LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: Opportunities & Challenges

PROF DR MANSOR FADZIL
President/Vice-Chancellor
Open University Malaysia
# INTRODUCTION: RECENT TRENDS IN LIFELONG LEARNING

## Various focus areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical &amp; vocational education &amp; training (TVET)</th>
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<td>ICT-led innovations: e-Learning &amp; MOOCs</td>
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<td>Adult education &amp; part-time studies</td>
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**Comprehensive approach:**
Combination of all forms of learning (formal, non-formal & informal)

**Flexible education:**
Customising learning opportunities based on individual needs & preferences

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INTRODUCTION:
RECENT TRENDS IN LIFELONG LEARNING

21st century skills:

- Applied knowledge
- Cross-disciplinary skills
- Soft skills & communication skills
- ICT proficiency
- Global awareness

Must be relevant, useful & universally applicable
Examples of lifelong learning agenda:
- Entrepreneurship for rural folk
- Eradication of discrimination
- Reducing illiteracy
- Community development

**COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING**
- Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme
  - Conducted in Africa, Asia & the Caribbean
  - Using ICT to educate farmers, improve their farming techniques, etc

**UNESCO**
- Lifelong learning to eradicate violence against women
- Study conducted in 5 Asian countries
- Social movement to raise awareness & for female empowerment

**OTHER INITIATIVES**
- Examples of lifelong learning programme using ICT to educate farmers, improve their farming techniques, etc
- Conducted in Africa, Asia & the Caribbean
- Study conducted in 5 Asian countries
- Social movement to raise awareness & for female empowerment

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THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Varying degrees of success:

- Advanced systems & frameworks, e.g.: South Korea’s Credit Bank System & Denmark’s liberal education approach
- Limited resources & awareness, especially in developing regions

Varying motivations for lifelong learning:

- Complement to higher education
- Professional training & upgrading
- Community development
- Opportunity to transform educational approaches
Launched November 2011

Currently at various stages of implementation

Lifelong learning as the 3rd pillar in human capital development

Timeframe & budgets in line with the 10th & 11th Malaysia Plans (2011-2020)

Definition in Malaysia encompasses the educational needs & interests of the working age population (15-64 years)
THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT

Lifelong learning included as one of the 10 Shifts in the recent Education Blueprint

4 CLUSTERS OF LIFELONG LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

CLUSTER 1:
Part-time academic programmes, including ODL

CLUSTER 2:
Technical & skills-based courses

CLUSTER 3:
Non-formal programmes for self-improvement, e.g. sewing

CLUSTER 4:
Full-time higher education academic programmes
THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT: THE CURRENT SCENARIO

Various Government-led initiatives & programmes, including nationwide lifelong learning carnivals

Growing efforts to increase awareness & for enculturation of lifelong learning across society

Growing acknowledgement in the importance of adult education

Increasing focus on accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL)

Moving towards accreditation structure & credit award system for all lifelong learning programmes
OPPORTUNITIES & STAKEHOLDERS

GOVERNMENTS
Achieving economic growth via upgrading of the labour force

EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
Diversifying programmes offered
Enhancing available expertise & resources

EMPLOYERS & ORGANISATIONS
Improving employee capacities for better performance at work

INDIVIDUALS
Obtaining additional qualifications
CURRENT CHALLENGES

Inadequate policies (country- & region-wide):
Crucial to ensure an education & training system that is responsive to global developments

Recognition & accreditation issues, including for non-formal courses & professional training

Overlapping efforts/initiatives leading to inefficient use of resources

Lack of public awareness
THE FUTURE OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Intensify efforts towards professional training & work-based learning

Further leverage on ODL & e-learning

Encourage lifelong learning as a solution to current issues, e.g. graduate unemployment

Develop policies towards further enhancing awareness & participation:
Important to address all areas & mechanism in lifelong learning provision
LEVERAGING ON ODL

ODL is a useful, viable & relevant approach to further expand the lifelong learning cause

e-Learning, on its own or in combination with face-to-face study sessions, can widen access & opportunities in lifelong learning

Various courses & programmes, in the form of formal & non-formal learning

Flexible approaches in registration, curriculum, pedagogy, delivery, assessment & support services

A variety of learning materials to suit different learning styles
CONCLUDING REMARKS

Important to encourage continuous dialogue on lifelong learning at national, regional & global levels

Equally crucial to understand the implications of lifelong learning on today’s knowledge economy
THANK YOU