Chapter 10
Student Biology Teachers: Passive Recipients to Active Participants (A Case Study, University of Malaya, Malaysia)

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Abstract This paper will focus upon a pilot attempt at involving the Biology Methods Course student teachers in the University of Malaya, actively in their own training. Forty-eight students were involved in this case study. The objectives were to guide student teachers to (1) not just implement the National Biology Curriculum but to also become innovators as well as interpreters of the curriculum and to be able to teach it in a very unique way and (2) develop good communicative skills so as to boost confidence and self-growth. The student teachers were allowed to be involved partially in their own training, by planning certain activities, which was assessed. The supervisor together with three other impartial persons determined the criteria by which these activities would be evaluated. This exploratory attempt (envolved in a field trip planned by the student teachers themselves) showed that student teachers were able to innovatively interpret the National Biology Curriculum. This, in turn, revealed that better communicative skills and self-growth as future science teachers could be inculcated.

Keywords Pre-service biology teachers • Interpreting the curriculum

Introduction

Biology teachers generally consider themselves to be teachers of content, and therefore the teaching approaches can be very teacher centred (Tolbert et al. 2014). Nevertheless, there is a need to prepare biology teachers who are competent both to teach the content of the curriculum and to develop the characters and personalities of the children. To this end, teacher education institutions play a crucial role in fulfilling national development, societal and individual needs. Cruickshank and Cruz

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