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Will teachers be trained for Character Education?

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Character Education is supposed to be embedded in several core subjects, but the outcome nor the pedagogy has been shared with the nation. - NSTP file pic

LETTERS: THE year 2027 would be a turning point in the Malaysian education system, where "Pendidikan Karakter" (Character Education) would be introduced as a subject in all public schools, from the preschool to post-secondary levels.

It is a fine suggestion from the Education Ministry, especially for me as someone who advocates for experiential learning and values development from an early age. However, I need further explanation on the matter.

Currently, we have Moral Education for non-Muslim students and Islamic Studies for Muslim students as core subjects in primary schools right up to secondary level. What is the status of these two subjects in 2027?

In many nations, the Moral Education subject is called Character Education. Would it not be redundant for non-Muslim students, who would be studying two subjects that are similar in nature?

Next, who will teach the subject? If teachers are not trained, then it will become like the sad case of Moral Education.

Teachers with fewer periods have been assigned to teach Moral Education since its introduction in 1983, a practice called merely "completing the timetable".

My next question is what happened to Civics and Citizenship Education? It thrived in the 1960s and 1970s, but then it died, although it was revived a few times.

Character Education is supposed to be embedded in several core subjects, but the outcome nor the pedagogy has been shared with the nation.

I am in favour of humanity subjects, like Moral Education and Character Education.

But we need to start with proper planning, training of teachers and focus on the current needs of human flourishing rather than human capital, as put forward by the United Nations.

If not, we are going to repeat the same mistakes we made with Moral Education and Civics and Citizenship Education.

Many teachers have complained that students are not motivated because there is no centralised examination. Character Education would focus fully on continuous assessment.

Are our teachers trained for such a holistic assessment?

Nevertheless, I welcome the daring move to include Character Education in our school education syllabus, since we seem to lack this in everyday life.

At the same time, the issues that I have brought forward must be discussed and solved so that we don't repeat mistakes.

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The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the New Straits Times