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*DEVELOPMENT OF LIFELONG LEARNING POLICY :
THE CASE OF SINGAPORE*

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Outline

- Country profile
- Unit of analysis
- Lifelong learning policy development in Singapore
- Comparing the cases of Singapore and Japan
- Conclusion



Country profile

Scale and demographics

- Land area: 714.3 sq km
 - Population: 5.47 million
 - Increase by 1.6% since a year ago
 - Generation ratio (resident only):
 - Below 20: 15.6%
 - 20-64: 47.2%
 - Over 65: 7.8%
 - Ethnicities: Chinese, Malay, Indian, others
 - Official languages: English, Malay, Mandarin Chinese, Tamil
 - Religions: Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Taoism, Hinduism
- (as of 2014, Department of Statistics Singapore)

Economy

- Asian Tigers
- GDP per capita: 4th in the world (IMF, 2013)
- Foreign direct investment
- Multi-national corporations
- State-led industrialisation

Education system

- Non-compulsory kindergarten
- Compulsory primary education: 6 years
- Primary School Leaving Examination
- Non-compulsory secondary education: 4-6 years
- GCE O Level examinations
- Post-secondary education:
 - A Level (leading to universities)
 - International Baccalaureate
 - Polytechnics (offer diplomas)
 - Institute of Technical Education (ITE)



Unit of analysis

Unit of analysis

- Lifelong learning as policy
 - Jurisdiction
 - Policy development
 - Political ideology

Jurisdiction

	Ministry in charge of lifelong learning policy	Associated ministry
Singapore	Ministry of Manpower (MOM)	Ministry of Education (MOE)
Japan	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)



Lifelong learning policy development in Singapore

From a remedy to a national project

Lifelong learning policy	Introduced as a remedy for weakness in education	Developed into a national project
Singapore	Remedy for front-ended education and training system, 1997	Lifelong Employability, 1999-

Introduced as a remedy for the educational weakness

- First major official manifestation and documentation
 - 1997, Thinking Schools Learning Nation (TSLN)
 - *A national culture and social environment that promotes **lifelong learning** in our people*

Introduced as a remedy for the educational weakness

- TSLN
 - Weakness: passive learners promoted by the front-ended 'paper chase' system
 - Remedy: lifelong learning
 - Synonym of a continuum of education and training
 - Fostering critical and creative populations through

Developed into a national project

- A broad national project
 - Responsibilities to Ministry of Manpower (MOM)
 - 1999, Manpower 21 Plan (M21)
 - A holistic approach
 - To address all aspects of the manpower value chain
 - To transfer into a Talent Capital, a centre of ideas, innovation, knowledge and exchange
 - *Lifelong Employability*

Developed into a broad national project

Enhancement of Lifelong Employability

- 2000, National Skills Recognition System (NRS)
- 2001, Lifelong Learning Endowment Fund (LLEF)
- **2003, Workforce Development Agency (WDA)**
- 2005, Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ)
- 2008, Employment and Employability Institute
- **2008, Continuing Education and Training (CET) Masterplan**
- 2008, Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience (SPUR)
- 2010, Institute for Adult Learning (IAL)
- **2014, CET 2020**

Developed into a broad national project

- Background to WDA
 - 2003, Ministry of Trade and Industry Economic Review Committee
 - Globalisation
 - Ageing workforce
 - Knowledge economy
 - New workforce needs:
 - Technical skills, mindset, attitudes
 - People management, problem analysis, communication skills
 - Lifelong Employability

Developed into a broad national project

- 2003, Workforce Development Agency (WDA)
 - *To lead, drive and champion workforce development to enhance employability and competitiveness*
 - Three main objectives:
 - Keep training relevant
 - Strengthen the CET infrastructure
 - Help workers find jobs

Developed into a broad national project

- 2008, CET Masterplan
 - Increase of LLEF by \$800 million to \$3 billion, and to \$5 billion
 - CET training capacity from 22,000 to 80,000
 - 10 new CET Centres in growing industries
 - Expanding existing Centres
 - CET trainer capacity building
 - Setting up an Institute of Adult Learning (IAL)
 - Tripartite partnership
 - MOM – MOE – WDA

Developed into a broad national project

- Current CET infrastructure
 - A network of five Career Centres
 - 40 CET Centres offering training and career services
 - A WSQ framework, covering 33 industries
 - IAL for CPD

Developed into a broad national project

- CET 2020
 - Increased involvement by employers in building and valuing skills and career services
 - e.g. Sectoral Manpower Strategies
 - Informed learning and career choices
 - e.g. Lifelong Learning Exploration Centre
 - Wide range of high-quality learning opportunities
 - e.g. Technology-enabled learning

Lifelong Employability

- *Learning should ideally be focused on skills that are needed by industries, so that with the newly-acquired skills, a worker could advance in his career and life*

(WDA Annual Report)

Lifelong Employability

- *Lifelong learning is the means to an end, and that end is to add value. The ability to add value will bring about better employability and better income for workers*

(Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, 2010)

Lifelong Employability

- *Improve the employment and employability of Singaporeans (Lee, 2001)*
- *Employable skills throughout working life (Goh cited in Kumar, 2004)*
- *The national training capacity (Gan, 2008)*

Ideology shift in parallel with policy development

	Ideology from	Ideology to
Singapore	Efficiency-driven, -1997	Knowledge-driven, 1999-

From efficiency-driven principles

- People's Action Party (PAP)
 - Singapore is *government-made under the continuous regime* (Low, 2001)
- 1960s-70s
 - 'Survival'
 - 1960s-70s
 - Developmental state
 - *A tight coupling of education and training systems with state-determined economic policies* (Gopinathan, 2007)

From efficiency-driven principles

- 1980s-90s
 - ‘Efficiency’ (Goh and Gopinathan, 2008)
 - Economic restructuring
 - Higher value-added production
 - Capital-intensive industries
 - Investment-driven economy (Law, 2008)

From efficiency-driven principles

- Second half of the 'efficiency' phase
 - Introduction of lifelong learning in TSLN
 - As an important efficiency strategy
 - Emphasis on a continuum between school and adult learning
 - To increase human capital suitable in the investment-driven economy

To knowledge-driven principles

- 1999-, M21 onward
 - ‘Knowledge’
 - Innovation-driven economy (Law, 2008)
 - *Globalized, entrepreneurial and diversified economy*
 - External and internal challenges
 - Emerging economies
 - The ageing society
 - Quest for Lifelong Employability

To knowledge-driven principles

- *Our future prosperity will be built on a knowledge-based economy.... The types of jobs change, and change rapidly. This means that workers must have broad basic skills and the capacity to learn new skills only then will they have employable skills throughout their working lives. So we must have **Thinking Workers and a Learning Workforce.***

(Goh cited in Kumar, 2004)

To knowledge-driven principles


- Lifelong Employability slogans
 - Thinking Workers and a Learning Workforce
 - Lifelong Learning for Lifelong Earning
 - Lifelong Employability for Economic Security



What is the point of lifelong learning?

In Singapore, the point is

- Lifelong learning legitimises
 - Lifelong Employability
 - Knowledge-based principles
 - Workforce enhancement



Comparing the cases between Singapore and Japan

Comparing the cases of Singapore and Japan

- Policy development from a remedy of the educational weakness to a broad national project

	Remedy	Broad national project
Singapore	Solution to the front-ended education and training system, 1997	Lifelong employment, 1999-
Japan	Solution to a credential society, 1984-8	Community bonding, 1990s

Comparing the cases of Singapore and Japan

- Ideology shift in parallel with policy development

	Ideology from	Ideology to
Singapore	Efficiency-driven, -1997	Knowledge-driven, 1999-
Japan	Neo-liberalism, 1980s	Quasi-communitarianism, 1990s-

Conclusion

- Lifelong learning has been interpreted and implemented differently and flexibly through times and across spaces
- Japan and Singapore cases: convincing illustration of the adaptability and legitimacy of lifelong learning
 - Japan : social considerations
 - Singapore: workforce enhancement

Conclusion

- Key features of lifelong learning
 - Adaptability
 - Context adaptive (Kraus, 2002)
 - Recontextualisations and renegotiations (Edwards and Boreham, 2003)
 - Legitimacy
 - Lifelong learning as a legitimator
 - Lifelong learning is legitimated

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