

# Teacher Education in ASEAN

by  
icis Wong

# **Teacher Education in ASEAN**

Edited by

**F.H.K. Wong**



**HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL BOOKS (ASIA) LTD**

**Kuala Lumpur - Singapore - Hong Kong**

HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL BOOKS (ASIA) LTD

Suite 4012-3, The Regent of Kuala Lumpur,  
Jalan Imbi, Kuala Lumpur 06-23, Malaysia  
41 Jalan Pemimpin, Singapore 20  
P.O. Box 6086, Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office,  
Kowloon, Hong Kong

LONDON EDINBURGH MELBOURNE AUCKLAND KINGSTON  
JOHANNESBURG IBADAN LUSAKA NAIROBI NEW DELHI

© Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd., 1976  
First Published 1976

Printed for Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd  
by Hoong Fatt Press, 9 Harper Road, Singapore 13

# **Teacher Education in ASEAN**

## Preface

The lack of literature on Teacher Education in ASEAN countries has prompted the contributors to write this book. Indeed, as far as they know, this is the first in-depth study of teacher education in the region, apart from the UNESCO reports that are published from time to time. That there has been no such book to date is certainly not because the subject-matter is unimportant, nor is it reckoned by the authorities to be of no importance. Rather the contributors think that the topic is so important and complicated that any attempt to study teacher education in ASEAN countries will have to be undertaken on a joint-venture basis. The editor is fortunate in having this excellent team of colleagues to make this attempt.

In writing this book, the contributors had in mind firstly, the students in colleges and universities of the region who should know the history, aims, structure and curricula of teacher education in their own country and those of neighbouring countries. Secondly, teachers who wish to keep in touch with developments after they have completed their training may find much in this book that is new and significant. Thirdly, with so much emphasis placed on teacher education, the general public may like to know what is taking place in the teacher training colleges and faculties of education today. Last but not least, there are students of education overseas who desire to know something of the problems and issues of teacher education in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 provides a comparative study of the education systems of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore. This is meant to serve as an introduction to chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in which the other contributors give an account of teacher education in his or her own country. Chapter 7 sums up the teacher education

situation in the region as a whole.

The various contributors have diversified backgrounds and experience and distinctively individual approaches to the topic. Each writer has a special competence in respect to his or her own chapter and has endeavoured to present the main features of teacher education in one country of the region. An approach of this kind cannot be expected to provide a picture that is either uniformly consistent or complete; but the presentation of individual viewpoints does offer a study that is varied, lively and thought-provoking. It is hoped that this publication will be of help to students of Teacher/Comparative/International Education in universities and training colleges and of interest to the general public of the region.

1976

F.H.K. Wong

## Contributors

**Attagara, Bhunthin**, is Chairman of the Committee on Education, House of Legislature, Thailand. Formerly Director-General, Department of Teacher Training, Ministry of Education, Thailand.

**Chang Min Phang, Paul**, is Director of the Centre for Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Formerly Chief Inspector of Schools, Malaysia.

**Gwee, Yee Hean**, is Director of the Institute of Asian Studies, Nanyang University. Formerly Acting Head of the School of Education, University of Singapore.

**Ramos, Paz G.**, is Professorial Dean of the College of Education, University of the Philippines.

**Tanboontek, R.**, is Lecturer in Education at the Sri Nakarindr University, Thailand.

**Tunsiri, Vichai**, is Chief of the Division of Curriculum Development, Department of Educational Technology, Ministry of Education, Thailand.

**Winarno, Surakhmad**, is Head of IKIP Jakarta, Rawamangun. Formerly Director of Teacher Education and Technical Personnel, Ministry of Education, Indonesia.

**Wong Hoy-Kee, Francis**, is Associate Professor of Education and Head of the Division of Comparative Studies in Education at the University of Malaya. Formerly a member of the Malaysian Ministry of Education Committee (1971) appointed to draft the objectives of teacher education, and sub-committee member of the Dr Mahathir's Committee (1974) set up by the Malaysian Government to review the implementation of national education policies.

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Heinemann Educational Books (Asia) Ltd for allowing me to use material from my two previous publications — *Comparative Studies in Southeast Asian Education* (1973) and *The Changing Pattern of Teacher Education in Malaysia* (1974).

F.H.K. Wong



# Contents

Preface	v
The Contributors	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
1 Southeast Asia: An Educational Synopsis	1
<i>Wong Hoy-Kee, Francis</i>	
2 Indonesia	35
<i>Winarno Surakhmad</i>	
3 Thailand	56
<i>Attagara, Tanboontek and Tunsiri</i>	
4 Malaysia	85
<i>Paul Chang Min Phang</i>	
5 Philippines	112
<i>Paz G. Ramos</i>	
6 Singapore	130
<i>Gwee Yee Hean</i>	
7 Conclusion	171
<i>Wong Hoy-Kee, Francis</i>	
Bibliography	181
Index	189

## List of Tables

1	ASEAN Countries: Capital cities, Land areas and Populations	1
2	Thailand: Distribution of Teachers' Qualifications by Types of Institutions	71
3	Thailand: Enrolment of College Students, Regular and Evening Courses, by Types of Institutions and Levels of Education, 1971-1973	87
4	Malaysia: University of Malaya Faculty of Education, Staff and Student Enrolment, 1963-1974	98

## List of Figures

- 1 Educational Flowchart, Indonesia 180a
- 2 The Thai School System 180b
- 3 Educational Patterns of Malaysia 180c
- 4 Educational System of the Philippines 180d
- 5 Educational System of the Republic of Singapore 180e
- 6 Adult Education Programme: A Model 180f
- 7 Indonesia, Various Primary Teacher Training Schemes, 1945–1970 180g
- 8 Indonesia, General Pattern of Primary Teacher Training System, 1960–1970 180h
- 9 Indonesia, General Pattern of Primary and Pre-Primary Teacher Supply System, 1960–1970 180i
- 10 Indonesia, General Pattern of Grade Placement of Elementary School Teacher 180j
- 11 Indonesia, General Pattern of Secondary Teacher Preparation 180j
- 12 Indonesia, General Pattern of Secondary Teacher Supply 180k
- 13 Indonesia, Possible Flow Pattern of Santri for a Pesantren 180l
- 14 Indonesia, Some Patterns of Madrasah Teacher Supply 180m
- 15 Present Teacher Training System, Thailand 180n
- 16 Scheme of Study for Science with Education Programme, Universiti Sains Malaysia 180o
- 17 Philippine Normal College, Manila, Administrative Organization Chart 180p
- 18 Philippine, Organization Chart, Department Proper 180q
- 19 Philippine, Organization Chart, Education Regional Office 180r
- 20 College of Education, University of the Philippines Organizational Setup 180s
- 21 Administrative/Academic Structure of the Institute of Education, Singapore 180t

# 1

## The ASEAN Countries: An Educational Synopsis

F.H.K. Wong

---

### Geography

This book deals with teacher education in five selected countries (Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore) of Southeast Asia which together form the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN). All five countries are in the tropical area of Southeast Asia. The table below shows their capital cities, relative land areas and approximate populations.

TABLE 1  
ASEAN COUNTRIES: CAPITAL CITIES, LAND AREAS & POPULATIONS

	Indonesia	Thailand	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore
Land Area : (in square miles)	735,270	198,000	130,000	115,707	225
Capital City :	Djakarta	Bangkok	Kuala Lumpur	Manila	Singapore
Approximate Population :	129,192,000	36,161,000	10,787,000	38,114,000	2,105,000

Source: SEAMEO, Final Report, Bangkok, 1971, Table 2.

The largest of these five countries is Indonesia, comprising some 13,000 islands stretching in a 3,000-mile long chain from the

Indian Ocean to the Pacific. Thailand, which occupies an area of some 198,000 square miles, lies entirely within the northern tropical zone. Rather smaller than Thailand in land area is Malaysia with a total area of 130,000 square miles. The Philippines, with a land area of 115,707 square miles, is another country of many islands. It has over 7,000 islands, many of which are still unnamed and uninhabited, spread over 1,000 miles from north to south, and 625 miles across the widest part from east to west. The Republic of Singapore, one of the world's smallest nations, consists of Singapore Island itself, with a number of adjacent islets such as Pulau Bukom, Pulau Ubin and Pulau Tekong. The total area of Singapore and the adjacent islands is about 225 square miles.

### **Education**

Educational traditions in ASEAN countries are centuries old. The early Buddhist monasteries were some of the oldest institutions. Older yet was the Hindu 'padepokan' which was not only a meeting place for the village but also a centre of learning where religious instruction was given. Later, with the coming of Islam, boys in Muslim countries like Indonesia and Malaysia often acquired simple literacy in the 'pesantren' or the 'surau' or the Quran classes under a Haji, while in the other countries the temple priest became the main instructor in the village. Early European presence in the region brought little change as trade was the chief reason for their coming to the East. However, alongside the merchants came the Christian missionary who, in varying degrees, showed enthusiasm for the education of the native.

It was not until the time of empire-builders such as Stamford Raffles that any colonial power seriously considered the native to be capable and in need of schooling. As early as 1823 Raffles proposed the establishment of a college which was to be a centre of teaching and research for Southeast Asia. He donated a generous grant from public funds, drew up schemes for a library, a press and even proposed chairs in Malay, Chinese and Thai languages. But even before Singapore was founded, the Reverend R. S. Hutchings had set up, in 1816, the Penang Free School in Pulau Pinang (an island off the Malay Peninsula) and planned

education in the vernacular languages around this school. In due course other institutions came into being patterned after the Free School, in both the Straits Settlements and later in the Federated Malay States. Higher education finally appeared with the opening of the Singapore Medical School in 1905 and the Raffles College in 1929.

While Malaysia and Singapore had the beginnings of a modern school system in the 19th century, the Philippines in 1901 passed Act 94 which established a system of free public schools. Practically all teachers and administrators were at first imported from America. Later on, as teacher-training normal schools were established, Filipinos were trained to serve as teachers and school administrators. By 1941 almost all the American educators had been withdrawn, and the Philippine school system was run almost entirely by Filipinos.

In Indonesia, on the other hand, the Dutch did little to encourage the education of the ordinary Indonesian. There was a double standard of education during the Dutch colonial administration—one for the Europeans, including a few children of the Indonesian aristocracy, and another for the natives. Later the school system was expanded to include the small village school (*sekolah desa*) which provided a basic three-year education. This was the only type of primary education that was available to most Indonesians up to 1942. The establishment of a technical college in 1919, a law college in 1924, and a medical college in 1926, created additional, though limited, channels for the development of higher education for Indonesians. In 1927 only 601 Indonesians had academic secondary education, and there were only 16 Indonesian students in the eight-year old technical college, 70 students in the four-year Law College, and 7 students in the newly established Medical School.<sup>1</sup> No university existed until 1949 when the Gadjah Mada University was established in Jogjakarta, after independence had been finally wrested from the Dutch. Since then a vast programme has been carried out to accommodate all children in primary level schools, and while Indonesia has still a long way to go before all will be able to attend school, progress in this direction has been phenomenal. As Southall puts it: "In education, the Indonesians have worked a miracle in response to tremendous public pressure. It is a miracle with imperfections, but a miracle nevertheless."

Towards the end of the 19th century, the spread of colonialism to the East had its effect on Thai education. King Rama IV saw several neighbouring countries being subjugated by Western powers, and in order to forestall a similar fate for Thailand, he established diplomatic and friendly ties with the West. Not only did the king and his children learn English but Thai scholars were sent abroad to study in Europe. His successor, Rama V (King Chulalongkorn) established a school within the royal precincts to which came princes and sons of courtiers who then graduated to important posts in the civil service. Widespread developments in administration greatly increased the demand for officials, and education concentrated on turning out the necessary personnel. Private bodies and missionaries were also encouraged to found schools. The basis was thus laid for the development of a modern system of education which transformed Thai society from the ancient kingdom of Siam into the new and modern Thai nation.

Much has been accomplished in providing education in the five countries under discussion during the 1950s. Since World War II each of these countries has had to create an education system, built on the foundations left by the colonial power and adapted to meet national aspirations. Provision of primary education for all (highlighted by the UNESCO Regional Meeting on Primary and Compulsory Education held at Karachi in December 1959)<sup>2</sup> and a progressive provision of secondary and higher education to many more students (emphasized by the various Asian Ministers of Education in November 1965)<sup>3</sup> are important post-independence activities. The 1970s will witness increasing attempts to improve the quality of the education provided.

### *Primary Education*

The primary school is (and will remain for some time) the only place of learning for the majority of children in the region. Under the Karachi Plan of 1960, these five countries are striving to provide compulsory free primary education of at least seven years duration by 1980. As the achievement of this goal will require the carefully planned development of education, both quantitative and qualitative, it was stressed at the Karachi Meeting that attention must be given to the training of educational planners,

administrators and teachers as well as the provision of appropriate buildings, books and equipment. The proposed undertaking is immense but each of the five countries under discussion has made tremendous progress since 1960, and whatever shortcomings still exist must be seen against the historical and political background of the ASEAN countries.

All of the five countries have nursery or kindergarten schools. In Indonesia these operate under the control of the Ministry of Education. Indonesia has even a set syllabus for kindergarten schools. In the other countries kindergartens are primarily the concern of private bodies and are patronized by the more wealthy citizens. With very few exceptions, fees are charged for this level of schooling.

Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 give an idea of the different ages of entry into the primary school and the varying lengths of the school programme up to the tertiary level in each of the five countries. The schools, faced with large enrolment problems, try to limit the size of classes to under fifty. Everywhere co-education is the normal practice in the primary school, though private schools run by religious organizations are often single-sex schools. The school uniform is often used as a means of minimizing social differences between the rich and the poor.

In Singapore and Malaysia there are no laws to make first level education compulsory. However, with the possible exception of the more remote areas in Sabah and Sarawak, both countries have now an adequate number of schools and teachers for any child who needs schooling. Since no fees are charged in either country, a very high percentage (over 90%) of those of school-age do in fact attend school.

The Philippines has the oldest laws on compulsory education. Under the Spanish rulers, primary education was made compulsory in 1812. Several laws since then have repeated this, but it is still impossible to enforce attendance as there are insufficient six-year elementary schools to cover all the barrios. The more remote barrios may only have a four-year primary school. The full six-year primary and intermediate courses are provided free of charge.

The Primary Education Act of 1921 in Thailand provided for compulsory education and this has been restated in subsequent legislation. Using temples and those literate monks who could



teach, Thailand was able to produce a modern system of education. It is still difficult, however, to enforce the laws. Teaching which is unsatisfactory produces poor results. Hence, while many children enter school at some time after their seventh birthday, very large numbers drop out after one or two years. The first four grades are universal but many districts are still unable to provide the three upper grades (Prathom 5-7).<sup>4</sup> Children are required, therefore, to attend school either until they have completed the first four grades or until they reach the age of fifteen, whichever comes first. Recent moves to raise compulsory limits to Prathom 7 can only be implemented in certain provinces or districts.

In Indonesia, ever since the revolution brought independence from the Netherlands in 1949, Indonesian educators have pursued two main objectives in primary education: first, the extension of primary schooling to all children over eight years of age and, second, the establishment of the community school. The Fundamental Law of 1950 states clearly the principle of education for all. The vast size of the population and the problems of communication make it unlikely that this will be a reality for many pupils in the immediate future. Educationists, in fact, realize that the provision of even six years schooling will take practically all the resources they have. Indonesia is the only country in the region where education at the first level is not free. In theory there is no charge but schools are permitted to and do, in fact, collect fees.

The problem facing educators in the region is therefore not merely to provide adequate schools and teachers to make compulsory attendance a reality, but to ensure that those who enter school stay there long enough to acquire lasting benefits from it. The Conference of Ministers of Education and Ministers responsible for Economic Planning of Member States in Asia, convened in Bangkok in 1965 recommended, concerning educational wastage, "that systematic studies and research be undertaken into the causes of dropouts and the social and other factors involved, and the effectiveness of different methods in improving the situation." The UNESCO Report on *The Problem of Education Wastage, 1967*, stated that of about 30 million children enrolled each year in grade 1 in schools of the Asian region, fewer than 50 per cent are likely to complete in due time their first level of education: