotation in the Chinese culture in which academic success was attributed to hard effort and practice. Similarly, Watkins & Biggs (1996) pointed out



that in the Chinese culture, hard work with sweat and tears was often believed to be an unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. On the other hand, teachers from Class K seemed to believe that an element of enjoyment was important in the course of learning. They thought it essential that pleasure went hand in hand with the acquisition of knowledge. They strived to build in a fun element in tasks which could be seen as chores. To them, students should experience moments of inherent pleasure in association with their acquisition of skills.

### Relationship with students

While teachers from both classrooms were observed to have a high level of rapport with their students, they seemed to define their relationship with students in a different way. Although hierarchy was evident in Class P, it did not mean that teachers were aloof and cold towards their students. Teachers took up a pastoral role and were observed to find time to have friendly chats with students during break time and shower them with warmth and care. The students, in turn, showed their respect to their teachers by trying their utmost to do what their teachers ask of them and behave in an obedient, orderly, quiet and co-operative manner. The situation in Class K was similar to Class P in that the teacher-student relationship was a warm, friendly and caring one. The sense of hierarchy was not as evident as in Class P and the physical distance between teacher and students was closer. Students treated their teachers with respect but did not bow at ninety degrees to them and were observed to be more relaxed in the presence of teachers.

In the classroom, teachers in Class P were observed to take up the role of knowledge-giver or provider. Teachers saw their role as “deliverer of knowledge” and

strived to perfect their job as mentors of students by preparing well-informed and well-structured lessons. They adopted a frontal teaching mode and on average, spent more than 2/3 of class time talking in the class. This was indicative of a transmission and teacher-centred method of teaching. On the other hand, teachers from Class K were observed to regard their roles as facilitators of students' activities as an integral part of their jobs. Instead of concentrating on delivering a well-structured lesson, they were observed to spend more time on moving around the classroom, helping, discussing and giving guidance to students, or making sure that students had the necessary reference books, resource materials like pens, paper, charts to do their tasks. On average, they were observed to spend half of the time talking in the class and spend the other half going around the class, helping and giving guidance.

#### Class control

Teachers in Class P was observed to supervise students closely to enable effective learning. Students' pace of work was carefully controlled to maintain reasonable progress of work. Teachers were ready to give and offer guidance to students whenever there were any doubts. They believed that successful learning required a lot of attention and guidance. It was important that students got the answers right the first time to facilitate further learning. On the other hand, teachers in Class K were seen to exert very few signs of direct teacher control over students' activities. Very often, teachers were observed to play the role of a facilitator and keep the wheels turning by visiting groups, answering questions that may arise from the work related to the task given. Yet, apart from that and the basic instructions concerning work given, the majority of teachers' time was spent on facilitating and supervising instead of directing and teaching in front of the whole class. Teachers in the class were interested

in developing self-referencing skills and study skills in students. They believed activities aiming at supporting the development and use of effective learning strategies in students were essential elements in the course of learning. Through trial and error and continuous effort, students would acquire the necessary study skills that facilitate their further learning.

In addition, teachers in Class P were observed to give class work to students which was characterised by a fair degree of conformity and that the teachers did not focus too much on encouraging inventiveness, discovery, or doing things differently. It was probably because teachers were inclined to think of what they had to teach as being fixed or pre-determined. They were not keen on encouraging inventiveness or independent thinking probably because these might lead to side-tracking, and this might not be favourable to a highly structured lesson plan and a press for progress. On the other hand, teachers from Class K were seen to encourage students to suggest ideas for work and ways of carrying out work. Inventive individuals were encouraged to try out their ideas and consider the appropriacy of them. Teachers were observed to be eager to show pleasure for new ideas and ready to let students' thinking lead wherever it might and to capitalise on whatever might come forth.

#### Development of students' responsibility

Teachers in Class P were observed to take on a close supervisory role for students in the course of learning. Although they were aware of the benefits of developing students' responsibility in learning like "finding out for yourself" and

“working with each other” through a co-operative learning mode, they put more emphasis on the control of discipline in a big class of 40 students. They reflected that it was easy for students to manipulate the chances of co-operation to slip away from their work or rely on others for answers. They stressed the importance of students’ concentration on their work, a strict keeping to time control over activities and pace of work. This was probably because they were aware of the importance of maintaining class discipline in a big class like the one they had and also because they were concerned about the push for progress. On the other hand, teachers from Class K were observed to be more inclined to take the role of a facilitator, one who were keen to encourage students to discover and find out for themselves the way/procedure to approach a task. They were seen not to insist on conformity of work and work method. This might probably be due to the fact that they thought it was important to develop in students a sense of responsibility of taking up their own learning and be complemented on the effort of it. The fact was that trying to manage a class of active students was a daunting job and in a way the small number of students in the class(22 of them) had made the task manageable for teachers in this class.

### Summary

To sum up, there were notable difference between the two classroom observed regarding the dimension on Teachers’ role and authority. In Class P, teachers’ were observed to hold the view that it was important to be firm with students and adopted a tighter control of students during lessons. They believed that it was not necessary to vary treatment to students within the same class. Also, they saw their role as “deliverer of knowledge” and strived to perfect their job as mentors to students. They went about conducting the class in a business-like manner and were keen to cover the course

competently and efficiently. Their preference to adhere to a highly structured lesson plan and a press for progress led them to favour no side-tracking or a lot of experimenting on the part of students. They stressed the importance of students' concentration on their own work, a strict keeping to time control over activities and pace of work. Their belief that academic success came with hard work and practice as a pre-condition for successful learning reinforced their determination to develop perseverance and a strict keeping to a discipline of hard work from their students. On the other hand, they complemented their serious side by taking on a pastoral role to students, showering them with care, attention and warmth.

In Class K, teachers were observed to hold the view that it was necessary to vary treatment for students with different abilities and needs in the class. They thought it was important that they took on the role of a facilitator in the classroom. They were keen to praise students' achievement and seize opportunities to recognise students' effort. They believed that building up the self-confidence of students by recognising their effort and progress was important in the course of learning. Also, they thought it was essential to develop students' own sense of responsibility in learning. They were keen to encourage students to discover and find out for themselves the way/procedure to approach a task. They did not insist on conformity of work and work method from students.

From the literature review (section 2.2 (vi)), it was discussed that if teachers could see themselves as more of a facilitator than an evaluator, it helps to reduce students' perception of the teacher as someone who is controlling their behaviour. When teachers work with students in collaborative mode, students are likely to experience heightened levels of self-perceived control, which is an important element in

mastery orientation. The positive relationship between an autonomy-oriented environment and students' mastery motivation and perceived competence has been discussed thoroughly (section 2.2 (vi)) . Also, the strong linkage between a classroom where the teacher provides students with opportunities to develop responsibilities and a mastery orientation in students has been identified (section 2.3). If we try to measure the dimension on Teachers' role and authority and reflect the scoring of the two classes in the form of a continuum (with higher scores representing those favouring the development of a mastery goal in students), then Class K would be seen as having a much better score (exhibiting more features in favour of favouring the development of a mastery orientation in students) than Class P.

We now go on to look at the other dimensions in the classroom.

#### **4.1 (iv) Class “P”(the local school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation/ recognition and Time use**

##### Task Orientation and Structure

Item 9: Variety of activities. This item is concerned with the degree of differentiation of activities at any one time when grouping is employed. Thus, if the class always operates as a single group, one should expect there to be no such differentiation. If a class operates as a number of groups there may be different activities going on simultaneously. After the observations, a summative coding of “a” was given to Class P. That means it was observed that most of the time, there was one activity only for the class. When interviewed, teachers confirmed that only one activity or the same activity was given to the class for ease of control. Also, as mentioned earlier, they thought there was no need to give students various activities to do to suit their individual needs because they were already grouped into different classes according to their abilities. Hence they did not see it necessary to vary activities for students within the same class.

Item 10: Usual number of work difficulty levels for subjects like Mathematics and English. This variable relates to the number of difficulty levels of work for different subject areas as well as for students with different ability levels. After the observations, a summative coding of “a” was given to Class P. That means it was observed that most of the time, one work level was given to the class. This observation was consistent with

the findings of the previous item. Teachers confirmed after the observations that usually just one level of work was given to the whole class. They thought there was no need to cater for students for different abilities within the same class. One teacher said :

“ If they work on the same task, they can move at the same speed and time will not be wasted...Also, it is much more efficient to manage the class if everyone works on the same thing...it will be too time-consuming to ask students to work on different tasks, especially for a large class like this...”

Item 11: Average time of students spent working on higher-order tasks. This variable relates to the nature of tasks given to the class. Activities are classified as higher-order tasks if they require students to capitalise on their previous knowledge and expand on their present experience in order to complete them. After the observations, a summative coding of “b” was given to Class P. That means it was observed that most of the time, students spent less than 1/3 of lesson participating in higher-order task-based activities. The majority of class activities were set in such a way that required the students to work on their own e.g. filling in a worksheet, completing an exercise, matching, reading for information etc. Emphasis was put on the rules of writing, pronunciation, spelling, dictation and recitation of texts. Teachers usually specified the number of words required for a given piece of composition and students were not encouraged to go over the limit. On average, it was observed that the class spent less than 1/3 of the time on tasks that require them to capitalise on their imagination or creativity to work on it. When interviewed, one teacher said this :

“...We sometimes give activities like class discussion to students, but only when they are in a good mood to learn...usually in the morning... it is easy for them to slip away from the topic and talk about something else... and they get too noisy, which could disturb other classes...moreover, there is too little space in the classroom for them to rearrange the desks and chairs to facilitate the discussion to take place...”



### Grouping Arrangement

Item 12: Size of teaching groups for subjects like Mathematics and Literacy. As in the case of Number of Work Difficulty Levels, some variation was expected in type of learning experience students in the class typically have as a result of the size of teaching groups. Option “a” refers to classes taught as a whole, and the observer is identifying the class as taught as a single group, with uniform instruction for all students. Option “b” refers to classes taught in two groups, and the observer is identifying the class as taught in two groups, more or less covering the same content with limited differentiation. Option “C” refers to classes taught in at least 3 groups with an average size of 8 or more students. Visible differentiation of content evolving around the same subject matter was expected. For Option “d”, it refers to classes where students were taught in groups with an average size of 8 or less or receive instruction on individual basis. After the five observations, a summative coding of “a” was given to the class. The observations reflected that the class was taught mostly as a whole, with uniform instruction for all students. When interviewed, teachers expressed the opinion that students in the class had more or less the same ability, therefore, they did not see the need to teach them in different groups. They also indicated that it would be difficult to manage a class of 40 students if they were split up in different groups.

### Evaluation/ recognition and Time use

Item 13: Extrinsic/intrinsic motivation. This variable is concerned with the type of extrinsic motivators used in the course of learning and the emphasis the teacher put

on the use of them. After the observations, a summative coding of “b” was given to the class. It means that extrinsic incentives were used extensively and indeed received considerable emphasis in the class. Extrinsic motivators like marks, points, rewards of one sort or another was observed to be employed extensively by teachers to motivate students to learn.

Firstly, it was observed that tests and grades were salient features in the classes. Students were routinely reminded that they would need to know the learning materials for an upcoming test. In one of the observation, the following was recorded:

T: “Class, I want you to revise Chapter 2 this week. By Friday, you will be given a test to see how well you are getting on with your work.”

During another observation, it was observed that the class was threatened by the teacher (jokingly) that they would be given an extra quiz if they were unable to recall or remember certain information.

When interviewed, teachers expressed the opinion that it was important to let the students know that this: their everyday effort would be counted and contributed to their term assessment, so they would try to do their best. The teacher said:

“Nowadays, students have too much to do after school. They watch TV, play video-games and talk on the phone. It is easy for them to waste their time... We try to help them make good use of their time by giving them homework to do.”

One teacher told the researcher this:

“In the first term (from September to December), there were four tests and one examination for students of all levels. Results of tests would be added onto examination results, and examination results from P4-P6 would be used to decide who would be able to be promoted to our sister secondary school under the same name. At the present moment, it was already known that over 90% of students could be promoted to the link-up secondary school. Despite this, there is still the

need to screen out 10% of students and the examination results would be used for such purposes. Parents are very keen to make sure that their children fulfill the requirements of the school.”

“We expect our students to spend an average of one hour doing homework everyday after school, this would help them revise the content of textbooks and prepare for dictations, tests and examinations...”

The importance adhered to results in tests and examination was felt strongly in the class. Although much of the homework was presented as a chore that was necessary to stick at, there were some attempts made by teachers to indicate to students that they might want to do a particular piece of work because it was especially interesting. For example, in the Literacy subject, the class was asked to do a survey on “the community facilities in their neighbourhood” for homework. The teacher reiterated that the survey would proved to be of interest to the class since it enabled them to learn more about their own environment.

Item 14: Competition. This variable is concerned with whether the teacher deliberately employs competition as a motivator. It focuses on measuring the degree of teacher-initiated competition experienced by the students. The observer will be coding the line of variation which extends from severe (and possibly damaging) competition between students, through ‘friendly’ competition, to a point where competition is trivial or non-existent. After the observations, a summative coding of “b” was given to the class. Competition amongst children was a prominent feature in the class, but it was not of a “cut throat” kind. It was observed that children were used to having ‘races’ with others in the class. Competition was used as a regular means by teachers to motivate students to learn extrinsically. In a P5 Mandarin class observed, the teacher tried to motivate more students to join in answering the questions by doing the following:

T: “I will now divide you into two groups and have a competition between boys and girls. If you get one answer correctly, I will record one mark onto your personal record here, which is part of the overall assessment results for the term. So do your best...”

Although there was no cut throat competition between the two sides during the competition, the atmosphere was serious since every single point was entered under the child's name immediately afterwards by the teacher.

In general, it was observed that social comparison was a salient feature in the class. Teachers pinned up and displayed essays or work that was well-done on the white boards lining the walls of the classroom. They were displayed there so students could share a view of the good work done by their classmates. Since only work well-done were displayed, students knew well who had been doing well with different subjects. One teacher gave the following comments when asked about the use of the display of work:

“We think it is a good way to motivate students to learn by displaying the good essays and writing on the board. They will serve as good models for other students to follow.”

During the two weeks of observation, there was a ‘Good behaviour’ competition in the school. Teachers were asked to give each class a rating from ‘A’ to ‘E’ indicating the degree of their satisfaction on the behaviour and discipline of the class. Students were observed to regard the competition as something important and there was much effort made by students to get a good grade for their class. When interviewed, teachers told the researcher that Class P was a ‘good’ class since students were streamed into different classes according to their ability, and Class P was the top class in Primary 5. Not only were they the best class, but they were among the best in behaviour as well.

Item 15: Student Responsibility for Managing Own Work. This variable seeks to measure the degree of responsibility given to students in managing the work allocated to them, and thus how far they are responsible for and how long they spend on each unit or sub-unit of work and the order in which they undertake tasks allocated. After the

observations, a summative coding of 'b' was given to the class. That means that very often student had little control of their own work. Most tasks were almost always instructed by the teacher singly. The time spent was controlled mostly by the teacher, as was the way in which the work was undertaken. One example of a task given was sentence making exercise in the Literacy hour. Students were given 10 minutes by the teacher to complete the sentence-making exercise aiming at familiarising the class with the use of the adjectives taught. Sometimes more than one task was instructed by the teacher at a time. When more than one task was instructed, the students had to do them in a given sequence and the teacher was seen to keep reminding students the need to stick to the schedule to ensure that time spent on each task was that intended. In a Social Studies lesson titled communal facilities in the neighbourhood, the class was asked to get in small groups and list out five kinds of communal facilities that were available to them in their neighbourhood. Then they had to find out the organizations responsible for providing these facilities. They were given 10 minutes to do the first part and 15 minutes to finish the second part. When interviewed, the teacher expressed the need to keep to a strict timing because she was aware of the possibility of the class to forget some of the things and had to start all over again when they met again in the next lesson. However, she stressed that students were sometimes given the chances to do a project (like "Protecting our environment") during long holidays such as Christmas or Summer and students could decide on the sequence in which they want to compile their reports.

Summary of scores of Class P on the Dimensions of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation /recognition and Time use

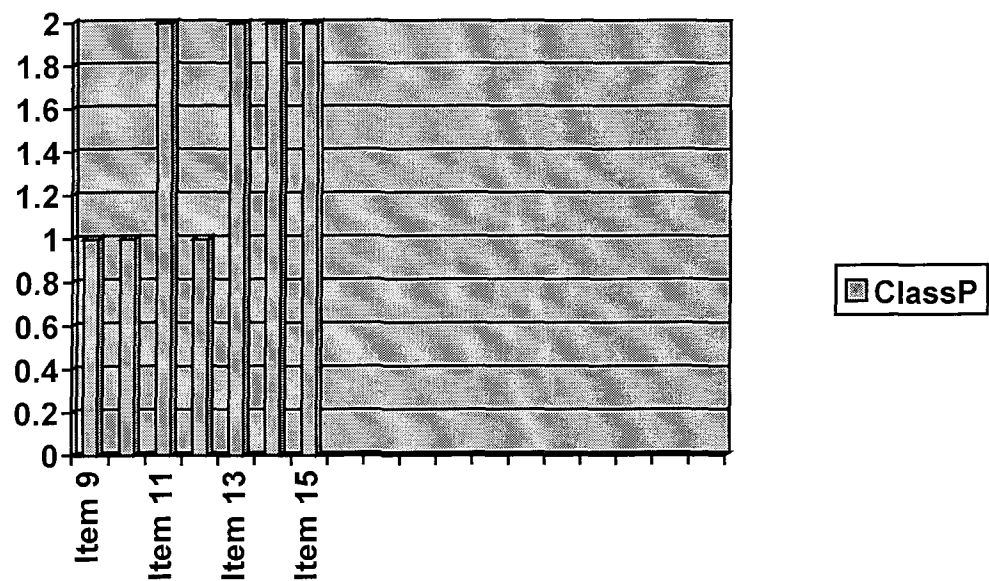


Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of Class P on the Dimensions of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation /recognition and Time use

**4.1 (v) Class “K”(the international school): Dimensions on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation /recognition and Time use**

Task Orientation and Structure

Item 9: Variety of activities. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given to Class K. That means it was observed that most of the time, there were

three or four activities for the class at the same time. An example was like this: In the Literacy hour, the teacher asked students to work on the essay they were writing for the school magazine. When some of the students had finished, they were asked to work on a spelling exercise and others were asked to finish off the book they were reading for the week. Another example was in the Humanities Hour, some students were asked to fill in a worksheet while others help the teacher decorate and put up their finished projects on the walls lining the classroom. Students seemed to be used to the idea of working on different activities. When interviewed, teachers said that students proceeded at different pace and had different needs, therefore, there was a need to prepare a variety of activities for students.

Item 10: Usual number of work difficulty levels for subjects like Mathematics and English. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given. That means that on average, there were three to four different levels of work were given to students of different abilities. When interviewed, teachers confirmed that usually the class was given different activities on the same theme to work on. One example was when the class was asked to put punctuation into a text, students got texts of different levels of difficulties to work on, depending on their abilities.

Item 11: Average time of students spent working on higher-order tasks. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given. That means that students were observed to spend nearly half of the lesson taking part in higher-order task-based activities. It was observed activities given were characterised by requiring students to capitalise on a range of skills like reading, summarising, analysing, deducting, and writing. Very often students had to draw on their previous experience and to collect information in order to finish the task. One example was this: In the Literacy hour, the

teacher asked the class to do a camp book to document the happenings at the camp they had just been to. Inside the book, students had to locate places they had been to on a map, listed out the itinerary, wrote a few recollections on the things and places they had been to etc.

### Grouping arrangement

Item 12: Size of teaching groups for subjects like Mathematics and Literacy.

After the observations, a summative coding of “a” was given. That means the class was taught as a single group. Although on one occasion (during the Numeracy hour), it was observed that the class was taught in two groups, with one group getting some special instructions on how to compile a bar chart and the other group learning how to put the figures collected into boxes, during other lessons the class was observed to be taught as a single group. When interviewed, teachers indicated that there were some occasions in which they would divide the class into different groups to receive different instructions. Yet, they agreed that for most of the time, the class was taught as a single group.

### Evaluation /recognition and Time use

Item 13: Extrinsic/intrinsic motivation. After the observations, a summative coding of “c” was given. That means extrinsic incentives were used and, although they played a much less prominent part in the life of the class than they did in ‘b’, they were given sufficient emphasis to show that they were part of the teacher’s individualized



system. It was observed that grades and evaluation were **not** salient features in this classroom. Teachers wrote comments on students' weekly due homework but did not grade them. Quizzes were used for review of materials learnt but no marks or grades were given. In fact, students in the class had difficulty understanding some of the items in the questionnaire on "Student Multidimensional Motivation Measure" (Appendix 2) which mentioned "getting a good grade" and "to score higher than others". It reflected that using grades to evaluate their performance was not often used in the class.

However, extrinsic motivation in the form of using stickers was used by teachers of the class. Work well-done was praised by teachers and sometimes teachers could be seen giving out stickers for external reinforcement.

Item 14: Competition. After the observations, a summative coding of "d" was given. It means that competition was seldom used by teachers to motivate the class to attain a 'good' standard (relative to ability). The teacher was anxious to see as many students as possible do well rather than to see some reach a higher standard than others. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, although stickers were used to motivate students, it was not done on a competitive basis. For example in a literacy lesson, students were allowed to put one tick under their names on a list stuck at the back of the classroom after they had answered three questions correctly. If they got five ticks under their names, the teacher would automatically give them a sticker as a reward. In a way, everyone was entitled to get stickers if he/she worked hard enough. Also, it was the students who put the ticks under their name at the end of the lesson, not the teacher doing it. As a result, students did not have the idea of out-competing each other in the course of the lesson.

In the course of the school year, there was no test or examination except for a diagnostic test at the end of the year which indicated the relative ability of the students with that of an average child in England (e.g reading ability equivalent to that of a 10-year-old in England). In some classes, dictation was given on a weekly basis, but no marks were given. Instead, those words which were spelt wrong by the child would be underlined by the teacher and the parent would be able to see how to help their child.

Recognition of work well-done was **not** done on a social comparative basis. Inside and outside the classrooms, there were hangings of students' work. The teacher made sure that the work of everyone was displayed and this was used as a means to tell the students how proud the teacher was with everyone's good work.

Item 15: Student Responsibility for Managing Own Work. After the observations, a summative coding of "c" was given. It means that most work in the class was instructed by the teacher as in "a", or "b". However, students were sometimes given responsibility either over a short period (up to approximately one quarter of a school day) for allocating time to each of a small number of tasks and for determining the sequence in which they were done. An example could be seen in the Literacy hour. The teacher assigned a number of tasks for students to complete, all of which would make up parts of their camp book. They were asked to label a map, write recollections on a few places and interesting events, and write short notes describing some photos that were taken at the camp. The teacher did not specify the sequence for completing the tasks and students had the choice to decide which section would appear first on their camp book. When interviewed, teachers expressed the opinion that students could do the work in their own ways as long as they covered everything. The class was given

one quarter of a day to complete the work and students worked on the book during the Literacy and Humanities hours.

Summary of scores of Class K on the Dimensions of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use

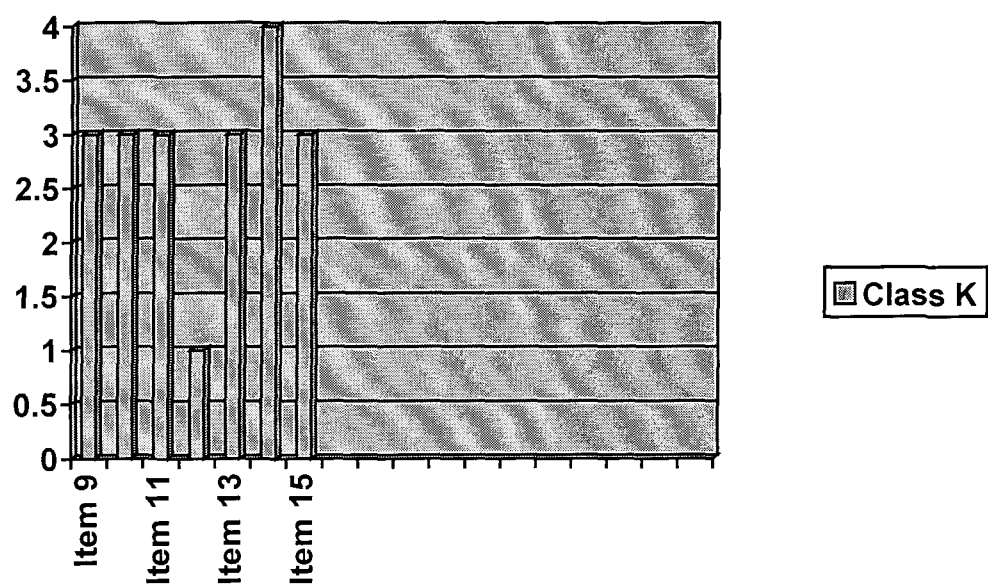
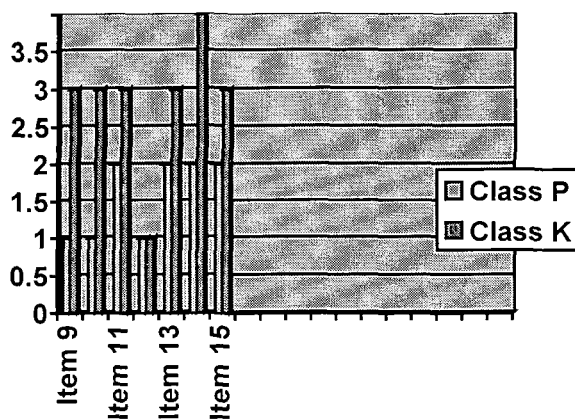


Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of Class K on the Dimensions of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use

**4.1 (vi) Comparison of the two classrooms on the dimension of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use:**



Based on the above description, we could now compare the findings from the two classrooms and find out whether there was any difference between them on these dimensions. As pointed out earlier, the options on the SCOTS Schedule can be seen as extending along a continuum of those favouring the development of a mastery goal in students and those which are not too favourable to it. Below is the summary of the findings:

Diagram 1: Chart reflecting scoring of each class on the Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation and recognition and Time use

The discussion on the dimensions of Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation/recognition and Time use would be based on the following categories:

1. Task orientation/structures and students' autonomy (items 9,10,11,12 and15)
2. Recognition and Evaluation (items 13,14)

### Task orientation/structures and students' autonomy

From the observations, it appeared that teachers in Class P tended to give tasks that were uniform to the class. Very often, the same tasks were given to the whole class and students were expected to proceed at the same pace while working. The sequence in which work was to be done was prescribed. These practicalities enabled teachers to have good control over the progress of the whole class so they could cover the course competently. The nature of tasks given were in the form of drills and practice which aimed at helping students commit to memory concepts and ideas through repetitive use and practice. As a result of these practices, students' autonomy in the classroom was limited. In general, students did not have a fair amount of control over classroom activities since most of that was in the hands of the teachers. To sum up, tasks that were typical of an unidimensional classroom, with students working on the same materials, proceeding at more or less the same pace, and having the same assignment were observed being used in Class P.

By contrast, students in Class K were usually grouped according to their abilities and were given tasks that were designed to suit their levels. Sometimes, it was observed that different activities were given to the class at the same time to keep students who proceeded at different pace engaged. The nature of tasks given was seen to require students to make use of their daily life experience, and a set of skills and strategies to complete. Sometimes, students were given a series of tasks to do in which they could decide on their sequence of completion. That meant they were given chances to manage their own time and to set their own goals/priority in completing a piece of work. As a result of these practices, students had some control over classroom activities and had a fair amount of autonomy in the classroom. In other words, tasks that were typical of a

multidimensional classroom, with students working on different tasks or having different assignment were observed in Class K.

From the literature review (section 2.2 (vi)), it was discussed that there was a direct linkage between the nature of tasks given in a classroom and the fostering of a mastery or performance orientation in students. There were certain tasks that could contribute to the fostering of a mastery orientation in students as they engaged in learning. These were usually tasks that offered variety, diversity and suited to the level of students. They should appeal to the interest of students and support the development and use of effective study strategies, too. The observations reflected that class K exhibit classroom features/structures that were more conducive to the fostering of a mastery orientation in students.

### Evaluation/Recognition

From the descriptions in the observations made in Class P, it was noticed that extrinsic motivators like marks, points, rewards of one sort or another was employed extensively by teachers to motivate students to learn. Tests and examination was an integral part of students' life. Social comparison was a salient feature in the class. Teachers pinned up and displayed essays or work that was well-done on the white boards lining the walls of the classroom.

By contrast, it was observed that the atmosphere in Class K was quite different. Although extrinsic motivators like stickers and charts were used to elicit desirable behaviour from students, it was used on a limited extent and did not bear the same kind of consequences as that in Class P. Students would not be streamed into different

classes according to their abilities in tests or examinations. Social comparison was not a salient feature in the classroom and although students might be aware of their different abilities, there were less chances for them to compare among themselves since they worked on different levels. Everyone's effort at work, no matter good or bad was seen to be cherished and rewarded in the same way by the teachers.

According to the Literature review (section 2.3), the indiscriminate use of extrinsic rewards and competition to motivate students to learn would have a negative effect on students' sense of self-perception and control in the classroom. Extrinsic rewards, when perceived as bribes, could serve to undermine children's interest and participation in classroom activities in the long run. Also, it would encourage students to have a performance orientation in learning. In contrast, students would be more willing to engage in and commit themselves to academic endeavours, invest more effort and persistence at tasks and adopt a mastery orientation in learning if teachers work at promoting the students' actual academic self-concept and instilling a sense of positive and higher self-conception of competence and control in classroom learning. If we try to measure the dimensions (on Task Orientation and Structure; Grouping arrangement; Evaluation/recognition and Time use) and reflect the scoring of the two classes in the form of a continuum (with higher scores representing those favouring the development of a mastery goal in students), then Class K would be seen as having a much better score (exhibiting more features in favour of favouring the development of a mastery orientation in students) than Class P.

Discussion and Analysis of Results

Below was a summary of scores of the two classes on all 15 items relating to different classroom dimensions.

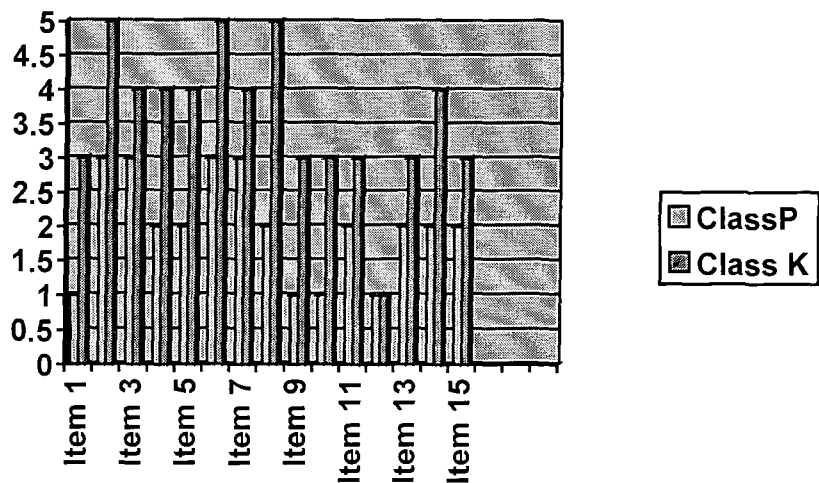


Diagram 5: Chart reflecting scoring of each class on all dimensions

From the scores in Diagram 5 and the descriptions of the observations above, we could see that there was a significant difference in various classroom dimensions that were used to describe the classroom environment of the two groups of students under comparison. An analysis of the data gathered from the observations and teachers' interviews reflected that the differences might have been largely a function of two factors. The first factor was the physical environment against which the two classrooms were set, and the second factor was the interplay of culture and organisation.

To account for the differences of the two classrooms along the TTGRT dimensions (Teacher authority, Tasks orientation, Grouping arrangement, Recognition/evaluation and Time use), it was important to consider the differences in



the set-up of the two classrooms and the difference in the environments and provisions of the two schools. As shown on p.57, there were difference in the environments and provisions of the two schools. Class P was set against an environment which was not as well equipped as in Class K. In Class P, there were 40 students on roll and the classroom was crammed with 40 desks and chairs. Apart from the standard provisions of a teacher's desk, chairs and desks for the children and two white boards in the classroom, there was hardly any room for magazine/book racks or video and cassette recorder. Students' desks and chairs were formally arranged in rows. Opportunities for mobility and flexible classroom layouts were severely restricted owing to a lack of space. Lesson periods usually lasted for 35-40 minutes, providing barely enough time for teachers to introduce methods such as problem-solving, group work or co-operative learning. Teachers who wanted to make use of power point presentation and the overhead projector had to make special arrangement with the school technician so he could set them up for teachers at the beginning of the specified lesson. The School Library, with a provision of 3000 books, was not given any prominence in the process of teaching and learning. When interviewed by the researcher, the Principal told her that it was quite difficult to make arrangements for the 450 students in the school to take turns to visit the Library. On average, students from each class were assigned half an hour per week to visit the Library. Students could do some leisure reading or borrow books during the time-slot assigned, which usually coincided with their playtime. Apart from this, the overarching pressure of the examination systems was seen to have direct influence on the teaching styles of teachers. Teachers were pressured to stick to the syllabus and cover the course on time and continuously push for progress. It appeared that the inevitable imperative of the characteristics of the classroom conditions described (a large class of 40 students in a small room and the scarcity of resources) was the adaptation of the teachers' strategies. The adoption of strict discipline control, a

formalised relationship between teacher and student, a strict adherence to the syllabus/curriculum were strategies that teachers used to cope with their practical realities. It appeared reasonable to suggest that teachers' focus on covering the course, preparing students' for tests and examinations had led them to favour lessons with certain characteristics that were particular of their culture. Lessons which were highly predictable, with unswerving attention to the learning tasks which prepared students for examination performance, and lesson structures which aimed at keeping students on tasks and reducing the risk of divergence in engagement as well as outcomes were among these characteristics.

On the other hand, situations in Class K was different. The classroom was bigger and more spacious. Students' work tables were arranged in a L-shape. This facilitated classroom interaction and interaction among students. In front of the teacher's sofa was a carpet area big enough for all students to sit on to listen to the teacher. There was a small TV, a Video Cassette Recorder, a computer and rows of magazine and books rack in the classroom. The use of the School Library was timetabled twice a week and students were asked to choose one book every week to read for leisure purposes. The set-up of the classroom enabled teachers to implement co-operative learning. The class of 22 students was usually seated in groups of 5-6, making it possible for the teacher to move around to look after the needs of students. Indeed, as Alexander (2000) commented when comparing classrooms from five countries, a classroom environment which could offer considerable mobility to students and teachers was "a concomitant of multiple-focus classroom organization"(p.335). Moreover, the absence of examination and performance pressure gave teachers some more flexibility in organising the content of the Curriculum and progress of the syllabus. Lesson periods usually lasted for one and a half-hours, which allowed the

teacher to plan for kinds of tasks that require preparation, finding out about things, discussion and feedback.

As discussed in the Literature review (section 1.1), government policies, and ways of allocating resources have a strong impact on the teaching and learning process and it could shape teachers' and students' priorities. The amount of funding government put in education affect class size, physical space and resource level, all of which contributed to different classroom environments for teachers and students. Also, public examination systems, selection criteria for higher education have direct effect on the teaching and learning process. As Dimmocks (2000) pointed out, government policy permeated the many tiers of the school organisation and predispose teaching pedagogy and students' learning styles.

Regarding the cultural factor, one could see that the ways teachers organised their classrooms was in part a working out of culturally embedded values, which could offer an explanation to account for the differences in strategies that teachers adopted in the two classrooms. As discussed in the observations, teacher-student relationship in Class P was a hierarchical one. The relationship was a formal one in which teachers blend the hierarchy with warmth and care. Strict discipline and tight control was perceived by teachers as fundamental to classroom teaching. Patterns of organization with students working in groups, holding a discussion, taking up different activities and proceeding at different pace would pose as tests on teachers' hold on discipline, order and control in the classroom much more severely than would whole class direct instructions. To a certain extent, teachers' preference on "getting in control" was seen to be an important factor influencing teachers' classroom organisation. On the other hand, observations revealed that teachers in Class K operated on a more friendly and equal

basis with students. Often they were seen working alongside with students in groups, giving guidance instead of standing in the front of classrooms giving directives. Students were allowed sharing ideas while working and the nature of tasks and activities given encouraged students to concentrate working at their own level, and at their own pace. Teachers' readiness to take on the role of managers/facilitators was seen to be crucial in influencing their teaching styles.

The discussion above suggested that teachers had developed culturally adaptable ways of teaching to cope with the demands of their teaching situations. It offered a possible explanation to the findings in this chapter: that there were significant differences in the various classroom dimensions of the two classes. This point on the effects of the cultural factor would be further investigated and discussed in a later chapter on "To what extent do culturally derived values influence teachers' perception of teaching and students' responses to learning". In the next chapter, I would like to focus on whether this significant differences in classroom dimensions would translate into/ or cause a significant difference in motivation orientations among students, as it was claimed by previous researchers in the Literature Review.

## **4.2 : Are there significant differences in students' motivation orientations in the two classes studied?**

In the last chapter, it was found out that there were significant differences in classroom processes between the two classrooms. In this chapter, the first focus would be on gauging students' motivation through the Student multidimensional motivation questionnaire and finding out whether or not there were significant differences between students from the two classrooms under study. The second focus would be on identifying possible relationship, if there were any, between classroom structures and students' motivation.

The Student multidimensional motivation(Appendix 2A) was used as a self-report measure to assess the motivation orientation and academic self-concept of students. As discussed in the literature review, previous researches had identified the basic elements involved in the study of students' motivation. The motivation constructs of: academic self-concept (section 2.2 (ii)); intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (section 2.2 (i)); work avoidant orientation (section 2.2 (iv)) and self-regulated learning (section 2.2 (v)); mastery and performance goal orientation(section 2.2 (iii) & (iv)); social self-concept (section 2.3) had been identified. These constructs are inter-related and sometimes overlap each other. They would serve as the basis on which students' motivation would be measured in this study. Henceforth, the eight subscales in the questionnaire were:

- mastery orientation
- performance orientation
- work-avoidant orientation
- intrinsic motivation

- extrinsic motivation
- self-regulated learning
- academic self-concept
- social self-concept

In order to obtain a score for each student, numerical values on a 1-5 scale were attached to the pictorial in the questionnaire depicting e.g “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree’. In all cases, “1” represented the “least favourable” category and “5” the “most favourable” category along the description towards a mastery orientation. Once these numerical values were attached, it was possible to calculate the mean scores and standard deviation of each group of students. The higher the raw score, the more positive the child’s assessed academic self-concept and motivation orientation. A child with a high score was telling us that he or she was intrinsically motivated to engage in the mastery process.

#### **4.2 (i) The MANOVA Test**

In order to find out whether there were any significant differences between students from the two types of schools, a MANOVA was conducted to find out the overall significant multivariate effect i.e. whether there were differences between the two groups of students, based on the 8 scales in the questionnaire.

The researcher began this study by setting a null hypothesis: There were no difference in motivation orientation between students from the two classrooms. The findings were as follows:

Findings:

The MANOVA results revealed an overall significant multivariate effect, ( $F(8,56)=3.60, p=0.002$ ) attributable to the differences between the two groups of students. P referred to the level of probability. When  $p=0.002$ , it means there were significant differences between the two groups. As a result, the null hypothesis that there were no differences between students from the two types of schools was rejected. That means the results revealed significant differences between the two groups of students on the total scores of the eight scales.

**4.2 (ii) The ANOVA Test**

After finding out that the total scores of students on the eight subscales in the questionnaire from the two classrooms were significantly different, it was of interest to find out if the overall difference between the two groups existed for each subscale and see on which subscales they had the greatest differences. To do this, an univariate ANOVAs was conducted to find out which sub-scales (items) there were significant differences between the two groups. Items were scored in the direction of positive self-concept and positive motivation orientation (i.e. mastery orientation). That means a child with a high score represents that she has positive self-concept and positive motivation orientation. The table below reflected the findings:

Findings:

As a follow-up measure, an ANOVAs was conducted (Table 1).

| Table 1. ANOVA Results Between Class P and Class K               |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |
|--|---------|------|--|---------|------|------|-------|
|  | Class P |      |  | Class K |      |      |       |
|  | (n=35)  |      |  | (n=39)  |      |      |       |
| Scale  | M       | SD   |  | M       | SD   | F    | ratio |
|  |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |
| Mastery goals  | 3.81    | 0.67 |  | 3.88    | 0.51 | 0.44 |       |
| Performance goals  | 2.12    | 0.65 |  | 2.48    | 0.73 | 2.24 | *     |
| Work-avoidant Orientation  | 3.10    | 1.20 |  | 2.82    | 1.39 | -0.9 |       |
| Intrinsic Motivation   | 3.44    | 0.80 |  | 3.78    | 0.65 | 1.95 |       |
| Extrinsic Motivation   | 1.69    | 0.51 |  | 1.78    | 0.58 | 0.72 |       |
| Self-regulation  | 2.96    | 0.77 |  | 3.26    | 0.72 | 1.73 |       |
| Academic Self-concept  | 3.11    | 0.82 |  | 3.76    | 0.51 | 4.03 | ***   |
| Social Self-concept  | 3.48    | 1.07 |  | 3.65    | 0.78 | 0.78 |       |
| Note: Scoring was from “5”(most positive) to “1” (most negative) |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |
| *p<0.05. **p<0.01. ***p<0.001.                                   |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |
|  |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |
|  |         |      |  |         |      |      |       |



The  $F$  values, the means and standard deviations for each scale by student group were reported in the above table. The  $F$  values, like  $p$  (probability) were indexes that reflect whether there were significant differences between the two groups of students under study. The higher the  $F$  values, the more significant were the differences.

Results indicated that students from Class K(International school) differed significantly from students in Class P (local school) on two subscales: Performance orientation and Academic self-concept. The results revealed that students from Class K reported significantly higher Academic self-concept (mean=3.76) than students in Class P(mean=3.11). The  $F$  ratio was 4.03\*\*\*(\*\* $p < 0.001$ ), reflecting significant differences in their Academic self-concept. Meanwhile, students in Class P reported a much stronger tendency towards a performance orientation (mean=2.12) in learning than students in Class K(mean=2.48). The  $F$  ratio was 2.24\*(\* $p < 0.05$ ), indicating significant differences between the two groups on this subscale. The scales that did not differ significantly between the two groups of students were Mastery goals, Work-avoidant goal, Extrinsic motivation, Self-regulation and Social self-concept.

#### **4.2 (iii) The Discriminant Analysis**

After identifying that the two groups differed most on the two subscales of Academic self-concept and Performance orientation, it would be useful to find out the contribution of each subscale to the overall differences so the researcher knew what factors contributed to the significant differences. In order to determine the extent to which the two groups differed with respect to the 8 subscales, a descriptive discriminate analysis was performed. The purpose was to further describe the MANOVA results

(Huberty & Barton, 1989), so we could tell which subscales contribute most to the differences. The results were reported in Table 2.

| Table 2. Discriminant Analysis Results Between Class P and Class K |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|
|  | Standardized | Canonical    |
|  | canonical    | structure    |
| Scale  | coefficients | coefficients |
|  |              |              |
| Academic Self-concept  | 0.92         | 0.66         |
| Self-regulation  | 0.10         | 0.36         |
| Performance goals  | 0.74         | 0.31         |
| Intrinsic Motivation   | 0.35         | 0.27         |
| Social Self-concept  | -0.16        | 0.20         |
| Mastery goals  | -0.17        | 0.13         |
| Extrinsic Motivation   | 0.07         | 0.11         |
| Work-avoidant Orientation  | -0.36        | -0.20        |

Findings:

The canonical structure coefficients for each variable provide an indication of the relative contribution of each scale to the overall discriminant function. In other words, the canonical structure coefficients could tell us this: Based on which subscales could we confidently discriminate or tell that a particular student came from Class P or Class K? The discriminate analysis showed that there were four scales that were related to the discriminant function. They were Academic self-concept, Self-regulation,

Performance goals and Intrinsic motivation. The four scales (variables) had a structure coefficient value of .27 or greater and had the greatest practical significance for distinguishing between students between the two classes. That means we could tell that students from the two classes differed mostly on the four scales of Academic self-concept, Self-regulation, Performance goals and Intrinsic motivation. If we picked any one of the filled in questionnaire by students and looked at the responses of that particular student to these four subscales, we could tell which class (Class P or Class K) the student came from; because these four subscales were major factors contributing to the differences between the the two groups and could serve as the basis on which to discriminate students between the two groups.

Referring to the mean scores of students on these four scales in Table 1, results revealed that students in the two classes mainly differed on the four subscales: Class K students were more intrinsically motivated to learn (mean=3.78) than children in Class P (mean=3.44). They reported more positive attitudes and inclinations to self-regulated learning (mean=3.26) than students in Class P (mean=2.96). As stated before, they had much higher Academic self-concept (mean=3.76) than students in Class P(mean=3.11). Finally, students from Class P demonstrated a much stronger performance orientation (mean=2.12) than students in Class K(mean=2.48) in their approaches to learning.

#### **4.2 (iv) Results of the Inter-correlations test**

One central hypothesis in the study was that a mastery motivation orientation should be related academic self-concept and intrinsic motivation. That means children

with an intrinsic love for learning and oriented towards a mastery goal would have more positive or higher perceived academic self-concept (stronger feelings of academic competence), a stronger inclination on intrinsic motivation and a stronger tendency towards self-regulated learning. Conversely, children with an extrinsic motivation to learning, children who regarded learning as a means to an end, and were oriented towards a performance goal would demonstrate a less positive or lower perceived academic self-concept (lower feelings of academic competence) in the classroom, and a weaker tendency towards self-regulated learning. Previous researches (e.g. Brophy, 1986, 1987; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987a; Ames & Archer, 1988; Epstein, 1988, Stipek, 1998) as discussed in section 2.2 (v) & (vi) had confirmed this. To test for the internal consistency of the results, an Inter-correlations test was conducted. The result of the test could also help us explore whether there was construct validity in the measurement and evaluate the reliability of the instrument.

To explore the construct validity of the measurement (instrument) and reliability, the zero-order intercorrelations among the subscales were established (as shown in the following : Table 3). The purpose was to find out whether a mastery motivation orientation was related to stronger inclinations on intrinsic motivation, stronger tendency towards self-regulated learning a higher perceived academic self-concept. That means if a student had a high score on mastery orientation, he/she should had higher scores on intrinsic motivation, self-regulated learning and academic self-concept. On the other hand, a performance orientation was related to stronger inclinations on extrinsic motivation, weaker tendency towards self-regulated learning and a lower academic self-concept. That means if a student had a high score on performance orientation, he/she should had lower scores on intrinsic motivation, self-regulated learning and academic self-concept.

| Table 3. Intercorrelations Among<br>Subscales |                           |         |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
|---|---------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Subscale                                      |                           | 1       | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8 |
|   |                           | Class P |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 1   | Mastery goals             | -       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 2   | Performance goals         | -0.23   | -     |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 3   | Work-avoidant Orientation | 0.47    | 0.18  | -     |       |       |       |       |   |
| 4   | Intrinsic Motivation      | 0.75    | -0.31 | 0.33  | -     |       |       |       |   |
| 5   | Extrinsic Motivation      | -0.41   | 0.29  | 0.00  | -0.56 | -     |       |       |   |
| 6   | Self-regulation           | 0.10    | -0.10 | -0.13 | 0.04  | -0.32 | -     |       |   |
| 7   | Academic Self-concept     | 0.46    | -0.59 | -0.08 | 0.43  | -0.18 | 0.23  | -     |   |
| 8   | Social Self-concept       | 0.41    | -0.38 | 0.17  | 0.47  | -0.18 | 0.06  | 0.64  | - |
|   |                           |         |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
|   |                           |         |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
|   |                           | Class K |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 1   | Mastery goals             | -       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 2   | Performance goals         | -0.28   | -     |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| 3   | Work-avoidant Orientation | 0.35    | 0.15  | -     |       |       |       |       |   |
| 4   | Intrinsic Motivation      | 0.56    | -0.06 | 0.45  | -     |       |       |       |   |
| 5   | Extrinsic Motivation      | -0.05   | 0.48  | 0.08  | 0.02  | -     |       |       |   |
| 6   | Self-regulation           | 0.48    | 0.08  | 0.16  | 0.50  | 0.19  | -     |       |   |
| 7   | Academic Self-concept     | 0.43    | -0.18 | 0.19  | 0.28  | -0.18 | 0.24  | -     |   |
| 8   | Social Self-concept       | -0.11   | 0.29  | -0.07 | -0.23 | 0.07  | -0.14 | -0.02 | - |

The prediction and hypotheses were supported by correlational data from the above. Consistent with findings in previous researches, those students in Class P who had a mastery orientation was positively correlated to intrinsic motivation ( $r=0.75$ ), academic self-concept ( $r=0.46$ ), social self-concept ( $r=0.41$ ) and self-regulation ( $r=0.10$ ). That means those students from Class P who were engaged in a mastery process of learning were also intrinsically motivated to learn and tended to be self-regulated in their learning and had good academic and social self-concept. The prediction also applied to students in Class K. Students in Class K who had a mastery orientation was positively correlated to an intrinsic motivation to learn ( $r=0.56$ ), academic self-concept ( $r=0.43$ ), and self-regulation ( $r=0.48$ ). That means those students in Class K who were engaged in a mastery process of learning were also intrinsically motivated to learn and tended to be self-regulated in their learning and had positive academic self-concept. The fact that results for the two groups were consistent indicated two things: First, there was internal consistency in the data collected, reflecting reliability of the findings. Second, it reflected that the construct validity of the measurement was sound.

It was interesting to note that for students in Class P, their scores on mastery goal strongly correlated to work-avoidant orientation ( $r=0.47$ ). That means the student from Class P who was mastery oriented had a strong tendency to avoid work. It might have something to do with the ways in which learning took place in Class P. As discussed in the research findings of the previous section 4.1 (i), memorization of facts, recitation of reading texts, mechanical practice and drills were all seen by teachers as necessary evils in the process of learning. These were the ways to help students develop familiarity with subject matter (like spellings and times-table) and teachers in Class P in general shared the belief that hard work with ‘sweat and tears’ was an

unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. To them, academic success came with hard work and practice. Hard work and repetitive learning might be painful, but it was a pre-condition for successful learning. This resonated what Hau & Salili (1991) found out in their study. They pointed out that there was a special connotations in the Chinese culture in which academic success was attributed to hard effort and practice. Similarly, Watkins & Biggs (1996) pointed out that in the Chinese culture, hard work with sweat and tears was often believed to be an unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. It appeared reasonable to suggest that the emphasis on hard work, an insistence on mechanical practice and memorization might lead to burn out and cause work-avoidant inclinations from students. This might be a possible explanation for the correlation between a mastery orientation and work- avoidant in students from Class P.

#### **4.2 (v) Summary**

The findings suggested that students from Class P differed significantly from students in Class K. They differed most significantly on two of the subscales in the questionnaire. They were Performance orientation and Academic self-concept. The four subscales of Academic self-concept, Self-regulation, Performance goals and Intrinsic motivation were identified as major factors contributing to the differences between the two groups of students and could serve as the basis on which to discriminate students between the two groups. In general, results revealed that students in Class K were more intrinsically motivated to learn than children in Class P. They reported more positive attitudes and inclinations to self-regulated learning than students in Class P. They also had much higher Academic self-concept than students in Class P. Finally, students from

Class P demonstrated a much stronger performance orientation than students in Class K in their approaches to learning



### **4.3 Are there significant relationships between motivation orientation and classroom structure?**

Having established that there were significant differences between the two classes of students and how they differed from each other, the next question was to consider whether the differences were linked to a difference in classroom structures and processes. As discussed in the findings of the last chapter, results from systematic classroom observation(SCOTS Schedule) revealed that classroom structures in Class K exhibited features which were more conducive to a performance approach. The variation in classroom structures were identified along the dimensions of:

- Teacher's roles, teacher and student interaction patterns, autonomy of students
- Task orientation and structures : types of activities, types of materials and time use
- Grouping arrangements
- Evaluation and Recognition

Consistent with previous research findings, classroom structures were seen to translate into/or relate to the significant differences in motivation orientations between the two groups of students under study. These differences in students' motivation orientation were linked to the differences in classroom structures of the two classrooms. Students in Class P had a much stronger inclination to adopt a performance goal orientation in learning, and a comparatively lower Academic social self-concept. This phenomenon was linked to the characteristics of their classroom processes: one that exhibited features that fostered a performance orientation in students. Meanwhile, students in Class K had a stronger tendency to adopt a mastery orientation in learning and a had a comparatively higher Academic self-concept. This was linked to the

classroom characteristics which exhibited features that were conducive to fostering a mastery orientation in students.

### Implications

There is now a large body of research which points to the importance of fostering a positive motivational beliefs in students (e.g. Pintrich and Schrauben, 1992). It suggests that students who have positive motivational beliefs, that is, those who believe they can accomplish certain tasks, believe that learning is under their control, approach tasks with an orientation to learning and mastery, and are interested in and value the task content, will be more likely to become engaged in learning in a deeper, more self-regulating fashion than those students who do not have these beliefs. Moreover, having positive motivational beliefs may not lead to improved academic performance, but these beliefs can lead to increased cognitive engagement in the task which does have a direct influence on academic performance in the long run.

From the discussion, it would be easy to jump to the conclusions that Class P or School P needed sweeping reforms to close the gaps. As discussed in the section on “Analysis and Interpretation of results” in the last chapter, it must be noted that the set-up of the two schools observed varied a lot in terms of resources provisions and staff support. The international school (Class K) was set against a more favourable environment with spacious playground, well-equipped rooms and favourable teacher-student ratio. It would be unwise to ignore the physical constraints of the schools as a contributing factor to the differences. On top of this, there was the larger structure of schooling like the examination and school allocation system that exerted a controlling effect on what teachers could do in the classroom. Moreover, what teachers regarded as

good educational practices, how they viewed their professional responsibilities, how they structured the classroom and how students reacted to and interpret different teaching practices would also contribute to the differences in students' motivation orientation.

To explain the large differences in classroom structures that exist between the two classes, and their linkages to the significant differences in motivation orientation that exist between students of the two classes, it was necessary to consider all the factors that might contribute to the differences. They include government policy, resource allocation and the cultural norms, values, shared beliefs that might affect students' and teachers' priorities and behaviour in the classroom. The findings in the last chapter threw some light on how the objective facts in a school (including dimensions of the school such as classroom organisation(including task design, work structures and teacher-student relationship etc) reflect cultural values of the main participants. They were in part the working-out of culturally embedded values of the two schools. In the next chapter, it would be of interest to have a more detailed look at how subjective dimensions of the participants involved (like their views, beliefs and values) contribute to the cultural factors that shape their actions and preferences.

#### **4.4 How do culturally-derived values influence teacher's perception of teaching?**

Findings from the last previous chapters suggest that there were large differences in classroom structures between the two classes of students under study. Also, the differences seemed to translate into significant differences in motivation orientation between students of the two classes. From the discussion on the findings of chapter 4, it was noted that cultural factors did play a role in shaping teachers' preferences, ways of organising the classroom and the degree of control over students' learning. In many ways, the findings from the SCOTS Schedule showed that teachers' approaches to teaching in the two classes reflected different views on how teaching and learning should happen. Teachers in Class P and Class K expressed different ideas and approaches on various issues related to their daily teaching. It would be of interest to find out more about how teachers were influenced by culturally derived values in making their decisions. The fact that teachers' perspectives as well as student's perspectives could provide valuable insights into the classroom in terms of classroom structures, goal orientation and priorities could not be ignored. As Fraser & Walberg (1991) suggests: "Classroom participants (students or/and teachers) are more sensitive to the long standing attributes of the environment than the neutral observer." Thus, this chapter aims at addressing this question: To what extent are teachers' values influenced by their culture?

##### Teachers' perception

Semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 4) were conducted with 5 teachers from each school, to gauge their attitude on the learning process, their pedagogy,

teaching styles and professional perspectives. These teachers were all involved in teaching the classes that the researcher observed. The questions from the Bristol-Aix Study Teachers' Questionnaire (Broadfoot 1993) were used as a framework for the investigation.

As discussed in the Methodology chapter (section 3.2 (i)), the Bristol-Aix Study Teachers' Questionnaire was intended to gauge teachers' views on a wide scope, including areas like the following:

- Personal and professional information about teachers themselves
- Socio-demographic description of the classes
- General perceptions of the nature of the teacher's job
- Professional responsibility and objectives
- Influences, constraints and degree of freedom in teachers' work
- Accountability

Since the aims this chapter basically was to find out how culturally derived values influence teachers' perspectives on learning, I will focus on presenting and discussing findings that were culture-specific in origins, findings that could offer possible explanation to the differences on the ways teachers' structured their classroom (as identified in the findings of the last chapter). The following were some of the points that were found to be related to cultural factors:

- ◆ Teachers' own perceptions on what influenced their practice: One instance was what was their own perception of their professional autonomy? For example, how much freedom did they perceive to have in deciding what to

teach, the degree to which they can exercise their own judgement on whether to fulfil the requirement of the courses by following the dictates of the syllabus or curriculum map or how much scope for personal initiative and autonomy in deciding and implementing pedagogic and policy objectives was enjoyed by them etc. In other words, what are the external constraints that teachers viewed as sources that influenced their practice would be investigated.

- ◆ Their self-imposed priorities, or self-imposed constraints: The findings and discussion in chapter 4 had already indicated that teachers from the two classes seemed to differ on the nature of their professional obligations such as ‘what needed to be done in the classroom’ ‘how did learning happen or take place’, or ‘what counts as good practice’ etc. Teachers’ self-imposed goals, standards of conduct could provide insight into why their practices were different from one another. The sources of these differences would be investigated.

In order to fully investigate teachers’ perceptions on what influenced their practice and find out what their self-imposed priorities, or self-imposed constraints were, several questions that directly addressed the concerns of teachers were added to Broadfoot’s questionnaire to help gauge the cultural values of teachers on the choice of their teaching style and pedagogy. They were: “What do you think of the discipline of students in your school? Do you think teachers need to tighten/relax measures in controlling the discipline of students in your school?” and “Do you think the amount of homework given to students is appropriate? Do you think you should add more/cut down on the amount of homework given?”

Results from the interviews revealed that the two groups of teachers showed the greatest differences in their conceptions on the following areas:

- ◆ Teachers' own perceptions on what influenced their practice : the constraints of the curriculum framework and the degree o autonomy they enjoyed
- ◆ Teachers' self-imposed priorities, or self-imposed constraints: classroom discipline and homework. These differences would be discussed in detail below.

#### **4.4 (i) Findings 1: Teachers' perception on degree of freedom in defining the curriculum**

The most striking difference in perception between teachers from the two classes was their answers to Question 8, 9, 10 and 11. Since they were interrelated, they would be discussed together.

For question 8 “How much freedom do you have to choose the content of your teaching?”, the figure below illustrated how teachers from the two classes differed on their opinions.

| Question   | Teachers in Class P  | Teachers in Class K  |
|--|--|--|
| How much freedom do you have to choose the content of your teaching? | $\sqrt{\sqrt{}}$ Complete freedom<br>$\sqrt{\sqrt{\sqrt{}}}$ A great deal of freedom | $\sqrt{\sqrt{\sqrt{\sqrt{}}}}$ a little freedom<br>$\sqrt{}$ very little freedom |

$\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$  represents the number of teachers

When asked: “How much freedom do you have to choose the content of your teaching?” Two teachers from Class P chose ‘complete freedom’ while three chose ‘a great deal of freedom’. On the other hand, four teachers from Class K chose ‘a little freedom’ while one chose ‘very little freedom’. Their answers to Question 8 would be of interest when compared to their answers to Question 9.

When we looked at their answers to question 9: “For what aspects of the content do you feel you have the greatest freedom of choice”, one teacher from Class P said:

(我可以決定先教那一課只要我們在考試前將課程教完就可以...校長很開明)

“ The order of covering the teaching units specified in the syllabus. We can decide on which chapter to teach first. As long as we finish the units before the examination, it is all right. Our Principal is a very open-minded person.”

One teacher from Class K answered the same question like this:

“We have great freedom in choosing what resources to use. We can also decide on how students are organised and what activities to do”



For question 10, they were asked: “For what aspects of the content of your teaching do you feel you have the least freedom of choice?”

One teacher in the Class P said:

(評核考試的內容要由所有老師決定雖然學生不知那一個測驗的成績會計算在大考內但我們對每一個測驗都要認真去做)

“ The assessment. The content of tests and dictation has to be agreed among all the teachers so students are treated fairly. Although our students don’t know which tests would be counted and the results entered into their records, we have to be serious about every test.”

For the same question, one teacher from the Class K answered:

“The programme of study. It is specified in literacy and in Numeracy what content is to be covered, also science...”

For question 11, they were asked: “What are the major constraints that determine for you the content of your teaching?”

One teacher from Class P said:

(課程指引和評核雖然現時小一沒有考試但也要評級我們沒有多大的自由去選擇教甚

“ The syllabus and the assessment. We have to refer to the syllabus. Although we are now not giving students in P1 any examination, we still have to give them grades for their work so we can track their performance. This in a way affect what we want to teach.”

The answers for the same question from a teacher in Class K was like this:

“The school’s curriculum map. The implementation of Literacy and Numeracy framework.”

### Analysis and interpretation of the findings:

As discussed in the Literature Review, Dimmocks had identified several dimensions along which one can compare the differences in culture of different schools and classroom structures. One of the dimensions concerned the aspect of “*Tight – loose*” in terms of organization structures(p.38). This aspect gauged the degree to which members felt there was strong commitment to the shared beliefs, values and practices of an organisation. Such strong commitment might come through supervision and control by superordinates or through members’ own self-motivation. An organisation which had strong homogeneity and commitment in respect of its members’ values and practices was tightly controlled. Conversely, a loosely controlled culture was one with only weak commitment to, or acceptance of, shared beliefs, values and practices, and little or no control was exerted to achieve homogeneity either by superordinates or by members themselves. Schools with tightly controlled cultures had principals, teachers, students and parents believing in and working towards the same goals and sharing many of the same teaching and learning practices. In the opposite case, teachers in schools with loosely controlled cultures were inclined to ‘do their own thing’, resulting in a wide range of heterogeneous practices. By comparing the responses of teachers (from the two different classes) to the questions asked (questions 8, 9, 10, 11), it was discovered that the organisation structure in School P (in which class P belonged) was much tighter than the one in School K (where Class K belonged).

Teachers answers to these questions revealed that while teachers from Class K felt that they had very little freedom in choosing the content of their teaching owing to the curriculum framework, the teacher from Class P by contrast felt that they already were enjoying a lot of freedom. The interesting thing was that Class P was operating

within an even tighter curriculum framework than Class K. Observations made in the classroom using the SCOTS Schedule (in Chapter 4) had revealed that in Class P, teachers had a much stronger need to follow the syllabus and cover the specified Course. Although teachers in Class P was seen to operate within an even tighter framework by the neutral observer, their own views were that they saw things differently to that of the observer. They told the researcher that they were contented with the degree of freedom they were given. Even with the role of assessment functioning as a primary source of control in the school, they were still very contented with the amount of autonomy they were given.

When asked whether they would like to see a relaxing of curriculum control, one teacher from Class P said:

(現時已有一定程度的自由但太多自由反而不好我們還是需要有一個完善的課程來作準則的)

“We are already starting to enjoy a relaxation in control. I think that is good enough. There is a need for teachers to have a framework to follow so we can do our jobs well. We can't be on our own entirely. We need guidelines...”

On the other hand, a teacher from Class K answered the same question like this:

“It would be great. We can then decide our own schedules according to the needs of our students and have more flexibility in choosing the content on what to teach...”

The different reactions of the teachers to these questions reflected that teachers from Class P preferred system, order and structure. They felt comfortable when there were clear set of instructions on what should be done clearly laid before them, so they knew what to do. They preferred to and were content operating in a ‘tightly controlled environment’. To explain this, it might have something to do with the importance paid to the imposition of order in the Chinese cultural tradition and the emphasis on order and rationalism. Since the time of Confucius, there had been a deeply entrenched view

that a steady society rested on everybody knowing exactly what roles to play - the Emperor had his own role, the subordinates had their own roles, the father did his own roles as a father while the sons fulfilled their own duties as sons. When everyone did the best out of their own roles, there was harmony in society.

(君君臣臣父父子子) ( Lun Yu )

Meanwhile, for the teachers in the Class K, they preferred more freedom of choice on the content of what to teach. It could be related to the English educational traditions that cherished a more diverse and particularistic approach to education (Broadfoot, 1996). Their tradition was more open to experimentation and favour a child-centred method in teaching. The professional language of teachers in England in the 1960s, the 1970s and 1980s and late 1990s had made constant reference to ‘the whole child’ and ‘the whole curriculum’. The teacher’s claim to expertise rested less on a fixed curriculum and pedagogy than on ‘knowing the whole child’. For teachers from Class K, they preferred a looser control over the content of the curriculum so they could have more free rein to get to know more about the child. To them, the emphasis of schooling was on the breath, balance, wholeness and the rounded individual, and holism was a basic education principle that was deep in their cultural tradition. As a result, the need to follow a prescribed curriculum map was seen to be a new constraint to them and it imposed a lot of unnecessary control on what they perceived as important and suitable for their classes.

#### 4.4 (ii) Findings 2: Teachers' perception on Discipline

Another significant difference in perception between teachers from the two groups was their demand of discipline on their students. From the observer's point of view, students in both schools were very well-disciplined and co-operative. Students were respectful to their teachers and there were no cases of disruption of class activities in the classroom as a result of students' misconduct during the two weeks of observation. Yet, teachers from the two groups had different responses to the question: "What do you think of the discipline of students in your school? Do you think teachers need to tighten/relax measures in controlling the discipline of students in your school?"

One teacher Class P said:

(學生要守規則他們將來會成為社會的棟樑我們要他們學禮儀有紀律在堂上要聽老師說話用心學習現時有某班的紀律不是很好我們還要努力教他們)

"It is important to inculcate in students early in their formative years a respect for others, and an ability to treasure what they already have. Our school stresses good discipline and self-discipline in our students because we want to equip them with the life skills that would benefit them for the rest of their lives. They should learn to be considerate to each other and respect others. In class, they should listen to their teachers and concentrate on their studies. An orderly atmosphere would provide a good environment for them to learn. Our students will be the future pillars of our society and we want them to be all-rounded individuals who shine in both their academic study and conduct. We have high expectations of them. At the present moment, the discipline in some of the classes is not up to standard. Some students are spoilt... they somehow forget the importance of being courteous and industrious. We will be working on that."

On the other hand, a teacher from Class K responded like this:

"I think they students are very co-operative. They are lovely children and overall speaking, we can maintain a constructive working atmosphere in the classroom. Sometimes there may be some slips but it is ok...they are alright."

#### Interpretation and Analysis

From this, again we could see how teachers were influenced by their cultural background in making their decisions in how to structure the classroom. Although the responses quoted were from that of individual teachers who were interviewed by the researcher, it was observed that in general many of the teachers in the same schools shared very similar attitudes towards discipline. The overall effect or ethos could be felt as soon as one stepped into the schools. While teachers from Class P put high priority on order and discipline, teachers from Class K were more relaxed about it. Again, it could be seen as related to their cultural traditions. We could use Dimmocks's dimension on 'tight –loose' organization structure to account for this. As Dimmocks suggests, ties between people in group-oriented cultures are tight, and relationships are firmly structured. Relationship in traditional Chinese society put a lot of emphasis on the imposition of order, and a strict adherence to hierarchy. This was seen to be vital elements in running a harmonious society. Teachers' instinct to maintain strict order and discipline in and outside classroom might be rooted in this tradition.

Also, this point on teachers' expectation of students' discipline and behaviour, which was seen to be a self-imposed priority, or self-imposed constraint, could be discussed in another dimensions suggested by Dimmocks : formal – informal relationship. As discussed in the earlier section on “ A comparative framework on comparing cultural traditions”, Dimmocks suggests that a school's structure can be gauged in the continuum of *formal - informal* relationship. Put simply, this kind of self-imposed priority, or self-imposed constraint that teachers put on their role in terms of classroom discipline can serve as a yardstick to reflect how cultural traditions affect the ways in which teachers' organised their work. As discussed in the findings of Chapter 4, teachers from Class P believed that the teacher-student relationship should be a formal one and that it was important for teachers to command the respect of their students. In

their roles as knowledge-givers, teachers believed that they should be given their due respect. Conversely, in their roles as learners, students were expected to be polite, respectful, obedient, diligent and listen to their teachers. On the other hand, teachers from Class K were seen to be more willing to accept a less formal relationship with students. They were more likely to define their roles as facilitators in the classroom. Classroom was less-centralised and students were given more opportunities to work on their own. Although not treated as equals, students were given more autonomy in the classroom.

#### **4.3(iii) Findings 3: Teachers' perception on homework**

There was also sharp contrast between the two groups of teachers on the question "Do you think the amount of homework given to students is appropriate? Do you think you should add more/cut down on the amount of homework given?"

For teachers from Class P, who gave students homework everyday, they thought that the amount was almost right. (On average, students spent 40 minutes on homework everyday.) The nature of the homework was mostly on drills and practices. One teacher said:

(以前的學生要用較長的時間去做功課現在他們已很幸福做功課對他們來說是很重要的家長們在家長會也要求我們多給功課否則小朋友會花時間看電視玩遊戲機)

"In the past few years, students had much more homework to do. With the easing of pressure on examination, they don't need to work as hard as before. They are very lucky indeed ... Yet it is still important that they need to do homework after school to consolidate what they have learnt at school. At the last parent's meeting, some parents reflected that the school was not giving enough homework to students. We will take into account of what they said. Parents are in general very concerned about their children's progress and attainment. We share their same feelings... If we don't give them enough homework, they will just waste their time watching

T.V., playing video-games or talking on the phone. It is important that we upkeep a good routine for them...They should know the importance of maximising their learning time. If you push them a little, and stretch them out a bit further, they are able to do much better than expected...”

On the other hand, teachers from Class K, who gave homework once every week, also thought that the amount of homework given was acceptable. (On average, students spent 40 minutes on homework every week). One teacher said:

“ We believe the present level is about right. Homework is given because they need to revise what they do in school every week. On top of that, they are asked to read their readers every night, too. Parents are asked to collaborate with the school to make sure that their child has read their readers every evening. Students can choose their books according to their interest to read from the library. Apart from doing that, students should have time to take part in other activities after school. Their parents keep them busy by organising different activities for them like gymnastics, playing piano or violin. They should be given time to do that...”

### Interpretation and Analysis

From the above, we could see that teachers from Class P believed that homework was an important element in the students' school life. They believed in hard work. They believed that perseverance and continuous investment of hard effort were pre-conditions for success and this was deeply entrenched in the Chinese culture. There was a Chinese saying that summarised their values “If one tries hard and put in a lot of effort, one can succeed. There is no benefit in play.” (勤有功戲無益) As Watkins & Biggs (1996) points out, in Chinese culture, hard work with sweats and tears was often believed to be an unavoidable experience needed in the course of learning. Teachers and parents in general believe that children should be ‘pushed a little’ and ‘stretched out a bit more’ in their work so they can get better performance in their work. It is common to find Chinese parents spending their evenings toiling over endless homework with their children. They also believed that this was the way to get good results. One Chinese parent who had sent his child to study in Class K told the researcher that he



regarded the move as his last resort. He thought that by putting his son in the international school, he was choosing the “soft options for his lazy boy, who cannot catch up with the demands and rigour of the local school.” He did not appear to be too happy with the relaxed way his son was taking his studies in the international school.

On the other hand, the majority of teachers from Class K in general seemed to embrace the belief that there were different agents involved in the learning process. They would like to use a variety of experiences to open up the horizon of their children. They thought that students’ life should not be confined to homework alone but should be opened to other kinds of exposure. In general, teachers from the West were seen to cherish a democratic pedagogy. Democratic pedagogy rejected the traditional domination-subordination relationship between teacher and students, and the child was treated as an active agent in his or her learning. That children had their own ways of thinking, seeing and feeling made up the basis of teachers’ democratic pedagogy. The Piagetian idea that children went through the same development but at different rates, Froebel’s use of organic imagery and the metaphor of growth, and the presumed corollary of all these that children must not be ‘pushed’ and would learn when they were ‘ready’ resonated the same point. The notion of children’s ‘readiness’ for growth and development also played a major role in the cultural tradition of teachers from these countries. As Marsh (1973) says: “Teachers should concern themselves with the individual students’ sense of time, his rhythms and moods... the rhythm of work...the ebb and flow between the material and the processes...”. This suggestion that a democratic pedagogy had its grip on teachers from School K to a certain extent helped to explain for the differences in attitudes towards schooling from teachers of the two different classrooms/schools. This point could also be related to one of the dimensions that gauged cultural differences put forward by Dimmocks (2000). The dimension

which concerned the aspect of “*Tight – loose*” in terms of organization structures (Dimmocks, 2000 p.38) could be used here to reflect the cultural differences of teachers from the two schools. Teachers from Class P believed that by tightly controlling the spare time of students, they could help them make fast progress academically. Whereas teachers from Class K believed that students should be given some ‘space’ in their process of their development.

#### **4.4 (iv) Summary**

To summarise, teachers were to a certain extent seen to be influenced by their cultural values in structuring learning experiences for their students. The ideas of ‘what works’ in education was defined by hidden cultural codes. Firstly, results from the interviews revealed that teachers in the Class P preferred order, system and control in the areas of curriculum while teachers from Class K preferred a loosely-controlled curriculum. This had its basis in the different cultural traditions of countries of their origin. Secondly, it was revealed that teachers in Class P took up the role of knowledge-giver and favoured a formal, well-defined teacher-student relationship with quite a lot of control on students’ discipline. On the other hand, teachers from Class K were more inclined to take up the role of facilitators in the classroom and establish a less formal teacher-student relationship with students. More autonomy was given to students. The difference was partly the result of the different cultural values at work on defining ‘the teachers’ role’. Lastly, teachers from Class P believed that enabling students to make good progress and attainment in their academic subjects was the highest priority on the agenda. In order to achieve this, it was important for students to

contribute a regular investment of time and effort on homework in the form of drills and practices. They needed to be pushed 'a little'. Meanwhile, teachers from Class K were seen to embrace the views that students should be exposed to a variety of experiences to widen their horizon. They believed that students would learn when they were 'ready' and 'space' needed to be given to students. Again, this basic difference had its roots in the two cultures defining 'what is important in educating our young ones'. In a nutshell, hidden cultural codes were seen to be at work in defining teacher-student relationship, the amount of student autonomy in the classroom, classroom procedures and how teacher structured their classrooms.

#### **4.5 How do culturally-derived values influence students' responses to learning?**

After identifying that the link between cultural values and teachers' pedagogy and how this link was at work in the previous section, now I turn to find out whether hidden cultural codes also have their implication in students' interpretation of their classroom experience. It would be useful to see the part played by students in negotiating with the teacher what should be addressed in the classroom. Data was based on semi-structured interviews given to 20 students from each class. The targeted children all came from the same classes that the researcher observed and there was an equal spread of boys and girls in the sample.

The scope of the findings would include the following views from students:

- Views on student control
- Views on relationships with teacher
- Views on criteria of success
- Views on tasks orientation/structure

Again, their views on the above aspects could be analysed according to the framework for inter-cultural comparison by Dimmocks as discussed in the Literature Review(p.37-38).

Results indicated that students from the two schools shared different views on the areas of (1) Views on “Criteria of success” at school (2) Views on relationship with teachers (3) Views on tasks orientation/structure (4) Views of student control.

#### 4.5 (i) Perception on criteria for success

Students gave significantly different answers when asked the question “Is there a ‘best student’ in your class? What is he/she good at? Do you think you can be like her/him?”

##### Findings from Class P:

Answers from the students of Class P to the question were almost unanimous and they pointed to a particular person in their class as ‘the best’ student.

(他的成績表裏全都拿甲級爲人又謙虛課外活動又做得好)

“He was the best because he got straight ‘A’ in his report cards and could do well in extracurricular activities. More important, he was never boastful about his academic excellence.”

It was interesting to note that as some of the students talked about “the best student” they identified him as if he was a saint. When asked whether they could be like him, the majority would shake their heads and said:

(無可能...) “...it’s impossible” or

(無這樣的必要) “...it’s not necessary...I don’t want to...”

(...如果我用今天我所有的知識回到學期的開始就可以...)

“...if I use the knowledge that I have gained at this point and go back in time to the beginning of term, I think I can be like him...”

(如果我多用功...)

“I can if I try harder...”

### Interpretation and analysis

From the above excerpts, it was worth noting that some students thought that “the best student” was gifted and had higher ability. One student said: “...if I use the knowledge that I have gained at this point and go back in time to the beginning of term, I think I can be like him...” this reflected that the student who said this thought that compared with the ‘best student’ he had in mind, he could only be like him if he could make use of the kind of knowledge he possessed at the present moment to compare with that of the ‘best student’ when he was several months ago(i.e. at the beginning of the term). This reflected that the student giving the comments believed that by now, he was again in no way comparable to that of the ‘best student’ because he must have made a lot of progress already. This showed that the student believed that his friend was gifted or had higher ability than him. Another said: “...It is impossible...” It reflected that he did not believe he had the ability to do so.

Answers to the same question from another student reflected that the same ‘best student’ they referred to could excel because he put in much longer hours of work than they did. He said: “I can if I try harder...” Another one said; “It’s not necessary, I don’t want to...” When asked “ Why didn’t he want to?” He answered: “ I would have to sacrifice all my spare time...”. They imagined it would be too hard for them to do the same. From their answers, we could see that while some of them believed that success was tied to high ability and hard work, others believed that it was determined by continual effort and hard work. Although it was not possible to determine whether students believed success was tied in with ability or effort, there was one thing they agreed on. Success came with a lot of hard work and a strong will. Even though one

was gifted, one still had to work very hard in order to excel. In a way, students' perception on the importance of hard work could be related to the Chinese cultural traditions which placed effort or a work ethic as a priori of success. There were plenty of Chinese proverbs which illustrated this point, for example (愚公移山) was a popular one and it rang a bell in almost everyone in the society. The foolish man who tried to move a mountain by himself succeeded at long last as a result of his dedication and hard work. This belief of hard work and a strict work routine seemed to be deeply entrenched in students' perception of success. It reflected how cultural values impacted on the ways how students defined their learning.

#### Findings from Class K:

On the other hand, answers from students in Class K to the same question were much more varied. While just a small majority of them regarded someone with academic excellence as 'the best student', some of them described "the best student" as having other qualities. Here are some of their answers:

"I think M is the best student because she just came from Sweden and her English is not very good. She has been trying very hard to catch up and she has done very well."

"I think P is the best student because she helps me out in the class a lot. She is very kind to me and is helpful to others as well..."

"I think R is the best because he is my best friend..."

"I think P is the best because he never fights..."

The majority (12 out of 20) of the students interviewed gave answers like this:

"There is no such person because we are all different. Some of us may be good at Numeracy but others may be good at Literacy..."

"There is no one who is the best or can called himself/herself the best. Mr. M said that when you good at something, you step off the carpet. When you step off one carpet, you get onto the

next one and work on something new. When you have mastered it, you can step off that carpet and move on...”

“I don’t think our teacher has a favourite student in his mind...”

### Interpretation and analysis:

It is interesting to note that students from Class K were seen to use different criteria in choosing the ‘best student’. From the answers they gave above, it was obvious that they chose the ‘best student’ using different concepts. One of them said : “She’s been trying very hard to catch up with her English and she has done very well...” This student complemented the ‘best student’ as someone who was trying to adjust to a new environment and someone who was trying hard at something new. She praised the student for her effort, hard work and perseverance. On the other hand, another student said the ‘best student’ was someone who was “kind to me and is helpful...”. This reflected that his criteria were on another dimension: he is best because he is kind and helpful. Yet another student said : “...because he is my best friend...” reflecting that to him, friendship counted most when it came to choosing someone who was ‘the best’. One student said :” “...he is best because he never fights...”. This reflected that he cherished someone who had good manners and tempers as a basic criteria for entitling ‘the best’.

The wide criteria that student in Class K used to define who was ‘the best’ reflected the view, academic ability was not the only way to measure one’s ability. Other things like social acceptance, hard work and attitudes counted too. Although the element of ‘hard work’ was mentioned by a few students, its importance as a criterion of success was not given as much weight as their counterparts in Class P. Also, even for students who used academic ability to define who was ‘the best’, they seemed to accept



the fact that there was a natural spread of abilities among them and when one was good at something, he/she might not be good at other things. When those who chose to use the criterion of academic achievement to measure success, they gave varied answers to the following question: “Do you think you can be like him/her?”

“No, I can’t sit for too long...”

“No, I like drawing and that’s my favourite subject. I need to spend time on it...”

“No, I am an outdoor type. I like football and baseball. I spend quite a lot of time on them...”

From their answers, it was worth noting that these students cherished their own strengths and put their personal interests as the first priority. To them, it was important to respect their own strength and invest time and effort on things that appealed to their interests. Their perception reflected how a democratic pedagogy which was characteristics of their cultural values influence students’ goal orientation.

#### **4.5 (ii) Perception on Control in the classroom**

##### Findings from Class P and Class K:

Since students’ answers from both classes indicated that there were a lot in common for both groups of students on this issue, the results would be discussed together. Here were some responses from Class P to the question “Do you like it best when you choose what to do or when the teacher does?”

(我喜歡自己選擇因為我可以選擇自己有興趣的東西... )

“I like to choose because I get more interested in the things I want to do...”

(我可以選我做得好的去做...)

“ I like to choose so I can choose the things that I am good at to do...”

There were 17 of the 20 students from Class P who indicated a preference for more control over their study. Similarly, students from Class K voiced the same opinion :

“ I like to choose so I can choose things that I am interested in to do...”

“I like to choose so I can choose things that suit me...”

There were 15 of the 20 students from Class K who indicated a preference for more control over their study. Only a small minority of students from both groups preferred their teachers making choices for them.

For those who did not want more control, like some of the children in Class P, their responses were like this:

(我喜歡老師爲我選擇因爲她懂得甚是重要...)

“ I prefer the teacher choosing for me because she knows what is important and what is not...”

(她會爲我們打算...)

“I prefer the teacher making the choices because she knows how to structure the course for me...”

It was interesting to note that their responses were similar to students from Class K: One student from Class K said:

“ I like the teacher choosing for us so that we would not be doing the same thing over and over again...”

“I like the teacher’s choice because she always have got a few surprises for us...”

Here, we could see that the majority (35 out of 40) of students from both groups preferred more autonomy in the classroom, despite their different cultural backgrounds. Also, they were functioning in very different settings with very different classroom structures. From the classroom observations made in Chapter 4, it was noticed children from Class K were already enjoying much more autonomy in the classroom than children from Class P. The degree of teacher control in their classroom was not strong compared with that of Class P. As reported in the findings, they had more freedom to proceed at their own pace and were encouraged to co-operate and work with their classmates in the classrooms while on tasks. Also, since their lessons were less-structured, there were more opportunities for them to contribute ideas during lessons. Meanwhile, their responses to questions from the above questions revealed that they would still look forward to more independence and control over classroom activities. Similarly, their counterparts in Class P (who were seen to be functioning in a much more restricted environment, with more teacher control, highly structured lesson and the need to proceed at more or less the same pace as other students in the same class) also reported a strong desire to have more freedom in choosing what they want to do during lessons. Their voices seemed to echo the same request as their counterparts in Class K – more independence and control over classroom activities.

#### **4.5 (iii) Perception on task orientation and structure**

There were again different reaction from students of both groups to the question: “What kind of class activities do you like?” This question aimed at probing what activities students cherished most in the classroom.

### Responses from Class P:

12 of the 20 students from Class P preferred activities that were interactive in nature. One said:

(我喜歡小組討論和分組活動可以知道更多他人的想法.)

"I like group discussion and group work so I get to know what others are thinking..."

(我喜歡體育因為不需要書本...)

"I like Physical Education because we don't use books in the lesson and you get to play with others..."

From their answers, it was felt that a substantial number of students in Class P were longing for more chances of interacting with other classmates. They would like to know more about what other classmates were thinking by playing/working with them. From the classroom observation done, it was noticed that students in Class P were not given a lot of opportunities to interact with each other because the lessons were usually highly-structured and teacher-led. Although it was not in their teachers' priority to devote class time for peer interaction, the students said that they would enjoy more time to talk to their classmates. The students' reaction might be a washback effect of their present classroom structures: they were asking for more chances of interaction because they had not had enough during their usual school days to do so. In other words, students were making a point that they liked and enjoyed interaction and they were longing to have more chances to interact with each other.

### Responses from Class K:

Meanwhile, 11 students in Class K answered the question “What kind of class activities do you like?” as follows:

“ I like Literacy because the activities get me to think hard on what I should do...”

“ I like History because I can find things out...”

From their answers, it was revealed that the main concern of some students from Class K was to have activities that involved challenge. They liked to have opportunities ‘to think hard’ and ‘to find things out’. From lesson observations, it was noticed that students in the class were always given opportunities to ‘find things out’ or ‘to think hard’. It seemed that students enjoyed the activities a lot and that was why they pointed out that they like those activities most.

#### **4.5 (iv) Perception on their relationship with teachers**

Answers from students of both groups to the question “ What do you like best about your teachers?” looked similar, apart from some subtle differences. Below were some of the responses from students of Class P.

(因她很和藹可親...)

“... I like her because she is kind and caring...”

(他很風趣友善...)

“...I like him because he is humorous, and friendly...”

(她教學很生動又不是太嚴...)

“...I like her because she uses a variety of activities in her lessons. And she is not so strict to us...”

Similarly, some students from Class K thought that their best teachers should have the same qualities, too. Their responses were

“ Mrs. M is always there when you need her...”

“...she is nice and warm to us...”

“...she helps us with our work...”

“... she gives us interesting work to do so we can find things out...”

It was interesting to note that from students' answers, we could see both groups of students preferred teachers who were someone kind, caring, humorous, friendly, flexible in her approach in teaching. However, there were some subtle differences in their answers. According to a student in Class P, the criterion of a good teacher was someone who was 'not so strict'. This reflected that although students in Class P were used to the idea of having a strict teacher, still they cherished someone who was 'not so strict'. On the other hand, a student in Class K mentioned that he liked his teacher because 'she was there when he needed her'. His criterion of a good teacher was someone whom he could rely on whenever he needed to. In a way, it reflected that the student was taking his teacher as someone who was close to him and could offer help. When we compared his answer with the student from Class P, we could see that the two students had different degree of expectations from their teachers. This might be a reflection of the teacher-student relationship operating within the classrooms. What the students expected from their teachers was quite different because teacher-student relationship was defined quite differently in the two classrooms. The expectation of students from their teachers in Class P was very humble compared with that of the student from Class K. While operating under a norm where teacher-student relationship was clearly defined, the student in Class P was pleased when he met a teacher who was 'not so strict'. On the other hand, the student in Class P who was used to operating in a norm where he took his teacher as someone 'close to him' was seen to be asking for more: he liked his teacher because he was always there when he 'needed him'. These

two cases could perhaps illustrate how children were conditioned into having different expectations and see how culturally embedded values might be at work in influencing students' viewpoints and expectations.

#### **4.5 (v) Summary**

Results from students' interviews revealed that students from both groups shared different perception on the four aspects discussed, namely criteria of success, control in the classroom, task orientation/structure and relationship with teacher. They had different criteria for defining success in the classroom and the criteria revealed that they shared different views on what was meant by learning and what was important in the learning process. For students in Class P, the major determinants of success was hard work and a regular investment of effort, while their counterparts in Class K tended to think that they would do best on whatever that interested them the most. Their perception reflected how cultural values might influence their definition of learning and what counted as important in the learning process. Consistent with what some researchers said, for example Planel (1997), cultural values of the society or ethos of individual schools might be at work in predisposing students to certain learning modes that were favoured by their teachers. Indeed, one had to bear in mind the complexity involved in a study like this: one which involved students from different national backgrounds. While the students from Class P might well belong to a homogeneous group in that most students came from the same national background (local Chinese), students from Class K were from different nationalities and different cultures. Therefore, instead of arriving at a definite conclusion on how students' different cultures could affect their preference for a particular kind of classroom instructions or

practices, it was of much more value to explore their values as best through interviews and see how and whether practices from one situation could be transferred to another.

Despite the differences identified between the two groups, there were some similar views that they shared. Although they differed in their views on the criteria of success, it did not seem to affect students' preference for a particular style of teaching that made their experience of school meaningful. They seemed to prefer to have more autonomy in the classroom and more choice over class activities. They would enjoy more freedom in the classroom and welcome more opportunities for taking part in the decision making process of their learning. They liked activities that were interactive in nature, activities that allowed them to interact with their peers. It seemed that they were all aware of the importance of learning to interact, work and live with other people while they were at school. The majority of students from both schools preferred teachers who were kind, caring, helpful and used a lively approach to teach.



**Chapter 5: Conclusion**

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| 5.1 Conclusion and implications |
| 5.2 Reflections                 |

**5.1 Conclusion and implications:**

The general purpose of this study was to examine the subtle interplay of factors (e.g. classroom structures, culturally-derived values, teachers’ perceptions of ‘what counts’ in education, students’ perceptions of their learning etc) that contributed to students’ goal orientations and outcomes. One specific objective of this investigation was to examine whether there were any significant differences in students’ motivational orientations in the two classes of students (who came from two types of schools) studied. A second specific focus was to examine whether there were any differences in the classroom structures and practices between the two classes of students and, if so, to find out to what extent did they account for the differences in students’ motivation orientation. The third specific focus was to examine the extent to which culturally derived values served to affect teachers’ interpretation of their professional values and definitions of good educational practices, which in turn defined how they structured their classroom. The last focus was to examine the extent to which culturally derived

values served to affect students' perceptions of the classroom instruction, and their definition of 'how learning should happen' in the classroom.

In this research, two primary classrooms, one from each education system (a local school and an international school in Hong Kong), were analysed. Subjects for this study were 80 students who completed a questionnaire. Out of the 80 students, 20 of them and 5 teachers (from each class) were interviewed individually by the researcher. They were chosen from two Key stage 2 classes in each of the two targeted schools. Firstly, qualitative data on getting a comprehensive view of the classroom processes of the two groups of students, with focus on the characteristics of classroom instruction and structures/dimensions of classroom learning. Data was obtained through the adapted version of SCOTS Schedule, supplemented with detailed field notes and teachers' interviews after the observations. The two types of classrooms were compared and the aim was to find out whether there were any significant differences between them in the above-mentioned areas. Secondly, quantitative data gauging students' motivation orientations was collected through the use of the Students' Multi-dimensional Motivation Measure. The questionnaire aimed at finding out whether or not there were significant differences between students from the two classes in terms of their motivation orientation. Thirdly, qualitative data gauging teachers' professional perspectives on the teaching and learning process was collected through semi-structured interviews. Fourthly, qualitative data gauging students' perception of the classroom perspectives was obtained through semi-structured interviews. The aims were to find out the extent to which culturally-derived values affect classroom structures and hence students' motivational orientation.

The findings from the questionnaire suggested that the two groups of students differed significantly on two aspects: Performance orientation and Academic self-concept. The results revealed that students from Class K reported significantly higher academic self-concept (the general feeling of doing well or poorly in school) than students in Class P. Also, students in Class P reported a much stronger tendency towards a performance orientation in learning than students in Class K. It was also found that students from Class K were more intrinsically motivated to learn than students from Class P. They reported more positive attitudes and inclinations to self-regulated learning. To sum up, students from Class K were found to have more positive motivational beliefs in learning. These positive motivation beliefs, as suggested by researchers, can translate into favorable factors that ensure successful learning. In other words, students who have positive motivational beliefs, that is, those who believe they can accomplish certain tasks, believe that learning is under their control, would approach tasks with an orientation to learning and mastery, and are more likely to be interested in and value the task content, will be more likely to become engaged in learning in a deeper, more self-regulating fashion than those students who do not have these beliefs. Although these positive motivational beliefs may not lead to improved academic performance, these beliefs can lead to increased cognitive engagement in the task which does have a direct influence on academic performance in the long run.

Consistent with the findings of western researches, findings from this study suggested that there was a strong linkage between students' motivational beliefs and classroom processes. The significant differences between the two groups of students could to a certain extent be explained by the differences in classroom structures in the two classrooms. A number of factors which research suggested to be positive features in the classroom, such as teacher warmth, sensitivity to students, an emphasis on students'

mastery and progress in learning, working towards students' self-control and autonomy, were all more often observed in Class K than in Class P. There were also a greater variety of activities going on in the Class K, more variation in treatment according to students' needs, more emphasis on teaching for understanding and developing the learner's study and referencing skills. These difference in classroom structures bear strong linkages to the differences identified in motivation orientation in students. Students from Class P had a much stronger inclination to adopt a performance goal orientation in learning as a result of the characteristics of their classroom processes, which displayed features conducive to the set-up of a performance-oriented classroom.

However, it would be easy to jump to the conclusions that School P needs sweeping reforms to close the gaps. It must be noted that the set-up of the two schools (where the two classes were based) observed varied a lot in terms of resources provisions and staff support. Class K enjoys a more favourable environment with spacious playground, well-equipped rooms and a favourable teacher-student ratio. It would be unwise to ignore the physical constraints of the schools as a contributing factor to the differences. On top of this, there is the larger structure of schooling like the examination and school allocation system that exerts a controlling effect on what teachers do in the classroom. Moreover, a further look at how culturally derived values affect teachers' pedagogy revealed that teachers were influenced to a great extent by hidden cultural codes that defined teacher-student relationship, students' autonomy in the classroom and their professional values. Similarly, results from the findings revealed that students were also seen to be influenced by their cultural values in interpreting their classroom experiences. In view of this, it is paramount that policy makers be aware of the multiple factors at work in causing a significant differences in students' motivation orientation.

As policy-makers in Hong Kong are imposing reforms from the top, it is paramount that they be alerted to the possible difficulties and problems that will be encountered in the process of change. In the latest Education Consultation paper “Learning to learn”, it was proposed that schools in Hong Kong should set up a new learning culture: one that fosters a positive environment for bringing up a next generation of young people who will be able to meet the demands of “a knowledge based economy” (CDC, 2000). Yet, we should be aware of the fact that what works in one country or setting may not be applicable to another. Curriculum innovations which require the implementation of alternative, more desirable classroom processes might not be consistent with the pedagogic model that prevails in local schools. The potential problems of policy borrowing and transfer when trying to push for reforms must be noted. As early as 1975, The Curriculum Committee had come up with proposals that endorsed the implementation of ‘new methods in which students are more involved in their own acquisition of knowledge’(CDC, 1975) and “teaching techniques that will promote the spirit of enquiry and research, using small group techniques, panel discussions and by promoting interaction between pupils themselves as well as the teacher’ (CDC, 1976). In the 1990’s, the Target Oriented Curriculum was launched in primary schools. All these curriculum changes ended in silence without any concrete results. The main reason was because teachers were in general wary of the changes. The failures of past reforms were a result of the inadequacies on the part of policy-makers to foresee problems and difficulties involved in the implementation process. As Morris(1998) points out, curriculum innovations require the co-operation of its participants, for example, teachers and students. Without the co-operation of any one party, there was no chance that reforms could be implemented successfully. In fact, as Klein and Eshel (1980) say, any innovations which require participants to change their

behavioural role perceptions substantially risk the danger of failures as reforms could be ‘mutated’ during implementation. In other words, teachers’ readiness for reforms and sense of ownership of new teaching methods are one of the keys to success in school reforms. New teaching methods must be accompanied by a change in teachers’ role perception as well.

In order to change teachers’ perception, support from different levels is needed. It involves changes that touch on the larger structure of schooling (like the assessment and examination system) to bring about the success of the new reforms. As President of the 75000-strong Professional Teachers’ Union, Cheung Man-kwong said: “...schools and teachers would be reluctant to give up drilling students with heavy subject content if universities did not take the first step by revising their admissions criteria...”(SCMP, 2000) Also, front-line educators gave warning that the planned curriculum reforms might lead to teacher burn-out because policy-makers were turning a deaf ear to problems of meagre manpower and resources.(SCMP, 2000). They pointed out that teachers would feel lost if textbooks were dropped, and they would have difficulties filling up the ‘flexible time’ given in the new reforms. Nelson Lau Ming-ki, a member of the Union of the Heads of Aided Primary Schools, said: “All these so-called good practices are innovative but definitely not relieving teachers’ hectic schedule, as claimed by the officials. In the long run, these new projects are only good for impromptu exercises, but are not sustainable with existing manpower and resources.” In a nutshell, it is high time that policy-makers realise the complexity involved in implementing changes that necessitates a change in the school’s culture and a change in teachers’ perception of ‘what is learning’. They should come up with a set of comprehensive and concrete proposals in preparing teachers and students to meet up with the challenges that will be brought about by the new education reforms.

## 5.2 Reflections

In doing this research, I have learned a lot of things, particularly on the problems associated with doing a comparative research with subjects coming from different cultural backgrounds. One of the major difficulties concerns linguistic problems arising from translation. Two of the instruments used in this study for students, the Students' Multi-dimensional Motivation Measure and questions used in the semi-structured interviews with students had to be translated into Chinese versions. In order to ensure that the words and expressions used in the two languages covered identical concepts, great care had to be given in the translation process. By enlisting the support of a professional translator and piloting the prepared questionnaire, some of the problems associated with conceptual and linguistic equivalence were addressed. The biggest hurdle in doing a cross-cultural research like this was to look for concepts from one culture that had any equivalence in another. Some major points in the Students' Multi-dimensional Motivation Measure that needed adaptation from the original questionnaires were centred around cultural interpretation of some wordings. As discussed in section 3.3, since students in this study came from different cultural background, they might interpret the questionnaire in a different manner. There were certain concepts that could pose as a problem for Chinese students and could affect their ratings on their scores on their self-competence. Cultural attitudes might lead the students to give themselves a rating on certain items. This problem was accentuated when the two schools operated in very different modes, with one of them operating in a competitive education system while the other one operated outside the system. Students in the international school might not be able to register certain statements that involved

comparison and competition because the competition element was absent in their school system. Although it was not always possible to solve these translation problems satisfactorily, it was paramount that the researcher was aware of it when doing a research like this. Future cross-cultural research in Hong Kong should take this problem into consideration to eliminate potential mis-interpretations of information by subjects who come from very different backgrounds.

The findings of this study has linked a positive motivational orientation to higher academic self-concept, more self-regulated learning, deeper learning strategies, increased cognitive engagement and improved academic performance by students. Yet, there were other factors apart from the ones studied in this research that may contribute to student's motivation orientation. Among them are the influence of home, mass media and out-of academic learning environment. They also make up an important source that may contribute to shaping student's motivation. Future researches on these areas would be beneficial in getting information to complete the whole picture.



## Bibliography:

- Acker, S. (1987). Primary school teaching as an occupation. In S. Delamont (Ed.) *The Primary School Teacher*. Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Alexander, R. J. (2000). *Culture and Pedagogy: International Comparisons in Primary Education*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd. UK.
- Amabile, T. (1983). *The Social psychology of Creativity*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Ames & Savell, K. (1986). Parent beliefs about the role of ability and effort in school learning. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- Ames, C. & Archer, J. (1988). Achievement goals in the classroom : Student learning strategies and motivation processes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 80, pp.260-267.
- Ames, C. (1984a). Competitive, cooperative, and individualistic goal structures: a cognitive motivational analysis. In R. Ames & C. Ames (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education: Student Motivation* (Vol.1, pp. 177-208). New York: Academic Press.
- Ames, C. (1984b). Achievement attributions and self-instructions in competitive and individualistic goal structures. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 76, pp.478-487.
- Ames, C. (1990). *Achievement goals and classroom structure: Developing a Learning Orientation*. Paper presented at the annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, MA.
- Ames, R. and Ames, C. (1984). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.1 Student Motivation*. New York: Academic Press.
- Ames, R. and Ames, C. (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol. 2. The classroom Milieu*. New York: Academic Press.
- Ames, R. and Ames, C. (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.2. Goals and Cognition*. New York : Academic Press.
- Anderman, E. M. and Maehr, M. L. (1993). Motivation an Schooling in the Middle Grades. *Review of Educational Research*. 64, pp.287-309.
- Anderman, E. M. and Maehr, M. L. (1994). Motivation and Schooling in the Middle Grades. *Review of Educational Research*. 64, pp.287-309.
- Ball, S. and Goodson, I. (Eds.) (1985). *Teacher's Lives and Careers*. Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Bandura, A. & Schunk, D. (1981). Cultivating competence, self-efficacy, and intrinsic interest through proximal self-motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 41, pp.586-598.
- Bandura, A. & Schunk, D. H. (1981). Cultivating competence, self-efficacy, and intrinsic interest through proximal self-motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 41, pp.586-598.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist*. 37, pp.122-147.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social Foundations of Thoughts and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

- Bandura, A., Jeffery, R. & Gajdos, E. (1975). Generalizing Change through Participant Modelling with Self-directed mastery. *Behavior Research and Therapy*. 13, pp.141-152.
- Bandura, M. & Dweck, C S. (1981). Children's theories of Intelligence as predictors of achievement goals. Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University.
- Benware, C. and Deci, E. (1984). Quality of learning with an active versus passive motivational set. *American Educational research Journal*. 21, pp.755-765.
- Bernstein, B. (1971). On the classification and framing of educational knowledge. In Hopper, Earl (Ed.) *Readings in the Theory of Educational Systems*. London: Hutchinson, pp184-211.
- Bernstein, B. (1990). *The Structure of Pedagogic Discourse*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Biggs, J. B. & Watkins, D. A., (Eds). (1996). *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological, and Contextual Influences*. Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne; Hong Kong University.
- Biggs, J. B. & Moore, P. J. (1993). *The process of learning*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Biggs, J. B. (1987). *Student Approaches to Learning and Studying*. Research Monograph. Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn.
- Biggs, J. B. (1992). *Why and how do Hong Kong Students Learn?* Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.
- Blumenfeld, P., Pintrich, P., Meece, J. & Wessel, K. (1982). The role and formation of self-perceptions of ability in elementary school classrooms. *Elementary School Journal*. 82, pp.401-420.
- Bond, M. H. (1986). *The Psychology of the Chinese People*. New York: OUP.
- Bond, M. H. (Ed.). (1988). *The Cross-cultural Challenge to Social Psychology*. Beverly Hill, CA: Sage.
- Broadfoot P. & Pollard A. (1994). *Changing English primary schools? The Impact of the Educational Reforms Act at Key Stage One*. Cassell. Education.
- Broadfoot, P & Osborn, M, with Gilly, M. and Brucher, A. (1993). *Perceptions of Teaching: Primary School Teachers in England and France*. London: Cassell.
- Brophy & Good, T. (1970). Teachers' communication of differential expectations for children's classroom performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 61, 365-374.
- Brophy, J. (1981). Teacher praise : A functional analysis. *Review of Educational Research*. 51, pp.5-32.
- Brophy, J. (1983). Conceptualising student motivation. *Educational Psychologist*. 18, pp.200-215.
- Brophy, J. (1986). *On motivating students*. (Occasional paper No. 101). East Lansing, MI : Institute for Research on Teaching.
- Brophy, J., & Merrick, M. (1987). *Motivating Students to Learn : An Experiment in Junior High Social Studies Classes*. East Lansing, MI : Institute for Research on Teaching.
- Burden, R. L. & Fraser, B. J. (1993). Use of classroom environment assessments in school psychology : A British perspective. *Psychology in the School*. 30, pp.232-240.
- Butler, R. (1986). Task-involving and ego-involving properties of evaluation: Effects of different feedback conditions on motivational perceptions, interest, and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 58, pp.1-14.

- Butler, R. (1987). Task-involving and ego-involving properties of evaluation: Effects of different feedback conditions on motivational perceptions interest and performance, *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 79. pp. 472-482.
- Corno, L. & Mandinach, E. B. (1983). The role of cognitive enjoyment in classroom learning and motivation. *Educational Psychology*. 78. pp. 210-216.
- Corno, L. & Rohrkemper, M. (1985). The intrinsic motivation to learn in classrooms. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.2: the Classroom Milieu*. London : Academic Press.
- Corno, L. & Rohrkemper, M. M. (1985). The intrinsic motivation to learn in the classroom. In Ames, R and Ames, C (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol. 2. The Classroom Milieu* (pp.53-90). New York: Academic Press.
- Covington, M. V. & Beery, R. G. (1976). *Self-worth and School Learning*. New York : Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Covington, M. V. & Omelich, C. (1979). Effort: The double-edged sword in school achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 71, 169-182.
- Covington, M. V. & Omelich, C. (1984). Task-oriented versus competitive learning structures : Motivation and performance consequences. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 1050-1098.
- Covington, M. V. & Omelich, C. L. (1981). As failure amount: affective and cognitive consequences of ability demotion in the classroom. *Journal of Education Psychology*. 73, pp.798-808.
- Covington, M. V. (1984). The motive for self-worth. In Ames, R and Ames, C (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol. 1. Student Motivation* (pp.53-90). New York: Academic Press.
- Covington, M. V. (1984). The motive for self-worth. Ames, R and Ames, C. (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.1. Student Motivation*. London : Academic Press.
- Covington, M. V. (1992). The role of cooperative reward interdependency in success and failure. *Journal of Experimental Education*. v61 n2, pp151-68.
- Crossley, M. & Vulliamy, G. (1984). Case-study research methods and comparative education, *Comparative Education*. 20, pp.193-209.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Nakamura, J. (1989). The dynamics of intrinsic motivation: A study of adolescents. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.) *Research on motivation in education*, vol3, pp.44-71. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Curriculum Development Committee (1975). *Syllabus for Economic*. Hong Kong: Government Printer.
- Curriculum Development Committee (1976). *Provisional Syllabus for Social Studies*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong: Government Printer.
- Dalin, P. (1993). *Changing the school culture*. New York: Cassell.
- De Charms, R. (1976). *Enhancing Motivation: Change in the Classroom*. New York: Irvington.
- Deal, T. E. (1982). *Corporate cultures: the rites and rituals of corporate life*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- Deci, E. & Ryan, R. (1985). *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in Human Behaviour*. New York: Plenum Press.

- Deci, E. (1971). The effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 18, pp.105-115.
- Deci, E. (1975). *Intrinsic Motivation*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Deci, E. (1980). *The Psychology of Self-determination*. Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath.
- Deci, E., Schwartz, A., Sheinman, L., Ryan, R. (1981). An instrument to assess adults' orientation toward control versus autonomy with children: Reflections on intrinsic motivation and perceived competence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 73, 642-650.
- DiClemente, C. (1981). Self-efficacy and smoking cessation maintenance: a preliminary report. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*. 5, 175-187.
- Dimmock, C. (2000). *Designing the Learning Centered School: A cross-cultural perspective*. London and New York: Falmer Press.
- Doyle, W. (1977). Paradigms for research on teacher effectiveness. In L. Shulman (Ed.) *Review of Research in Education* (Vol. 5, pp. 163-195). Itasca, IL: Peacock.
- Doyle, W. (1986). Classroom Organization and Management. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). New York: Macmillan.
- Drever, E. (1995). *Using Semi-Structured Interviews in Small-Scale Research: A Teacher's Guide*. SCRE.
- Duda, J. L. & Allison, M. T. (1989). The attributional theory of achievement motivation: Cross-cultural considerations. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 13, pp. 37-55.
- Dweck, C. S. & Elliott, E.S. (1983). Achievement motivation. In P. Mussen & E. M. Hetherington (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology*. New York: Wiley.
- Dweck, C. S. & Leggett, E. L. (1988). A social cognitive approach to motivation and personality. *Psychological Review*. 95, pp. 256-273.
- Dweck, C. S. (1975). The role of expectations and attributions in the alleviation of learned helplessness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 31, 674-685.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). Motivational Processes Affecting Learning. *American Psychologist*. 41, pp. 1040-1048.
- Dweck, C. S. and Bempechat, J. (1983). Children's Theories of Intelligence: Consequences for Learning. In S. G. Paris, G. Olsen and H. Stevenson (Eds.), *Learning and Motivation in the Classroom*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Education Commission (2000). *Learning for Life, Learning through Life: Reform Proposals for the Education System in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Government Printer.
- Elliott, E. S. & Dweck, C. (1988). Goals: an approach to motivation and achievement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 54, pp. 5-12.
- Epstein, J. L. (1988). Effective schools or effective students: Dealing with diversity. In R. Haskins & D. MacRae (Eds.) *Policies for America's Public Schools: Teacher Equity Indicators*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Epstein, J. L. (1989). Family structures and student motivation: A developmental perspective. In Ames, R. and Ames, C. (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education*. Vol. 3, pp.259-295. New York: Academic Press.
- Finn, J. (1972). Expectations and the educational environment. *Review of Educational Research*. 42, 387-410.
- Floden, R. E. (1990). Two views of the role of research on teacher thinking. Issue paper (National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (U.S.); pp.90-94.

- Fraser, B. J., Herbert J. & Walberg H. J. (1991). *Educational Environments: Evaluation, Antecedents and Consequences*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Fraser, B. J. (1986). *Classroom Environment*. London: Croom Helm.
- Fraser, B. J. Malone, J. A. & Neale, J. M. (1989). Assessing and improving the psychosocial environment of mathematics classrooms. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 20, pp. 191-201.
- Fraser, B. J., Walberg, H. J., Welch, W. W. & Hattie, J. A. (1987). Syntheses of educational productivity research. *International Journal of Educational Research*. 11, pp.145-252.
- Galloway, D., Rogers, C., Armstrong, D., and Leo, E. (1998). *Motivating the Difficult to Teach*. London: Longman.
- General Introduction to TOC* (1982). Hong Kong Government: Government Printer.
- Good, T. & Brophy, J. (1987). *Looking into Classrooms*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Good, T. (1983). *Classroom research: A decade of progress*. Educational Psychologist. 18, pp.127-144.
- Goodlad, J. (1984). *A Place Called School*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gottfried, A. (1986). *Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Graham, S. & Golan, S. (1991). Motivational influences on cognitive: task involvement, ego involvement, and depth of information processing. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83, pp. 187-196.
- Grolnick, W. S. & Ryan, R. M. (1987a). Autonomy in children's learning. An experimental and individual difference investigation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 52, pp. 890-898.
- Grolnick, W. S. & Ryan, R. M. (1987b). Autonomy support in education: Creating the facilitating environment. In N. Hastings & J. Schwieso (Eds.) *New directions in educational psychology: Behaviour and motivation*. (pp. 213-232). London: Falmer Press.
- Haertel, G. D., Walberg, H. J. & Haertel, E. H. (1981). Socio-psychological environments and learning: A quantitative synthesis: *British Educational Research Journal*. 7, pp.27-36.
- Harter, S. & Connell, R. (1984). A model of children's achievement and related self-perceptions of competence, control, and motivational orientation. In J. Nicholls (Ed.) *Advances in Motivation and Achievement*. Vol. 3, pp. 219-250. New York: JAI Press.
- Harter, S. (1981). A new self-report scale of intrinsic versus extrinsic orientation in the classroom. Motivation and informational components. *Developmental Psychology*. 17, pp.300-312.
- Harter, S. (1982). The Perceived Competence Scale for children. *Child Development*. 53, pp. 87-97.
- Hau, K.T. & Salili, F. (1991). Structure and semantic differential placement of specific causes: Academic causal attributions by Chinese students in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Psychology*. 26, pp.175-193.
- Hazel, R. et.al. (1994). *Emotion and culture: empirical studies of mutual influence*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Hazel, Rose Markus and Shinobu Kitayama (1991). Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion and motivation, *Psychological Review*. vol.98, No.2, pp224-253.

- Jagacinski, C. M. & Nicholls, J. G. (1984). Conceptions of ability and related effects in task involvement and ego involvement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 76, pp. 909-919.
- Jagacinski, C. M. & Nicholls, J. G. (1987). Competence and affect in task involvement and ego involvement : The impact of social comparison information. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 79, pp.107-114.
- Jiang, B. (1998). *Learner Motivation and Preference: Effects of Culture, Gender and Age*. Thesis(Ph.D.), Arizona State University.
- Johnson, D. W. & Johnson, R. T. (1985). Motivational processes in co-operative, competitive, and individualistic learning situations. In Ames, R. and Ames, C. (Eds.) (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education*. Vol. 2. *The classroom milieu* (pp.249-286). New York: Academic Press.
- Klein, Zev, and Eshel, Yohanan (1980). The open classroom in cross cultural perspective: a research note. In *Sociology of Education*. 53, pp.114-21.
- Knight, S. L. & Waxman, H. C. (1991). Students' cognition and classroom instruction. In H. C. Waxman & H. J. Walberg (Eds.) *Effective Teaching: Current Research*. (pp. 239-255). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.
- Komin, S. (1990). Culture and work-related values in Thai organizations. *International Journal of Psychology*. 25, pp. 681-704.
- Lee, Bryk, and Smith (1993). School culture and organization. In Stipek, D. (1988). *Motivation to Learn. From Theory to Practice*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Lepper & Greene, D. (1975). Turning play into work. Effects of adult surveillance and extrinsic rewards on children's extrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 31, pp. 79-486.
- Lepper & Hoddell, M. (1989). Intrinsic motivation in the classroom. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education*. Vol. 3: *Goals and Cognition*. London: Academic Press.
- Lepper, M. (1983). Social-control processes and the internalisation of social values: An attributional perspective. In E. Higgins, D. Ruble, & W. Hartup (Eds.) *Social Cognition and Social Development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lepper, M. R., & Hodell, M. (1989). Intrinsic motivation in the classroom. In Ames, R and Ames, C (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education*. Vol. 3 (pp.73-105). New York: Academic Press.
- Levin, H. (1990). Presentation at the Illinois site-based management: Accelerated schools project, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL.
- Maehr, M. (1983). On doing well in Science: Why Johnny no longer excels; Why Sarah never did. In S. Paris, G. Olsen, and H. Stevenson (Eds.) *Learning and Motivation in the Classroom*. Hillsdale, N.J. :Erlbaum.
- Maehr, M. L. & Nicholls, J. G. (1980). Culture and achievement motivation: A second look. In N. Warren (Ed.), *Studies in Cross Cultural Psychology* (Vol.3, pp.221-267). New York: Academic Press.
- Maehr, M. L. & Nicholls, J.G. (1980). Culture and achievement motivation: A second look. In N. Warren (Ed.), *Studies in Cross Cultural Psychology* (Vol. 3,pp.221-267). New York: Academic Press.
- Maehr, M. L. & Pintrich, P. R. (Eds.) (1993). *Motivation and adolescent*. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.

- Malone, T. & Lepper, M. (1987). Making learning fun: a taxonomy of intrinsic motivation for learning. In R. E. Snow & M. J. Farr (Eds.) *Aptitude, Learning & Instruction. Vol. 3: Cognitive and Affective Process Analysis*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Marshall, H. H. & Weinstein, R. S. (1984). Classroom factors affecting students' self-evaluations: An interactional model. *Review of Educational Research*. 54, pp. 301-325.
- Marshall, H. H. & Weinstein, R. S. (1986). Classroom context of student perceived differential teacher treatment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 78, pp. 441-453.
- Marshall, H. H., Weinstein, R. S., Middlestadt, S. & Brattesani, K. A. (1980). Everyone is smart in our class. Relationship classroom characteristics and perceived differential teacher treatment. Paper presented at the American Educational Research association, Boston, April 1980.
- McGraw, K. and McCullers, J. (1979). Evidence of a detrimental effect of extrinsic incentives on breaking a mental set. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 15, pp.285-294.
- Mcpake, J. & Powney, J. (1995). A mirror to ourselves? The educational experience of Japanese children in the U.K. *Times Educational Supplement*, 6 October 1995, p.6.
- Meece, J. & Holt, K. (1993). Variations in students' goal patterns. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 85, pp. 582-590.
- Meece, J. L. & Holt, K. (1990). Classification and validation of task-related goal patterns in elementary school children. Unpublished manuscript, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Meece, J. L. (1991). The classroom context and students' motivational goals. In M. Maher, & P. Pintrich (Eds.), *Advances in Motivation and Achievement* (vol. 7, pp.261-286). Greenwich, CT: JAL Press.
- Meece, J., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Hoyle, R. (1988). Students' goal orientations and cognitive engagement in classroom activities. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 80, pp. 514-523.
- Meece, J., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Puro, P. (1989). A motivational analysis of elementary science learning environments. In M. Matyas, K. Tobin, & B. Fraser (Eds.), *Looking into Windows: Qualitative Research in Science Education* (pp.13-23). Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science.
- Mercer, N. (1991). Accounting for what goes on in the classroom: what have neo-Vygotskians got to do? *Journal of the British Psychological Society*. 15(1), pp. 61-67.
- Midgley, C. et al. (1992). Classroom environment and the transition to junior high school. In B. J. Fraser, & H. J. Walberg (Eds.) *Educational Environments: Evaluation, Antecedents & Consequences*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Miller, D. T. (1976). Ego involvement and attribution for success and failure. *Journal of Personality and social Psychology*. 34, pp. Pp. 901-906.
- Morris, P. (1996). *The Hong Kong school curriculum : development, issues and policies*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Morris, P. et al. (1996). *Target Oriented curriculum Evaluation Project: Interim Report*, In-service Teacher Education Program, Faculty of Education. The University of Hong Kong.

- Nicholls, J. (1984). *Conceptions of ability and motivation. Vol. 1: Student motivation.* San Diego, Calif: Academic Press.
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984a). Achievement Motivation. In Ames, R. and Ames, C. (1989). *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.1.* New York: Academic Press.
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984b). Achievement Motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice, and performance. *Psychological Review*. 91, pp. 328-346.
- Nicholls, J. G., Patashnick, M. & Nolen, S. B. (1985). Adolescents' theories of education. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 77, pp. 683-692.
- Pintrich P. & Schrauben B. (1992). Students' motivational beliefs and their cognitive engagement in classroom academic tasks. In Schunk D., & Meece J. (Eds.), *Student Perceptions in the classroom.* Hillsdale.
- Pintrich, P. R. & Schunk, D. H. (1996). *Motivation in education: theory, research, and applications.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Merrill.
- Planel C. (1997). National cultural values and their role in learning: a comparative ethnographic study of state primary schooling in England and France. *Comparative Education*. Vol.33 no.3 pp.349-373.
- Powell J. (1985). *The Teacher's Craft.* SCORE
- Richards, J. C., Tung, P. & Ng, P. (1991). *The Culture of the English Language Teacher: a Hong Kong example.* Department of English, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.
- Richards, M. & Light, P. (1986). *Children of Social Worlds.* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Rosenholtz, S. J. & Simpson, C. (1984a). Classroom organization and student stratification. *The Elementary School Journal*, 85, 21-37.
- Rosenholtz, S. J., & Simpson, C. (1984b). The formation of ability conceptions: Developmental trend or social construction? *Review of Educational Research*. 54, pp.31-63.
- Rosenthal, R. & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom. Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Rubovitz, P. & Maehr, M. (1973). Pygmalion black and white. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 25, pp. 210-218.
- Ryan, R., Connell, J. & Deci, E. (1985). A motivational analysis of self-determination and self-regulation. In C. Ames, & R. Ames (Eds.), *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol. 3: Goals and Cognitions.* London: Academic Press.
- Ryan, R., Connell, J. and Plant, R. (1990). Emotions in nondirected text learning. *Journal of Learning and Individual Differences*. 2, pp.1-17.
- Schmidt, R. & Savage, W. (1992). Challenge, skill, and motivation. *Pasaa*, 22, 14-28. Reprinted in University of Hawaii Working Papers in ESL, 112.2 (1994), 1-25. Honolulu: university of Hawaii, Department of English as a Second Language.
- Schunk, D. (1985). Self efficacy and classroom learning. *Psychology in the Schools*, 22, pp. 208-223.
- Schunk, D. (1989). Self-efficacy and cognitive skill learning. In C. Ames, & R. Ames (Eds.), *Research on Motivation in Education* (Vol.3, pp.13-44). New York: Academic Press.
- Sharon Feiman-Nemser (Ed.) (1986). Teacher education and learning to teach: proceedings of the first annual NCRTE Retreat--June 24-26. East Lansing, Mich.: National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.



- Sharpe, K. (1997). The protestant ethic and the spirit of Catholicism: ideological and institutional system change in English and French primary schooling. *Comparative Education*. 33, pp. 329-324.
- Silberman, M. (1970). *Crisis in the Classroom. The Remaking of American Education*. New York: Random House.
- Simmons, C. & Wade, W. (1998). Contrasting attitudes to education in England and Japan. *Education*. 30 (2) pp.146-152.
- Skaalvik, E. M. (1997). Self-enhancing and self-defeating ego orientation: relations with task and avoidance orientation, achievement, self-perceptions, and anxiety. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Vol. 89 No. 1, 156-168.
- South China Morning Post (1998), *Private education defies the slump*. October 6.
- South China Morning Post (2000), *Teachers Face Challenge of Change*. December 2.
- Spaulding, C. L. (1992). *Motivation in the classroom*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stake, R. E. & Easley, J. A., Jr. (1978). *Case Studies in Science Education* (Vol. 2, NSF Publication No. 038-000-00376-3). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Stipek, D. & Weisz, J. (1981). Perceived personal control and academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research*. Vol. 51, pp.101-137.
- Stipek, D. J. & Kowalski, P. S. (1989). Learned helplessness in task orienting versus performance orienting testing conditions. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 81, pp. 384-391.
- Stipek, D. J. (1998). *Motivation to learn: from Theory to Practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Todd, S. (1995). Questioning questionnaires. Unpublished paper, University of Hawaii at Manoa.
- Uguroglu, M. E. & Walberg, H. J. (1986). Predicting achievement and motivation. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*. 19, pp.1-12.
- Uguroglu, M. E. Schiller, D. P. & Walberg, H. J. (1981). A multidimensional motivation instrument. *Psychology in the Schools*. 18, pp.279-285.
- Walberg, H. J. (1976). Psychology of learning environments: Behavioral, structural, or perceptual? In L. Shulman (Ed.). *Review of Research in Education* (vol. 4, pp.142-178). Itasca, IL :Peacock.
- Walberg, H. J. (1984). Improving the productivity of America's Schools. *Educational Leadership*. 41 (8), pp.19-28.
- Wang, M. C. & Gordon, E. W. (Eds.). (1994). *Educational Resilience in Inner-city America: Challenges and Prospects*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D. & Walberg, H. J. (1994). Educational resilience in inner cities. In M. C. Wang, & E. W. Gordon (Eds.), *Educational Resilience in Inner-city America: Challenges and Prospects* (pp.45-72). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Warwick, D. and Osherson, S. (Eds.) (1973). *Comparative Research Methods. An overview*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Waxman, H. C. (1989). Urban Black and Hispanic elementary school students' perceptions of classroom instruction. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*. 22, pp.57-61.

- Waxman, H. C. (1991). Investigating classroom and school learning environments: a review of recent research and development in the field. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*. 26(2), pp.11-14.
- Waxman, H. C. (1992). Reversing the cycle of education failure for students in at-risk school environments. In H. C. Waxman, J. Walker de Felix, J. Anderson, & H. P. Baptiste (Eds.) *Students At Risk in At-Risk Schools: Improving Environments for Learning* (pp. 1-9). Newbury Park. CA: Corwin.
- Waxman, H. C. Huang, S. L., Knight, S. L. & Owens, E. W. (1992). Investigating the effects of the classroom learning environment on the academic achievement of at-risk students. In H. C. Waxman & C. D. Ellett (Eds.), *The Study of Learning Environment* (Vol.5, pp92-100). Houston: University of Houston.
- Weiner, B. (1992). *Human Motivation: Metaphors, Theories and Research*. London: Sage.
- Weiner, B. (1992a). *Human Motivation: Metaphors, Theories and Research*. London: Sage.
- Weiner, B. (1986). *An Attribution Theory of Motivation and Emotion*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Weinstein, R. S. & Middlestadt, S. E. (1979). Students' perceptions of teacher interactions with male high and low achievers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 71, pp.421-431.
- Weinstein, R. S. (1983). Student perceptions of schooling. *Elementary School Journal*. 83, pp.287-312.
- Weinstein, R. S. (1989). Perceptions of classroom processes and student motivation: children's views of self-fulfilling prophecies. In C. Ames, & R. Ames (Eds.), *Research on Motivation in Education: Goals and Cognitions* (Vol. 3, pp.187-221). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Weisz, J. & Cameron, A. (1985). Individual differences in the student's sense of control. In Ames, R., and Ames, C. (Eds.) *Research on Motivation in Education. Vol.2. The Classroom Milieu*. London: Academic Press.
- Wittrock, M. (1986). Students' thought processes. In M. Wittrock (Ed.) *Handbook of Research in Teaching* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp.297-314). New York: Macmillan.
- Woods, P. (1990). *The Happiest Days?* London: Falmer Press.
- Yang, K. S. & Liang, W. H. (1973). Some correlates of achievement motivation among Chinese high school boys ( In Chinese). *Acta Psychologica Taiwanica*. 15, pp.59-67.
- Yang, K. S. (1982). Casual attributions of academic success and failure and their affective consequences. *Acta Psychologica Taiwanica*. 24, pp.65-83. (From Psychological Abstracts, 1985, 72, Abstract No. 13126)
- Yang, K. S. (1986). Chinese personality and its change. In M. H. Bond (Ed.) *The Psychology of the Chinese People*. (pp. 106-170). New York: OUP.

Appendix 1A: The SCOTS Schedule

The five columns to the right of all items are for recording the observer’s codings in each of five observations extending for approximately one quarter of a school day. Where the letter ‘T’ appears at the head of one of these columns, it indicates that information concerning the item is to be sought from the teacher at the end of the fourth observation.

Items can be categorized like the following:

- Items relating to teacher’s roles, teacher and student interaction patterns, autonomy of students : 1-7
- Items relating to Task orientation and structures (types of activities, types of materials) : 8-11
- Items relating to grouping arrangements: 12
- Items relating to evaluation/recognition, and time use: 13-15

Item 1: Variation of treatment according to students’ needs

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. No variety of treatment amongst students (level of work may vary but approach is identical for all students. |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Some variety of treatment, but for low or high ability students only.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Treatment varies with instructional groups.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Treatment varies with students grouped in pairs.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. Treatment varies with individual student need.   |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 2: Praise/Blame approach

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Teacher emphasizes error and wrongdoing. Praise is almost completely absent; even when students produce good work. The smallest defect is picked on.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Teacher emphasizes error and wrongdoing and although praise is given, it tends to be grudging, half-hearted or casual.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. There are no strong indications of a positive or a negative approach; both are approximately equal.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Teacher tends to praise rather than blame. The general atmosphere is supportive but the use of praise is less systematic than in ‘e’. Negative comments may be converted into positive ones, but less regularly than in ‘e’. |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. Teacher seeks opportunities to praise good or improved work/conduct and emphasizes what has been achieved. Criticism and prohibitions are always avoided, substituted by positive comments and instructions.                 |              |   |   |   |   |

### Item 3: Teaching for memorization/understanding

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. The emphasis is almost entirely on rote-learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) and on the acquisition by students with mechanical competence. The focus is on obtaining the correct answer, and there is little sign of any attempt to discover whether understanding of the underlying principles and concepts is being acquired.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. As in 'a', except that sporadic attempts are made to ascertain whether understanding of underlying principles and concepts is being acquired.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Some emphasis is laid on students' acquiring an understanding of underlying principles and concepts relating to the areas of competence with which their learning is concerned. Nevertheless, rote-learning learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) and the acquisition of mechanical competence is also prominent.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. The emphasis is predominantly on the acquisition and understanding of underlying principles and concepts. Nevertheless, rote-learning learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) does occur to some extent, and 'rule of the thumb' procedures, designed to avoid accidental mechanical errors in the application of understood principles, may be found.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. The main emphasis is on the acquisition and understanding of underlying principles and concepts. There is no rote-learning (e.g. of tables, spelling, etc) since the students are expected to look up necessary facts and to memorize these simply through familiarity in usage. Failure to establish the correct answer is treated as less important than demonstration on how to obtain it. "Rule of the thumb" procedures are accepted only when the student can demonstrate understanding of the principles underlying the rule. |              |   |   |   |   |

### Item 4: Teacher-student relationship

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Teacher is reserved and creates distance between herself and the students such that students are dissuaded from making any avoidable approach. |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Teacher distant but approachable within constraints of teacher-imposed formal procedures.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Teacher approachable, being neither distant nor friendly.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Teacher approached on social as well as school topics; friendly but not treated as equal.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. Teacher very friendly with pupils; relationship approaching one of equality.   |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 5: Average time of students spent listening to teacher talk

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Students spent the whole lesson listening to teacher talk.            |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Students spent more than 2/3 of the lesson listening to teacher talk. |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Students spent more than half of lesson listening to teacher talk.    |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Students spent half of the time listening to teacher talk.            |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. Students spent less than 1/3 of lesson listening to teacher talk.     |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 6: Directness of teacher control of student’s learning activities

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Control of students by teacher is entirely direct; students show no sign of training in managing work activities.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. As in ‘a’ except that in some limited contexts a significant proportion of the class operate in ways showing a lesser dependence upon the teacher.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Although the teacher intervenes substantially to maintain the operation of the working system, students show a substantial competence in work management. Students are given opportunities to show themselves able and willing to sustain even non-routine work for at least a short while in the absence of the teacher support. |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. As ‘e’, except that the role of the teacher in keeping the wheels turning is rather more apparent. In particular, the teacher apparently finds it necessary to intervene from time to time e.g. because pupils work are seen as faltering. (Note : class discussion should not be seen as teacher-intervention.                   |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. There are very few signs of direct teacher control of student’s activities (other than basic instructions given, concerning work to be taken) and yet the majority of students work purposefully, clearly knowing how to operate the system in use. (Work is typically unaffected by the absence of the teacher)                  |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 7: Encouragement/prevention of difference

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. The work of the class is characterized by conformity to the teacher's dictates. In consequence, inventiveness, discovery, and doing things differently are prevented or strongly discouraged. Suggestions from students not welcomed and not used.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Suggestions from children are listened to and kindly dealt with but rarely, if ever, used. Teacher seems to be paying 'lip service' to idea of participation but in fact shows why his ideas are better without permitting children to find this out for themselves. Thus, in practice, the students have to follow teacher's dictates.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. The work of the class is characterized by a fair degree of conformity in that the teacher, while not preventing, rarely encourages inventiveness, discovery, or doing things differently. Difference is therefore able to occur but is unlikely to manifest itself often or in many students but may possibly give substantial encouragement within one or two subject areas, probably ones thought peripheral.                     |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Teacher encourages children to suggest ideas for work and ways of carrying out work. Inventive individuals are encouraged to try out their ideas and consider the appropriacy of them. Teacher does not always insist on conformity of work and work method- however teacher normally suggests basic approach to work so that those devoid of ideas may participate. Likely to be marked by teacher showing pleasure at good ideas. |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. The work of the class is characterized by very little conformity and the teacher strongly encourages curiosity, discovery, and inventiveness, and difference in learning mode are commended if at all sensible.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| Note : By <u>discovery</u> , it is meant finding things out for oneself.<br>By <u>difference in learning mode</u> , it is meant difference in approach to work, arriving at answers, etc.  |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 8: Encouragement /prevention of inter-pupil cooperation

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Teacher seeks to prevent cooperation amongst students; there is sustained insistence on working alone (save possibly in some project work, physical education or similar activities) or students show no sign of attempting to cooperate.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. As 'a', except that the total ban is not sustained or teacher tolerates pupils cooperation but prevents it if it exceeds modest limits. ( In some cases, the teacher may allow a small minority greater freedom and/or totally inhibit cooperation amongst members of another such minority.) |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. As 'b', but from time to time cooperation is encouraged explicitly or implicitly.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Teacher frequently gives implicit and explicit encouragement of cooperation   |              |   |   |   |   |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| whenever possible.   |  |  |  |  |  |
| e. Teacher encourages implicitly and/or explicitly pupils cooperation whenever it is possible. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Note, minimal cooperation such as borrowing an eraser should not be regarded as cooperation.   |  |  |  |  |  |

**1b. Contextualizing Notes :**

**Teacher’ role, relationship with students, student’s autonomy:**

Teacher Warmth: Teacher nurturance, acceptance, responsiveness to child comments, respect for child, display of positive emotions for child

Teacher authority: (Control over pacing and organisation of tasks): Provide freedom or “real choices for the class? Give opportunities to develop responsibility and independence? Support development and use of self-management and monitoring skills?

**B. Tasks structures**

Item 9: Variety of activities:

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. One activity only for class.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Two activities for class.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Three or four activities for class.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Five or six activities for class.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| Note : Activities within the same subject area but relating to different aspects of a subject should be regarded as separate activities for the purposes of this dimension, but activities different only in difficulty level should be treated as a single activity. |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 10: Usual number of work difficulty levels for subjects like Mathematics and English

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. One work level for class.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Two work levels for class.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Three or four work levels for class.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Multiplicity of work levels, such that work is allocated mainly on an individual basis. |              |   |   |   |   |

Item 11: Average time of students spent working on higher-order tasks

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Students not given any chance to take part in higher-order task-based activities.           |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Students spent less than 1/3 of lesson participating in higher-order task-based activities. |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Students spent nearly half of the lesson taking part in higher-order task-based activities  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Students spent half of the lesson taking part in higher-order task-based activities         |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. Students spent over half of the lesson taking part in higher-order task-based activities    |              |   |   |   |   |

1b. Contextualizing notes:

Task Orientation and task structure:

Nature of tasks : appeal to students’ interest, offer novelty, variety, diversity, challenge to students ? Help students establish short-term, self-referenced goals? Support development and use of effective learning strategies? Tasks contextualised or embedded in practical or personally meaningful activity? Activities close-ended?



C. Grouping arrangement

Item 12: Size of teaching groups for subjects like Mathematics and Literacy

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Class taught as a single group.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Class taught in two groups.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Class taught in at least 3 groups with an average size of 8 or more students.                           |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Students taught in groups with an average size of 8 or less or receive instruction on individual basis. |              |   |   |   |   |

3b. Contextualizing notes:  
Grouping arrangement:

How students are grouped? Number of work level for class, size of groups etc.

4a. Evaluation and recognition

Item 13: Extrinsic/intrinsic motivation

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. The incentives to work provided by the teacher are all extrinsic: marks, points, rewards, etc. The teacher fails to indicate that work may be satisfying in itself. Work is, either explicitly or implicitly, presented to students with a pain rather than a pleasure.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Extrinsic incentives are used no less extensively than in 'a', and indeed receive considerable emphasis, but the teacher reveals that some of the work may be interesting. He may, for example, indicate that some of the students will want to do a particular piece of work because it is especially interesting. In contrast much of the work is presented as a chore that it is necessary to stick at.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Extrinsic incentives are used and, although they play a much less prominent part in the life of the class than they do in 'b', they are given sufficient emphasis to show that they are part of the teacher's individualized system. There is a tacit assumption that the work will be generally interesting to students but indications that students don't like particular tasks are accepted as natural. |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Extrinsic incentives (if any) are no more than a formality. Little time is devoted to them, and the students show little interest in them. On the other hand, students are, at least, very willing to undertake work. Their motivation is therefore, presumably intrinsic.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. No extrinsic incentives employed and, since signs of any motivation in the students is notably lacking, it would be unwise to assume that there is any intrinsic  |              |   |   |   |   |

motivation either.

### Item 14: Competition

| Options   | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|---|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Competition amongst students is intense and of a 'cut-throat' nature. It pervades almost all the work of the class, and except for students who 'opt out', the struggle is constant. At least, some of the children may, nonetheless, appear to enjoy competition.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. Competition amongst children is a prominent feature of the class, but it is less "cut throat" than in 'a'. Children spontaneously indulge in 'races' with others in the class (if only with immediate neighbors. Though there is so much effort to be 'better' than others (in work, speed, or behavior), it is friendly and enjoyed by most children. |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Competition is marked but 'criterion-referenced' not 'cut throat'. The emphasis is on all attaining a 'good' standard (relative to ability). The teacher is anxious to see as many as possible do well rather than to see some reach a higher standard than others.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Competition such as that described in 'c' is a feature of only a few activities or, from time to time, of some activities.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. No sign of any competition (other than in games).  |              |   |   |   |   |

**4b. Contextualizing notes:**

Frequent public evaluation(Grades, stickers, league tables)?Frequent social comparisons mentioning good performance/high effort/low effort? Teachers use external reinforcers to motivate? Make evaluation private, focussing on individual improvement, progress, and mastery? Provide opportunities for improvement? Encourage view of mistakes as part of learning?

5a. Time use

Item 15: Student Responsibility for Managing Own Work

| Options  | Observations |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. Student has no control of own work. Tasks are almost always instructed by the teacher singly. The time spent is controlled entirely by the teacher, as is the way in which the work is undertaken.  |              |   |   |   |   |
| b. As “a”, save that, at least sometimes, more than one task is instructed by the teacher at a time. When more than one task is instructed, the students have to do them in a given sequence and the teacher often intervenes to ensure that time spent on each task is that intended.   |              |   |   |   |   |
| c. Most work is instructed by the teacher as in “a”, or “b”. Students are however sometimes given responsibility either over a short period (up to approximately one quarter of a school day) for allocating time to each of a small number of tasks and for determining their sequence or for a longer period (up to a whole day) for allocating time to tasks but not controlling their sequence.                    |              |   |   |   |   |
| d. Students are given a program of work to be covered over a period of time (usually ½ day or 1 day.)The distribution of time is left to students save that the teacher may intervene whenever too much time to any one activity with the result that the amount – and quality – of work in other areas is suffering. The intervention normally takes the form of direct instructions as to what the student is to do. |              |   |   |   |   |
| e. As “d”, save that teacher intervention is infrequent and different in type. The teacher does not intervene until there is evidence available (e.g. from a student’s own work record) that a student’s work is suffering through failure to allocate time satisfactorily.  |              |   |   |   |   |






4b. Contextualizing notes

Are students allowed to plan their schedules and progress at optimal rate? Do teachers adjust time requirements for students who have difficulty completing their work?

Appendix 2A:

Students' copy  
Student multidimensional motivation Measure

學生的課室環境量度

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

1. At school, I do the work in my class because I like learning new things.  
我做好我在學校的工作主要是因為我喜歡學習新事物。

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

2. At school, I am concerned about improving my Knowledge and skills in my school work.  
在校內，我重視改善自己在學業上的知識及技巧。

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

3. When I come across problems in my school work, I usually keep trying to solve it.  
遇到功課上的困難，我通常會不斷嘗試，設法解決。

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

4. I believe I can solve problems in my school work by working hard.  
相信靠自己的努力，我可以解決功課上的疑難。

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

5. What I learn in my class makes me want to learn more.  
我在班中所學的，令我更有意欲學習更多的知識。

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

6. I take reading and writing as one of my favorite hobbies.  
閱讀和寫作是我的嗜好，所以我會持續閱讀和寫作。






☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

7. At school I try to do my work better than other students. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我嘗試爭取比其他同學更高的成績。

8. I feel good at school when I do the work better than other students. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
當我比其他同學的學業表現更佳，我在校內會很有成功感。

9. At school, I want to look clever to my friends. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我會在朋友面前表現得很聰明。



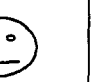
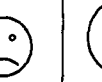

10. In my class, I am concerned not to make a fool of myself. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
我不可讓自己在班內出洋相/出醜。

11. The worst thing about making mistakes in my class is that other students may notice. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
最糟糕的事是同學注意到自己在班中所作的錯誤。

12. In class, I try not to be among the students who are very weak in their study. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我會盡量表現到自己不是最弱學生的一群。

13. At school it is important for me to manage tasks that other students do not manage. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，同學做不到的工作我能掌握到，對我來說是很重要的。

14. I like school best when there is no hard work. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
如果學校沒有太多的功課，我最愛學校。

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Strongly agree</b><br>十分贊同   | <b>Agree</b><br>同意  | <b>Undecided</b><br>尚未決定  | <b>Disagree</b><br>不同意  | <b>Strongly Disagree</b><br>強烈反對  |

15. At school I hope we do not get any homework.  
我希望老師不會給我家課。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

16. In general, I find school work very boring.  
普遍來說，做功課是沉悶的事。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

17. I enjoy my work in my class a lot.  
我很享受上課時的工作。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

18. I am not afraid of hard and challenging work.  
我不怕艱難的及具挑戰性的工作。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

19. I like working on new projects/tasks in my class.  
我喜歡致力於班內新計劃/新工作。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

20. I prefer to work, figure out problems by myself  
instead of asking for help from others.  
自己解決問題及求助於他人，兩者比較，我會選擇前者。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

21. I do other reading, writing or projects that interest  
me in my spare time even if I am not asked by the  
teachers at school to do so.  
即使老師沒有吩咐，我也愛在空餘時間閱讀、寫作或作大型課業。






☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

22. Doing well in my class will help me in the future.  
在班中表現佳，對我日後有幫助。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

23. I work hard in school so I can have things I want  
someday.  
我在校內努力讀書，以保障將來生活得好。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Strongly agree</b>   | <b>Agree</b>  | <b>Undecided</b>   | <b>Disagree</b>   | <b>Strongly Disagree</b>  |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

24. I try to do my work well so my parents/teachers will be pleased with me.  
我嘗試獲取好成績，好讓家長或老師對我滿意。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

25. I work hard to get school work done even if I don't like the class.  
即使我不喜歡班中的工作，我仍會努力獲取好成績。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

26. I organize my study time well for my school work by myself.  
我會妥善安排自己讀書的時間。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

27. I get help from my parents and/or private tutors very often for my work.  
我時常在功課上請教家長或補習老師。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

28. I am proud of my work in school work. 對於學業上的表現，我感到自豪。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

29. I am smarter than others in my class.  
我在班中比其他同學聰明。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

30. I am sure of myself when it comes to school work.  
我對自己的學業表現，甚有信心。






|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

31. If I keep trying at it, I can do well in my school work.  
如果我肯不斷嘗試，我在學業上能夠獲取佳績。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

32. I like school because I can do well in my school work.  
因為我的學業成績好，所以我喜愛學校。

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

33. My teachers are always pleased with my work.  
我的老師很滿意我的學業表現。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

34.I have a lot of friends in my class  
我在班中有很多朋友。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

35.I find it easy to do things/work with other kids in my class.  
我覺得與班中同學合作，做功課是一件容易的事。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

36. I am important to my classmates in my class.  
在同學眼中，我在班中甚為重要。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐


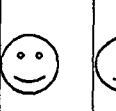
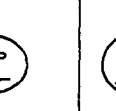
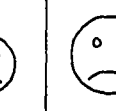
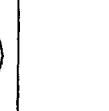
37 It is easy for me to make friends with other children in the school.  
我很容易與校內其他同學做朋友。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐








Appendix 2B:

Researcher's copy  
Student Multidimensional Motivation Measure  
學生的課室環境量度

|   |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree  | Undecided   | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意   | 尚未決定  | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

| Mastery goals (6 items): Scoring for each scale (5-1)   | 5                        | 4                        | 3                        | 2                        | 1                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. At school, I do the work in my class because I like learning new things.<br>我做好我在學校的工作主要是因為我喜歡學習新事物。           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. At school, I am concerned about improving my Knowledge and skills in my school work.<br>在校內，我重視改善自己在學業上的知識及技巧。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. When I come across problems in my school work, I usually keep trying to solve it.<br>遇到功課上的困難，我通常會不斷嘗試，設法解決。   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I believe I can solve problems in my school work by working hard.<br>相信靠自己的努力，我可以解決功課上的疑難。                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. What I learn in my class makes me want to learn more.<br>我在班中所學的，令我更有意欲學習更多的知識。                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I take reading and writing as one of my favorite hobbies.<br>閱讀和寫作是我的嗜好，所以我會持續閱讀和寫作。                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

**Performance goals (7 items): Scoring for each scale (1-5)**

7. At school I try to do my work better than other students. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我嘗試爭取比其他同學更高的成績。

8. I feel good at school when I do the work better than other students. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
當我比其他同學的學業表現更佳，我在校內會很有成功感。






9. At school, I want to look clever to my friends. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我會在朋友面前表現得很聰明。

10. In my class, I am concerned not to make a fool of myself. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
我不可讓自己在班內出洋相/出醜。

11. The worst thing about making mistakes in my class is that other students may notice. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
最糟糕的事是同學注意到自己在班中所作的錯誤。

12. In class, I try not to be among the students who are very weak in their study. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，我會盡量表現到自己不是最弱學生的一群。

13. At school it is important for me to manage tasks that other students do not manage. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
在校內，同學做不到的工作我能掌握到，對我來說是很重要的。

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

### Work avoidant orientation (2 items) :Scoring for each scale (1-5)

14. I like school best when there is no hard work.  
如果學校沒有太多的功課，我最愛學校。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

15. At school I hope we do not get any homework.  
我希望老師不會給我家課。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

### Intrinsic motivation (6 items) :Scoring for each scale (5-1) except no.16

16. In general, I find school work very boring.  
普遍來說，做功課是沉悶的事。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

#### Scoring for each scale (1-5)

17. I enjoy my work in my class a lot.  
我很享受上課時的工作。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

18. I am not afraid of hard and challenging work.  
我不怕艱難的及具挑戰性的工作。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

19. I like working on new projects/tasks in my class.  
我喜歡致力於班內新計劃/新工作。






☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

20. I prefer to work, figure out problems by myself  
instead of asking for help from others.  
自己解決問題及求助於他人，兩者比較，我會選擇前者。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

21. I do other reading, writing or projects that interest  
me in my spare time even if I am not asked by the  
teachers at school to do so.  
即使老師沒有吩咐，我也愛在空餘時間閱讀、寫作或作大型課業。

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

Extrinsic motivation (4 items) :Scoring for each scale (1-5)

22. Doing well in my class will help me in the future. 在班中表現佳，對我日後有幫助。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

23. I work hard in school so I can have things I want someday. 我在校內努力讀書，以保障將來生活得好。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

24. I try to do my work well so my parents/teachers will be pleased with me. 我嘗試獲取好成績，好讓家長或老師對我滿意。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

25. I work hard to get school work done even if I don't like the class. 即使我不喜歡班中的工作，我仍會努力獲取好成績。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐






Self-regulation (2 items) :

26. I organize my study time well for my school work by myself. 我會妥善安排自己讀書的時間。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scoring for each scale (5-1)

27. I get help from my parents and/or private tutors very often for my work. 我時常在功課上請教家長或補習老師。
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Scoring for each scale (1-5)

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Strongly agree  | Agree   | Undecided  | Disagree  | Strongly Disagree   |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

**Academic self-concept (6 items) :Scoring for each scale (5-1)**

28. I am satisfied with my work in school.

對於學業上的表現，我感到滿意。

29. I am just as clever as others in my class.

我在班中比其他同學聰明。

30. I am sure of myself when it comes to school work.

我對自己的學業表現，甚有自信心。

31. If I keep trying at it, I can do well in my school work.

如果我肯不斷嘗試，我在學業上能夠獲取佳績。

32. I like school because I can do well in my school work.

因為我的學業成績好，所以我喜愛學校。

33. My teachers are always pleased with my work.

我的老師很滿意我的學業表現。






**Social self-concept(4 items) :Scoring for each scale (5-1)**

34.I have a lot of friends in my class

我在班中有很多朋友。

35.I find it easy to do things/work with other kids in my class.

我覺得與班中同學合作，做功課是一件容易的事。

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Strongly agree</b>   | <b>Agree</b>  | <b>Undecided</b>   | <b>Disagree</b>   | <b>Strongly Disagree</b>  |
| 十分贊同  | 同意  | 尚未決定   | 不同意   | 強烈反對  |

36. I am important to my classmates in my class.  
在同學眼中，我在班中甚為重要。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

37 It is easy for me to make friends with other children in the school.  
我很容易與校內其他同學做朋友。

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

## Appendix 3A:

### Semi-structured Interview for Pupils(Tape-recorded):

#### **Pupils' perception of control in the classroom and study :**

同學對課堂控制及學習之觀感

1. Do you like it best when you choose what to do or when the teacher does?

在堂上你比較喜歡老師為你選擇的工作或是自己選擇的工作？

2. Do you choose what you do at school or does your teacher choose for you most of the time?

在學校的大部分時間，你所做的工作是由你自己選擇做的,還是由老師選擇？

#### **Perceptions of their relationship with their teachers:**

同學對老師關係之觀感

1. How do you get on with your teachers?

你與老師相處得好嗎？

2. What do you like best about your teachers?

你最喜歡老師哪些地方？

#### **Perceptions for criteria of success**

對成功的準則之觀感

1. Is there a “best student” in your class? What is he/she good at? Do you think you can be like her?

在你班中有沒有「最佳學生」？他/她擅長甚？你認為你能否像他/她一樣？

2. Which student in your class do you think is a “good” pupil? Why do you think so?

你認為班中哪一位同學是「好學生」？為甚麼你認為他/她是「好學生」？

#### **Perception of task orientation/structure**

對工作方向/工作組織之觀感

1. What kind of class activities do you like best? Why?

你最喜歡班中哪一類型的活動？為甚麼？

2. What do you think is the most important thing for you to come to school to do?

你認為回校最重要要做的事是甚麼？

Appendix 3B  
**Questionnaires for Teachers:**

**Conceptions of professional responsibility among teachers from the two schools**

Please place a tick in the appropriate box. In cases where a question is clearly not relevant to you, please draw a line through it or write N.A. (not applicable).

**A. General Information**

- 1. About what percentage of pupils in your class belong to the following cultural groups?
- 2. British : approximate percentage ☐
- 3. Chinese: approximate percentage ☐
- 4. What is/are the main non-British's /Chinese groups?

---

**B. Practices, Conceptions, Point of View**

- 1. Do you organise or co-ordinate any extracurricular activities? e.g. school clubs, games, workshops, choir, school camp/trips, etc.

Yes ☐ No ☐

- 2. If yes, please specify 

---
- 

- 3. How often do you work in close collaboration with a colleague or colleagues when teaching your class or another group of pupils?

Never ☐

Less than once a week ☐

Once a week ☐

More than once a week ☐

Daily or almost daily ☐

- 4. What form would this collaboration take?



5. In your work as a teacher, how far do you feel that your teaching practice is influenced by each of the following factors?

| a. I am influenced by:   | Degree of influence |          |               |            |                     |
|--|---------------------|----------|---------------|------------|---------------------|
|  | Very strongly       | Strongly | Only a little | Not at all | Does not concern me |
| b. My family background  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| c. My initial training   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| d. My personal teaching experience   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| e. My own reading/independent study  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| f. My colleagues at work   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| g. My Principal  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| h. My school inspector   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| i. My pupils   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| j. Parents of my pupils  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| k. My membership of a professional association   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| l. My experience of specialist personal courses, e.g. encounter groups, assertiveness training |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| m. My participation in extracurricular activities with children                                |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| n. My participation in in-service training   |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| o. My professional ideology  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| p. My study for a university degree/diploma  |                     |          |               |            |                     |
| q. Other(please specify)   |                     |          |               |            |                     |

6. Which one of these influences is the most important for you?

7. Which is the least important?

---

8. In general, how much freedom do you have to choose the content of your teaching?

Complete freedom ☐

A great deal of freedom ☐

Considerable freedom ☐

A little freedom ☐

Very little freedom or no freedom at all ☐

9. For what aspects of the content of your teaching do you feel you have the greatest freedom of choice?

---

---

10. For what aspects of the content of your teaching do you feel you have the least freedom of choice?

---

---

11. What are the major constraints which determine for you the content of your teaching?

---

---

12. In general, how much freedom do you have over the choice of teaching methods?

Complete freedom ☐

A great deal of freedom ☐

Considerable freedom ☐

A little freedom ☐

Very little freedom or no freedom at all ☐

13. In what aspects of your teaching methods do you have the greatest freedom?

---

---

14. In what aspects of your teaching methods do you have the least freedom?

---

---

15. What are the major constraints which determine for you your teaching methods?

---

---

16. Your work as a teacher can have short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes. What are likely to be the most important outcomes of your own teaching for your pupils?

a. In the short term, i.e. in the course of this school year?

---

---

b. In the medium term, i.e. as they complete compulsory schooling?

---

---

c. In the long term, i.e. when your pupils have become adults?

---

---

17. In your professional practice, how important is the responsibility you have for the following educational objectives?

| Educational objectives   | Essential | Very Important | Important | Important to some extent | Fairly Un-important | Not Important at all |
|--|-----------|----------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Actual instruction/academic work                                  |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| b. Development of the child's personality                            |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| c. Training in personal relations                                    |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| d. Moral education   |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| e. Development of the intelligence                                   |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| f. Physical education  |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| g. Sex education   |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| h. Artistic/aesthetic education                                      |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| i. Health education  |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| j. Children's behavior in class                                      |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| k. Arouse an interest in learning                                    |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| l. That children should enjoy what they are doing.                   |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| m. That children should like hard work and effort                    |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| n. That children are kept constructively engaged                     |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| o. That children see the relevance of what they are doing            |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| p. That pupils should be able to apply their knowledge in the future |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| q. That children should know how to organize their work              |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |
| r. Helping the child to become mature                                |           |                |           |                          |                     |                      |

18. For a teacher, to ‘be responsible’ also means to ‘be accountable’ to others. From this point of view, to whom and how much do you feel responsible?

| To whom :                           | I feel:          |             |                            |                      |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|                                     | Very responsible | Responsible | Responsible to some extent | Not very responsible | Not Responsible At all |
| To yourself and your own conscience |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To your Principal                   |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To the parents of the pupils        |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To your school                      |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To your school inspector            |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To your colleagues                  |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To your pupils                      |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |
| To society in general               |                  |             |                            |                      |                        |

19. Whether you feel more or less responsible, for what do you feel the most responsibility in relation to:

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Yourself              |  |
| Your Principal        |  |
| The parents           |  |
| Your school           |  |
| Your school inspector |  |
| Your colleagues       |  |
| Your pupils           |  |
| Society in general    |  |

20. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

|   | Strongly<br>agree | Agree<br>to some<br>extent | Disagree<br>to some<br>extent | Don't<br>Agree<br>At all |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Parents should have a say in what their children learn at school   |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| b. It is up to teachers to decide, on the basis of their professional experience, what is best for the child  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| c. A teacher's practice should follow the direction laid down by government policy  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| d. It is a teacher's duty to explain the methods he or she is using to parents  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| e. The teacher must adapt his or her methods to the social composition of the local area (types of pupils recruited from the area)                                |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| f. At the end of the day, teachers are only responsible to their own conscience   |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| g. Teacher's activities in the classroom must take into consideration the needs and the socio-economic characteristics of the local environment                   |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| h. Teachers should adapt their teaching(curriculum and methods) to meet parents' wishes   |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| i. What teachers do from day to day should reflect the policy of the Principal  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| j. Teachers should be available to discuss personal matters with parents  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| k. A child's progress in school is <b>not</b> ultimately the responsibility of the teacher  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| l. A teacher has a great deal of freedom in his or her professional practice  |                   |                            |                               |                          |
| m. The professional responsibility of a teacher depends in the last resort on the education system and the overall environment and characteristics of the society |                   |                            |                               |                          |

21. In a few words, can you describe the essential elements of your teaching style?

---

---

---

22. How far do you agree with each of the following statements about the nature of teaching?

| For me, teaching:   | Agree completely | Agree to some extent | Disagree To some extent | Disagree completely |
|---|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| a. is a vocation  |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| b. is a means of earning a living like any other              |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| c. is collaboration in a creative endeavor with my colleagues |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| d. is the daily pleasure of contact with children             |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| e. is a way of giving meaning to my life                      |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| f. is a very hard job   |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| g. is a daily challenge                                       |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| h. is to do a job which is little valued by society           |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| i. gives me the chance of interesting social relationships    |                  |                      |                         |                     |
| j. means being isolated in my work                            |                  |                      |                         |                     |

23. What do you think of the discipline of students in your school? Do you think teachers need to tighten/relax measures in controlling the discipline of students in your school?

---

---

24. Do you think the amount of homework given to students is appropriate? Do you think you should add more/cut down on the amount of homework given?

---

---