Teachers must learn, unlearn and relearn

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© Provided by Media Prima Teachers have to learn the new era of teaching, which is technology-based. -NSTP/File pic

AS I follow the transformation in education in primary schools, I’m concerned about teachers’ coping strategies.

When it was announced that there would be no more formal examinations for Year 1 to 3, I was excited as it meant we can engage pupils in more activities to help them develop holistically.

But the transformation is either taking place too slowly or not at all. I believe the main reason for the “slowness” is that the philosophy of learn, unlearn and relearn is not
happening. This must come from the gatekeepers in the operational stages of the education transformation, who are the teachers.

**FIRST**, teachers have to learn the new era of teaching, which is digital, technology-based and employs virtual space for other aspects of development.

Many new aspects of learning and teaching pedagogy can be learnt through the Internet, especially from YouTube, if teachers find it challenging to perform creative methods such as singing, dancing and drama.

**SECOND**, is the unlearning process. Teachers have to remind themselves of their role to develop holistic individuals. This is not something new if we go by the National Education Philosophy, which focuses on the holistic growth of each child under the education system.

Teachers need to play a more holistic role in facilitating students to develop their intelligence quotient (IQ), emotional quotient (EQ), spiritual quotient (SQ) and creative/confidence/communications quotient (CQ), which contradicts with what they had done earlier, that is, mostly teaching and preparing students to score in examinations. By the time students enter university or start working, they would have high IQ, but very little interpersonal or intrapersonal skills (EQ, SQ and CQ) to face issues.

**THIRD**, teachers need to relearn their roles. There is no one size that fits all and educating students requires much creativity on the teachers’ part.

We talk so much about imparting higher order thinking skills in students, but such skills must come from teachers. To be effective 21st century educators, teachers need to relearn the psychology of young people, their interests and passion.

Most importantly, teachers need to wipe out their assumptions and biases about education and keep abreast with happenings around the globe.

That way, they will develop students who are not only knowledgeable locally but also stand tall with citizens of other nations.

Only when teachers learn, unlearn and relearn can changes in policy or content be effective.

Teachers need support, and checks and balances from the Education Ministry. They need experiential learning programmes and training.

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