

Committee IV
Crises in Education in the 1980's:
A Survey of Educational Values and Systems

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**EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ASIAN COUNTRIES:
ISSUES AND COPING STRATEGIES**

by

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Asian region consists of some forty independent countries. In 1980, there were 2,558 million people (roughly 58% of the world population) living in this part of the world (which covers 20.3% of the world land area) with per capita income ranging from as high as US\$8,378 in Japan (1981) to as low as US\$112 in Bangladesh (1978/1979). The population density of the region is fairly high and the rapid population growth is still a considerable handicap for economic development in most of the Asian countries. While urbanization is growing steadily in most of the countries, the urban population is still a small percentage of the total population in the region.

Excluding Japan, which is highly industrialized, and the Middle East oil-exporting nations, the rest of the Asian countries can be drawn with a dividing line of per capita income settling at US\$360 per annum. Those low-income countries where per capita income is lower than the above mentioned level are still in the condition of underdevelopment, but the countries which can be placed in the middle income bracket are actually newly industrializing countries. Although their per capita income is generally far behind that of the industrialized nations, these newly upsurged countries have made great strides both in economic growth and in the process of modernization in the past decade. Today, developing countries like Singapore, the Republic of China (Taiwan) and South Korea have

drawn international attention and built themselves a reputation with their highest sustained rate of economic growth. Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines also have undergone an immense change in their socio-economic aspect.

This essay will attempt to describe the main educational issues and the coping strategies in the Asian countries, but the discussion will be limited to within the scope of the newly industrializing countries where education plays a most dynamic role in nation building and economic development of the country. The school system is envisaged as a means for training qualified manpower and productive workers for socio-economic development. These nations represent a sort of homogeneous category, not only because of their similar position regarding the stage of economic development but also due to the common background of suffering under colonialism in the past. Except for Thailand, these countries had been ruled by industrialized powers until the end of the Second World War. In the case of South Korea and Taiwan, both were occupied by Japan for over half a century. Even Thailand which was nominally independent, was subjected to external pressure for quite a long period of time. Thailand had been within the sphere of influence of the United Kingdom. Under the colonial rule, cultural ties were built up in each country with the political suzerain, and for better or worse, many aspects of the culture and institutions were implanted and absorbed from abroad. Education was especially influenced by such cultural ties.

Educationally speaking, most of the Asian countries are dependent to a certain extent upon the industrialized nations, in particular upon their former colonial powers, in terms of research production, educational facilities and intellectual life. The scholars and educational leaders in Oriental societies have mainly been trained and have obtained their advanced degrees from universities in industrialized nations. The usage of the European language in academic communication, textbooks and scientific journals is very common. The overwhelming dominance of the former colonial powers in technology, scholarship and publishing has determined the educational structure of developing countries in Asia.

Education is highly valued in Asia in general. Two cross-currents affect the educational development of this region. On one hand, the population aspires to climb up the educational ladder as they see in it, rightly or wrongly, a better way to a promising career and a prestigious career. On the other hand, the governing leaders assume the underdevelopment of their country as a consequence of the low economic productivity which in turn stems from the underdeveloped state of human capital in their country. Education is charged with the mission of providing the young with a competence required for productive participation in the modernizing economy. Thus, the efforts are focused upon the extension of a modern mass education.

A pervading conflict is existing in Asian education. While the

government emphasizes vocational and technical education suited to the requirements of national modernization and economic development, the general public, however, tends to show their preference for an academic type of education program which is favourable for access to higher education. In response to the increasing demand of schooling and also conflicting needs, the Asian governments are concurrently seeking to reorient the educational structure and to expand their school system to meet the credential requirements of the population.

11. QUANTITY AND QUALITY IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Over the last three decades, the countries of the Asian region have generally witnessed a phenomenal growth in the school population and the expansion of access to the secondary and post-secondary institutions. This notable increase is particularly evident in the field of higher education which is characterized by a spectacular rise in enrollment and the number of institutions of higher learning. The statistics on higher education in South Korea and Taiwan will serve as an example for showing the scale of expansion that has taken place over the last thirty years or so.

TABLE 1. Quantative Growth of Education in the Republic of Korea.

YEAR	NO.OF INSTITUTION	NO.OF STUDENTS	ENROLLMENT GROWTH OVER 5 YEAR PERIOD	ENROLLMENT RATIO (19- 22 AGES)
1950	55	11 358		0.82%
1955	74	84 996	648.3%	5.57%
1960	85	101 041	18.9%	5.39%
1965	162	141 636	40.2%	7.53%
1970	168	201 436	42.2%	10.11%
1975	204	297 219	47.6%	10.97%
1980	236	615 452	107.1%	18.14%
1982	255	954 066	55.0%*	28.08% (1)

* (Enrollment growth over a two year period).

Korea can be exemplified as one of the most remarkable countries regarding the expansion of education among the countries after liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. The increase in primary school enrollment was astounding. Today, almost every child of elementary school age is enrolled. Although compulsory education is six years, the elimination of the middle school entrance examination in 1968 resulted in a rapid increase in the percentage of primary school graduates advancing to the middle schools; it rose from 58.4% in 1969 to 95.7% in 1980. The number of middle schools more than tripled to 2,100 since 1945 while enrollment increased 7.8 times, reaching 2.4 million. (2) The quantitative growth of colleges and universities (including junior colleges) is most notable. In 1945, the number of institutions of higher

education was 19 with 7,819 students, while the last statistics in 1983 show that the number of colleges and universities was 257 with an enrollment of 1,013,628 students. The period of 1950-55 witnessed the most notable expansion of Korean higher education owing to the end of the Korean War in 1953 which was followed by an extensive reconstruction program.

The Republic of China can also be exemplified with an impressive educational growth over the last three decades. The growth rate of higher education has been more significant than that of other levels of education. The following table gives a general view of the scale of expansion. (3)

TABLE 2. Quantative Growth of Higher Education in the Republic of China.

YEAR	NO.OF COLLEGES & UNIV.	NO.OF STUDENT COLLEGES & UNIV.	ENROLLMENT GROWTH OVER 5 YEAR PERIOD (COLL.& UNIV.)	NO.OF JUNIOR COLLIGES	NO.OF STUDENT JUNIOR COLLEGES	ENROLLMENT GROWTH OVER 5 YEAR PERIOD (JUNIOR COLLEGES)
1950	4	5 379		3	1286	
1955	10	13 629	153.0%	5	4545	253.0%
1960	15	27 172	99.0%	12	7888	73.6%
1965	21	55 812	105.0%	35	29534	274.4%
1970	22	95 145	71.0%	70	108328	266.8%
1975	25	140 630	48.0%	76	150226	38.7%
1980	27	159 871	14.0%	77	183134	21.9%
1982	28	171 311	7.2%*	77	203722	11.2%*

* (Enrollment grow h over a two year period).

The period of 1960-1970 witnessed a very spectacular expansion of higher education in Taiwan. A number of conditions combined together to produce this rapid growth. The foremost was due to a school-age population boom after the Second World War; pressure for the equality of opportunity has also opened the university door to the non-traditional students. However, the most important factor of all is the continuing improvement of living standards brought about by the economic upsurge has helped the general public to send their children to institutions of higher learning. The tuition is low enough that even the modest family can afford it.

A closer examination of the basic data on the quantitative development of higher education in Taiwan reveals many significant aspects worthy to note. Firstly, the growth rate of higher education has been higher for women than men in terms of total enrollment. In 1950, the ratio of women in the total enrollment of universities and colleges with degree programs was 10.9%; this proportion went up to 23.4% in 1960 and 40.7% in 1980. Secondly, private institutions have made certain obvious gains in the growth of higher education. In 1955, the proportion of students enrolled in private institutions was 10.8% of the total number of university and college students, but this proportion increased to 44.8% in 1965 and 59.4% in 1982. Thirdly, there has been a slow but continuous increase in the number of adult and non-traditional students. Furthermore, the graduate students enrolled for Master and Doctorate programs in universities have rapidly increased during the last decade.

Although the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China have achieved such a quantitative development of education in a comparatively short period of time, both countries have experienced various problems in the qualitative and structural aspects. Many measures were taken to assure the quality of post-secondary education. In the Republic of China for example, the government has taken action to control the quantitative development ever since 1973. There has only been four new public institutions established since the last decade. None of the applications for establishing private institutions have been approved. The annual increase of university and college freshman students have been strictly controlled to under 3% during this same period. The rationale behind this policy lies upon the assumption that quantity over-expansion accompanied with the limits of physical facilities, teaching staff and other educational resources would lead to the downgrading of academic quality. It is also assumed that under-employment of college graduates in Taiwan has become a problem of public concern because of the over-supply of highly educated manpower.

Although the increase of teaching staff has failed to keep pace with that of the students, and the excessive teaching load of the faculty member has become a serious problem, the Korean Ministry of Education still adopts a mass higher education policy. Just in a short period of two years (1980-1982), college enrollment increased 55% and the enrollment ratio of college-age population jumped from 18.14% in 1980 to 28.08% in 1982. This unusual expansion of higher education

resulted from the decision by the Korean government to migrate the surplus high school graduates from the capital city to the provinces. Many provincial junior colleges were upgraded to the status of colleges and universities. The Korean government also approved the establishment of new universities, colleges and branch campuses of the existing colleges and universities in Seoul.

Among the developing countries in Asia, the Philippines is one of the countries which is concerned with quantitative expansion but with very limited educational resources. Even though the GNP per capita is low (US\$460 in 1979) and the distribution of wealth is uneven, the Philippines followed a mass higher education model of its former colonial power, the U.S.A. after its independence in 1946. Consequently, the colleges and universities have multiplied in response to the strong demand of higher education. Since the government could not afford to establish a sufficient number of higher education institutions, private institutions were allowed to come into existence more or less when or where they wanted. In 1979, there were approximately 600 colleges and universities offering degree programs, but they were only 7% of the college students who were enrolled in public institutions. The private sector takes care of the rest with no financial support from the government. The Philippines also adopted an open access policy in regard to higher education before 1979. However, since that year, a national examination has been introduced with an attempt to control the quality. Recently, the Filipino government has also planned to

establish some kind of accrediting system which will tighten up the quality.

It is evident that the very fast growth of student enrollment and the number of institutions without a corresponding provision for facilities and qualified teaching staff, has put higher education in the Philippines under heavy stress. There are a series of tough problems such as heavy teaching loads for the staff, lack of research facilities in the universities, a large number of student drop-outs from courses and a growing unemployment and under-employment amongst university graduates. It is estimated to result in the unemployment of about 70,000 college graduates in 1978 and about 95,000 in 1982.(5) Since 93% of the students are enrolled in private universities and colleges, most of them work on a very limited budget. Thus, it is in the interest of these private institutions to enroll as many students as possible, irrespective of the facilities of the staff they can provide. It follows that the Filipino government, with its financial stringency and scarce resources, is now confronting a dilemma of the simultaneous pursuit of 'quality' and 'quantity', an embarrassing situation common to many Asian countries.

Almost without exception, education administration in Asian countries is characterized by a centralized system. The Ministry of Education, or its equivalent agency, plays a very powerful controlling role in assuming a nation-wide homogeneous school system. In an effort to upgrade the manpower quality and to expand educational opportunity,

Ministries of Education in Asian countries have advanced the notion of education as an investment and have undertaken nation-wide educational planning as a key strategy to overcome educational underdevelopment of the country. Many Asian governments have set up a specific unit within the government in charge of educational planning, and long range development plans have been drawn up for implementation in accordance with the national objectives and policy.

There is criticism which points out that 'educational planning has been oversold and it has led people and governments to expect more from it than it was realistically able to deliver in terms of development and change in educational systems.'(6) It is also noted that the effectiveness of projection and other quantitative techniques have been overestimated and the cultural and social constraints are always being neglected. In most cases, Asian educational planners follow the models, methods and tools of planning applied by Western experts uncritically without adequate regard for their own particular situation. Nevertheless, educational planning in Asian countries still fulfill part of its function in the sense that in the process of planning, the educational and developmental needs of the nation or the region are articulated and a certain kind of communication amongst political decision-makers, educators and the country's silent majority is going on. The educational planner is thus given an important role as communicator or facilitator of communication.

It is widely recognized that educational planning models are permeated with economic concepts. There are more and more economists taking an increasing interest in education over the last twenty years. It is believed that the economic approach is an excellent means of encouraging education to move closer to reality and to take into more account the close relationship between education and socio-economic development.

111. CULTURAL PLURALISM AND NATIONAL UNITY.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, continued conflicts with ethnic complications have troubled many newly independent Asian countries. The border disputes, riots and expulsion of minority settlers have made headline news in the Asian press. The region of South East Asia represents one of the most complex ethnic and culturally plural areas of the world. In such multi-racial and culturally pluralistic societies, education has often been used as a means for uniting different groups into a sense of nationhood.

Just take the ASEAN countries (The Association of South East Asian Nations) for example. Singapore, with a population of 2.47 million (1982) is comprised of 1,896,700 Chinese; 362,400 Malays; 158,300 Indians (including Pakistanis, Bangladeshi^a~~ans~~ and Sri Lank^a~~ans~~), and 54,400 persons of other ethnic groups. The Chinese constituted 76.7% of the population, the Malays 14.7%, the Indians 6.4% and the remaining, 2.2%. In Singapore, English, Chinese, Malay

are the official languages.(7) In 1980, Malaysia had a population of 13.43 million. The Malays made up 45% of the population, the Chinese 32%, the Indians 9% and the other ethnic groups 14%. Although the Malay language is the official language by constitution, Chinese, English and Tamil are also major languages being spoken in Peninsula Malaysia. In Thailand, where the Thai make up 85% of the population of 47.5 million (1982), the Chinese with a proportion of 10% and the Malays at 2.5% make up a sizeable minority. Similar to Thailand, both Indonesia and the Philippines are composed of many different tribal groups interspersed with European settlers (Dutch in Indonesia and Spanish in the Philippines). Chinese settlers in Indonesia (population: 151.8 million in 1980) and the Philippines (population: 48.3 million in 1980) made up respectively 3-4% of the population, and control main economic sectors such as banking, business and import/export firms. Chinese language is still taught privately in these two countries, though the Chinese medium schools have virtually ceased to exist.

Having undertaken a comparative study of education in culturally pluralistic societies, Keith Watson suggested a typology of approaches regarding the educational policies adopted by Asian countries toward the minority groups within their national borders.(8) They are: 1. The recognition approach, whereby the right of minority languages, cultures and education are recognized in the national institution (i.e. India); 2. The unification approach, whereby a national language of instruction and centrally prescribed

textbooks and curricula are used to create a unified sense of nationhood (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia); 3. The separation approach, whereby the government tries to develop a common nationality while at the same time preserving the different languages and cultures of the minority groups (e.g. Singapore); 4. The integration approach, whereby immigrant children are integrated into the mainstream of a homogeneous society through language and external pressure (e.g. Thailand); 5. The non-recognition or laissez-faire approach.

Even though such a classification helps to differentiate the educational policies pursued by the Asian governments vis-a-vis their ethnic minority groups, in fact all the countries of the Asian region claim to be creating a unified nation through their diverse population using the school system, the medium of instruction in particular, as a means to achieve the end of national unity. We shall examine the policies pursued by Malaysia and Singapore as examples.

In Malaysia, there was a complexity of schools before its independence. There were schools for the Malay children, schools for the Chinese children, schools for the Indian children and schools providing education in English for preparing for the Cambridge Overseas Schools Certificate Examination. When Malaya became independent in 1957, the first step of the newly elected government was to seek unification of the three racial groups, and this was done through the unification of what had hitherto been

compartmentalized educational systems.....the English medium, the Malay vernacular and the Chinese and Tamil vernacular systems. In the interest of national unity, the Malaysian government insisted on using Malay as the national language, and education in the Malay-medium was free all through the educational system. From primary to secondary levels, the teaching of the national language has been made compulsory for school children.

In 1969, Bahasa Malaysia was officially declared the national language and the language of the government. From 1971, Bahasa Malaysia was to replace English as the medium of instruction in all English medium primary schools beginning in Grade 1; from 1978, all national secondary schools; and from 1982, all upper secondary schools and from 1983, all university education was to be conducted through the medium of Bahasa Malaysia. Examinations were likewise to be changed to Bahasa Malaysia and a credit pass was to be a prerequisite for entry into teacher training institutions, higher education and the government service. Even more disturbing for the non-Malays is that a credit pass is required for study abroad, whether or not on a scholarship.(9)

Singapore also provides a colourful kaleiscope of a multi-racial society; differences in ethnicity, culture, religion and language make it a land of contrast. But in comparison with its neighbour Malaysia, Singapore has pursued a policy of tolerance and respect

in regard to the cultural value of minority groups. Although the Chinese makes up 76.6% of the population, Singapore intently promotes a policy to create a unified sense of nationhood through using English as a national language. Even with the fact that Mandarin Chinese, Malay and Tamil are recognized as the official languages, English has actually become the working language of public administration, international commerce and academic communication. For years, the Singapore government has deliberately phased out the main Chinese dialect spoken by most of the Chinese origins, namely Hokkien, Cantonese, Hainanese, Hakka and Foochow through a Mandarin speaking campaign. During the last three decades, English-stream schools have gradually pervaded over the Chinese-stream schools. In 1959, there were 27,223 pupils enrolled in Chinese-stream schools. The number constituted 45.9% of the total enrollment, but the enrollment of the Chinese-stream schools decreased to 5,289 (11.2%) in 1978. Meanwhile, English-stream school enrollment climbed up from 28,113 in 1959 to 41,995 in 1978.

Singapore's educational authority assumed that parents send their children to English stream schools in the belief that an English education would give them better career prospects.⁽¹⁰⁾ However, this is just one part of reality as opposed to the whole picture. Over the years, measures were taken through a bilingual policy to raise the English standard in Chinese language schools and that has brought out a consequential change in the performance level in the Chinese language. The Singapore government apparently sticks to one common language policy. Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew made the point clearly,

'If we are to be one nation, we need at least one common language in order to communicate with each other. Eventually, we shall share one culture. Meanwhile, we can only hope to share more values and social attitudes in common.'(11) In the mind of the Singaporean Prime Minister, 'The greatest value in the teaching and learning of Chinese is in the transmission of the norms of social and moral behaviour. This means principally Confucianist beliefs and ideas, of man, society and the state.'(12), and Prime Minister Lee also assumed 'I do not believe we shall lose our culture and roots because Chinese is not taught as the first language; language is related to, but not synonymous with culture.' (13)

During the last few decades, there were a series of measures to regulate and suppress Chinese language in favour of English language instruction. The Nanyang University, the only Chinese-medium university in South East Asia announced that English would be used as the medium of instruction. Three years later, the Nanyang University merged with the then University of Singapore. Its campus was occupied by a new English medium institution.....the Nanyang Technological Institute, set up in 1981. In 1979, nine Chinese secondary schools were selected for development into effective bilingual schools, and to raise the English proficiency of pupils in these Chinese schools, an immersion program was implemented so that pupils in the non-English medium schools were also ordered to attend the immersion program in English medium schools or the

supplementary English program in their own schools.

In August 1978, an Education Study Team, led by Dr. Goh Kong Swee, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and actually Minister of Education, was appointed by Prime Minister Lee to work out a 'New Education System'. The team recommended in its 'Report on the Ministry of Education 1978' the following schools reforms which have been implemented in stages since January 1980.

Under the new system, the first three years of primary education will emphasize the learning of language instead of the acquisition of factual knowledge. At the end of Primary Three, pupils will be streamed into the normal bilingual course, the extended bilingual course or the monolingual course according to their performance in the first three years. Pupils in the normal bilingual and extended bilingual courses will study two languages in addition to other subjects (pupils have to be proficient in English and to be at least literate in Malay/Chinese/Tamil), and complete their primary education in six and eight years respectively. The pupils of the monolingual course will last five years after the streaming and then after taking an examination, shall be awarded a certificate, they will join the Vocational and Industrial Training Board for vocational training. These vocationally-oriented pupils are asked to study one language if the language studied is not English. The pupils will also undergo a program in oral English.

Based on their performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations, pupils will be further streamed into a normal course, an express course and a special course. Pupils in the Secondary Special and the Normal course will study two languages (English/ and Malay/Chinese/Tamil) and will sit for the General Certificate of Education, 'O' level Examination, at the end of the fourth year. While pupils in the secondary extended course will follow a modified curriculum and will sit for the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination at the end of the fourth year and may proceed to sit for the GCE 'O' level Examination after an extra~~y~~ year of study, some go for employment or vocational training after the CSE examination. For this group, two languages are also learned (English and one mother tongue language), one at the first language level and the other at the second language level. The New Education System is supposed to provide ~~more~~ flexible programs according to the different capacities of the pupils, but apparently, it also serves to reinforce the bilingual educational policy with the aim of ensuring adequate proficiency in the English language to meet the objective of the Singapore Government for building a cohesive multiracial society through the use of one common language.

Even with economic growth and technological advancement as a prime national goal, Singapore has devoted to conserve the traditional values, the Confucian ethics in particular. But some Chinese Singaporeans are doubtful about the statement made by Prime Minister

Lee in which he asserted that 'The ideas which language carries endure despite changes to the language which carries them', many argued that language and culture are too closely intertwined that it is inevitable that cultural values would suffer should usage of the language in which they are transmitted decline.(14)

Several countries in Asia also have language problems, but in different perspectives. These countries have decided to use their own national language to replace the foreign language used earlier as the medium of instruction in universities. But such a transition has not proved to be easy. There are many difficulties to be solved such as the lack of trained teachers capable of using the national language, lack of books, publications and teaching materials in the national language and the need to continue to use an international language for scholarly pursuit. In conclusion, language as an educational medium is still a hot issue in many Asian countries.

IV. MORAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Traditionally, Asian nations and their societies as a whole have fully recognized the importance of moral education. It is widely believed that education is concerned with more than teaching factual knowledge, living skills or promoting intellectual abilities. The cultivation of the whole social value system and wholesome character together with the enhancement of national identity are taken as a primal goal of basic education in most Asian countries.

In an age of accelerated socio-cultural change and a rapid movement toward industrialization, Asian educators and social leaders are fully aware of the deteriorating moral situation manifested by an upsurge of violence and juvenile delinquency, the eroding of working ethics and industriousness, and a declining of group loyalty and filial piety. It is assumed that the young generation nowadays is more inclined to personal comfort and pleasure pursuit rather than public service and moral obligation, and the educational system is the main culprit in the present situation. It is at this point that people feel strongly for a strengthened moral education.

Just as mentioned by the project entitled 'Moral Education In Asia' (15), the field of moral education is not only the most abstract and occasionally controversial, but also, the most difficult to handle in concrete terms.....there is a great divergence between precept and practice at the individual, societal and national levels.....some countries do not have any programme of moral education as such. Instead, they depend almost entirely on religious education for the character building of children. There are other countries where the imparting of religious education in schools is forbidden by law. There were divergent views about the whole concept of moral education.

The research project indicated that the following objectives of moral education were more or less common in Asian countries. (16)

1. Full development of child's personality in its physical, mental,

emotional and spiritual aspects.

2. Inculcation of good manners and of responsible and cooperative citizenship.
3. Developing respect for the dignity of the individual and sanctity of fundamental human rights.
4. Inculcation of a spirit of patriotism and national integration.
5. Developing a democratic way of thinking and living.
6. Developing tolerance towards and understanding of different religious faiths.
7. Developing a sense of human brotherhood at the social, national and international level.
8. Helping children to have faith in some supernatural power and order that is supposed to control this universe and human life.
(This applies to the communities of believers).
9. Enabling children to make moral decisions on the basis of sound moral principles.

Although there are many differences in the present status and instructional programmes of moral education in Asian countries, there are still some similarities among the countries that share common cultural origins. Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of China (Taiwan) and Singapore are those countries under the influence of Confucian heritage. The emphasis of national solidarity, filial piety, social responsibility, truthfulness, human brotherhood, group loyalty.....etc are the values highly emphasized in moral

education programmes. Confucian ethics have been recently compared to the Protestant ethic in capitalistic societies in serving as a mobilizing force for promoting economic growth in East Asia. In his best seller 'Japan As No.1', Ezra F. Vogel analyzes the Japanese development into the world's most competitive industrial power, and how and why the Japanese industry is so successful. In addition to its technical expertise and management, Vogel places high value on some factors of national character such as company loyalty, devotion and diligence of the Japanese workers. However, after almost two decades of economic miracles, Japan's equivalent of the old Protestant work ethics is in fact being eroded by the changing values of a young generation which ^{knows} nothing of the hardships of the immediate post-war years.(17) Several surveys have revealed that young Japanese these days are not prepared to work as hard as their fathers. Personal comfort is becoming more important than company loyalty; 'workaholics' being replaced by the leisure seeking.

Fearing the possible decline of Confucian ethics which is regarded by Prime Minister Lee of Singapore as the cornerstone of social harmony and the valuable incentive for economic growth, Singapore's leader has decided to take every measure to avoid the possible deculturalization of Chinese ethics at the same time as advocating the policy of English medium schooling. In order to preserve the traditional values, Singapore's Ministry of Education introduced a new subject, 'Confucianism' along with 'Knowledge of Religion' into the secondary school curriculum. A report on moral education

was released in 1979 which was written by a group of parliamentarians and is likely to form the basis of the school-based moral education programme in the 1980's. It is apparent that political leaders are very much concerned about the possible loss of cultural roots and traditional norms due to the rapid urbanization and industrialization. A senior government official stated that, 'The traditional roles of the parents and home in shaping the moral development of children has unfortunately weakened in modern societies (due to) modernization and urbanization.... Young people today are growing up in an age of religious skepticism, moral confusion and almost universal uncertainty because of the questioning of traditional values and beliefs.' It is recognized that the attitude of Singapore's youth is becoming more materialistic, unwilling to sacrifice, placing self before nation, even unfilial, a syndrome of corruption has taken root in Singapore.

In Taiwan, Confucian ethics is assimilated with two moral courses called 'Living and Ethics' at the primary level, and 'Civics and Morality' at the secondary level. The eight prime values, i.e. group loyalty, filial piety, respect for others, brotherly love, trustfulness, social justice, peace and cosmopolitanism are particularly emphasized in the moral instruction and textbooks. Taking into account the social disorder brought about by the urbanization and industrialization, educational authorities have devoted untiring efforts in calling attention to the virtues to be inculcated in moral lessons, i.e. respect for law and order,

tolerance and cooperation, honesty, awareness of public interest, respect for human rights, and the like. Contrast to the so-called 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' launched by Mao Tse-tung, a catastrophe of Chinese cultural heritage and traditional values devastated by the rebel Red Guards, the Republic of China initiated and promoted a movement, 'Chinese Cultural Renaissance' which has brought about a quantity of instructional materials and audio-visual media being used in moral education programmes.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen's 'San Min Chu Yi' (The Three Principles of the People) (18) represents a synthesis of Confucian humanism and modern democratic thought of the West. Although being regarded as a political ideology addressed on the subject of national identity, democratic participation and human rights and the promotion of the people's livelihood, the San Min Chu Yi serves as a conceptual framework for the political socialization of Chinese students in Taiwan.

Although Confucian ethics are still an essential part of the Korean moral programme, Korean 'spiritual education' heavily stresses the patriotism due to the threat of Communism from the north. 'One of the objectives of our educational reform', proclaimed the Korean Minister of Education, 'is the strengthening of spiritual education. What we call spiritual education here is a combination of what is generally called the moral education and political education.' Minister Rhee further explained, 'In other words, spiritual education

is designed to cultivate a moral consciousness within our growing generation, accustom them to social norms, and raise them into citizens who respect order and love their country.'(19)

Minister Rhee also pinpointed the core curriculum of moral education at the different levels of schooling; 'Spiritual education's core on the primary level is to implant national pride and love for the country into the minds of the children', he asserted that discipline and propriety are virtues particularly important for the secondary school. 'The propriety mentioned here means the natural introversion of the moral value in our traditional culture. Orderly life and training for propriety are two very important tasks in civic spiritual education. Two principles for college students' spiritual education are first, college students should respect the law and regulations,....(and) second, spiritual education for college students can be achieved mainly through hard study, earnest scientific research and responsible learning of skills.'(20)

An important aspect of moral education programmes in Asian countries is related to the development of the spirit of national identity and patriotism in children. Korea and Taiwan are good examples with both countries whose security is threatened by communist invasion and has the reunification of the whole country being the supreme national goal. Some other countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, where there is no immediate danger from outside invasion, national identity is also emphasized in light of the eventual

integrating and strengthening of a multi-cultural nation.

In multi-religious societies and in those countries where the population is a mixed one of believers and non-believers, a moral education programme is developed without relying on religion.

However, in some other countries, moral education is synonymous with religious education.

In India and Thailand, moral education is often combined with religious instruction.(21) One aspect of this tradition concerns the emphasis of affective factors, and moral education is conceived as primarily a process of deliberate character formation. By contrast, moral education in the countries where it is imparted exclusively in terms of civic values, the moral judgement based on sound reasoning is an important aim of moral education. In these countries, Professor Laurence Kohlberg's work at Harvard is becoming very popular; moral education has become an independent field of study which involves a great deal of understanding and cognitive process. In such a process, knowing rather than doing, reasoning rather than feeling play the central role.

Indonesia adopted a policy of religious instruction in public schools and it is the parents who decide whether children are to receive such instruction. The school has to sponsor the practice of religion. It is also stipulated that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education should cooperate fully and efficiently

to implement the policy of religious instruction in secular schools. The former is responsible for the organization and distribution of textbooks and curriculum design, whereas the latter has the right to decide whether or not a religious teacher can actually teach religion in a secular school.(22)

Religious instruction in Indonesia is designed to sustain the status quo in the country. Since Moslem is a majority (89%), and Islam is the dominant culture of Indonesia, therefore it is assumed that the government is responsible to instruct a child in the religion of his parents. It is also assumed that religious instruction is contributing significantly towards national cohesion by cultivating a sense of mutual love and a common belief system.

Secular religious instruction in Singapore seems somewhat different in intention from that of Indonesia. 'Bible knowledge' or 'Islamic religious knowledge' is introduced as an elective subject parallel with the moral education course at the secondary level. The primary aim of religious instruction in Singapore is conceived to develop a coherent and culturally rooted secular ideology which may provide the youngster useful guidance in dealing with moral dilemmas on the one hand, and understanding and tolerance of the similarities and differences amongst religions on the other.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Traditionally, education is highly valued by Asian people. With the economic development and the access of the school age population to basic education, "the explosion of educational aspirations" is creating the dominant pressure for educational expansion. Aware that "education as a profitable investment" and maximization of educational opportunities helps to reduce economic and social inequalities as well as inequitable developing benefits, governments of Asian countries have taken the educational expansion as a national endeavour. Thus, the educational system in Asian countries underwent an ^{un}precedented expansion and change over the last three decades. However, due to resource constraints and financial limitations, the rapid expansion of education has in some respects created as many problems as it has solved. In these problems, the expansion and the qualitative transformation of education are intrinsically linked. Besides, a considerable discrepancy between the output of graduates and the absorption capacity of the manpower market exists in most parts of the region; unemployment and underemployment of certain types of graduates is particularly evident at the collegiate level.

Because of the absence of job opportunities and research facilities in addition to the cultural ties between Asian countries and their former suzerain, the problem of a brain drain in most parts of the region has become an alarming situation. The higher pay and comfort

also attracts a considerable number of trained manpower (medical doctors, engineers and technicians) from developing countries. Although so many Asian leaders went through an useful training and in many cases obtained their advanced degree from Western universities, the flow of high level manpower out of the region has cost so much for the Asian countries and has an unnegligible impact on Asian education.

Since so many high school graduates seek university credential and make every effort to cram into prestigious institutions of higher learning, most Asian countries have adopted a strict selective process (in most cases, through a competitive entrance examination) to assure the equal opportunity of access. Such a nationwide joint entrance examination has caused many problems and is being criticized for its heavy psychological burden placed on both youngsters and their families. The intensive drilling and rote-memorization involved in preparing for the examination has also been denounced as suffocating student's potential creativity and handicapping the high schools to a normalized curriculum and pedagogical innovation. It is also realized that high school students are more interested in examination preparation than in substantial learning and personality growth. Teachers constantly pay more attention in coaching and drilling students in taking exercise tests than teaching the moral values and behaviour.

With the industrial sector assuming an increasingly dynamic role

in the economic development and modernization of Asian countries, a striking shift of emphasis and orientation in favour of natural sciences, science-based technology and vocationally oriented education is undergoing at the core of change in educational programmes as well as the motivations and attitudes of the students. Such a shift of emphasis corresponds to the educational policy of Asian governments which view education as an instrument for realizing these broader socio-economic objectives, but the emphasis on economic growth and modernization should not be allowed to overshadow another and no less fundamental aim of educational development, that is, the transmission and enrichment of common cultural and moral values. It is in these values that the individual and society find their identity and worth.(23) Scholars and educators in Asia are now beginning to take a Humanistic perspective which rejects the "value-free" approach to learning. It is now recognized that learning "how to be" is as important as learning "how to do". As the rapid deterioration of discipline and moral standards has drawn wide concern in the developing countries, the general public will come to recognize in the 1980's that the most profound need of our age is to give meaning, purpose and direction to the world where we live and to rediscover the meaning of human life.

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