

**People's View of the Education of Singapore**

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## **People's View of the Education of Singapore**

With the development of the modern world, science and technology is becoming more and more important. With the coming of the 21st century, a new kind of economy, the knowledge-based economy, appears. How can we get more knowledge? How can we develop our science and technology? The answer is through education. In China, most people have realized the importance of science and technology as well as knowledge, so they try their best to get the best education. The Chinese government has also taken a lot of actions to promote the development of education. So now in China education is developing and changing quickly. However, we are not familiar with the situation in Singapore. Therefore we conducted this survey in order to get a general idea of the education here.

### **Methodology**

#### *Design of Questionnaire*

In order to collect more useful information for us, we designed ten questions, including three types of questions: multiple choice questions, open-ended questions and a ranking question as well. Through these questions we want to find out a lot of things about the education system of Singapore. Before we conducted our survey, we changed some questions according to the advice given by our tutor.

#### *Survey and Interviews*

In order to get some different opinions on the same question, we tried to interview people from different countries. So we interviewed a lot of people from Singapore, Indonesia, India, Malaysia as well as three from China. Also we tried to interview people of different professions as lecturers, officers, students and so on. We tried not to interview too many students or too many people from China. We conducted our survey mainly in Jurong Point and NTU campus. In Jurong Point most people were not willing to be interviewed. However, while in NTU, we performed our survey fairly smoothly. All the interviewees were very kind and patient. They gave us quite a lot of useful information. Thanks to their cooperation, we had a pleasant survey.

## Results

The information we have found is as follows.

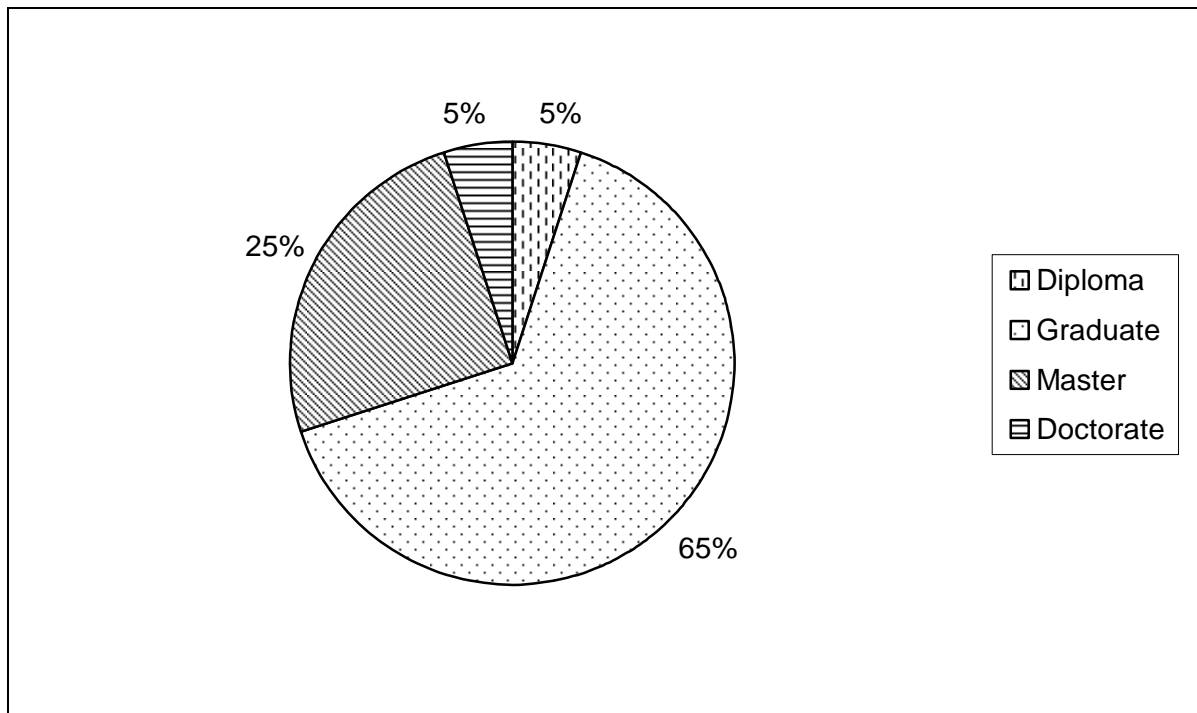
90% of the interviewees think education is very important to a country and society, while the rest think it important.

45% of the interviewees are satisfied with the current education system very much in Singapore. 20% are satisfied, but think it needs improve. Another 15% think it average. 4 interviewees didn't answer the question.

As to the basic qualification people should have, 5% think that a diploma is enough and 65% believe graduate. In addition, 25% thinks the master degree and 5% thinks the doctorate. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1

Basic qualification people should have



The purposes of getting a degree are also divided. (See Table 1 on page 4)

Table 1

Purpose of getting a degree

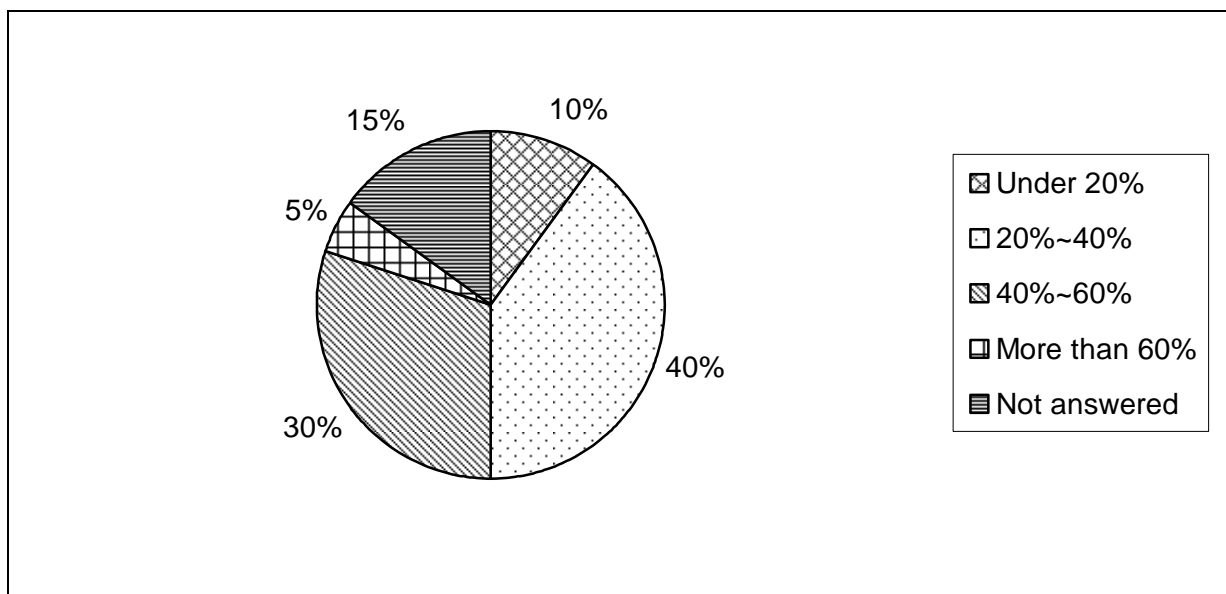
Purpose	Number of respondents	Percentage of sample
Find a good job and earn more money	9	45
Get more knowledge in order To do scientific work	1	5
Do more contributions to the Country and society	7	35
Others	3	15

Half of the interviewees believe that studying is a heavy burden for students nowadays, while another two think it not so heavy. The rest 40% think it not heavy.

For education cost in family expenditure, conditions are divided. 2 of the interviewees' families spend less than 20%, 8 families spend between 20% and 40%, another 6 spend between 40% and 60%, only 1 family spends a percentage of more than 60.

Additionally, there were three interviewees who did not answer this question. (See Figure 2)

Figure 2

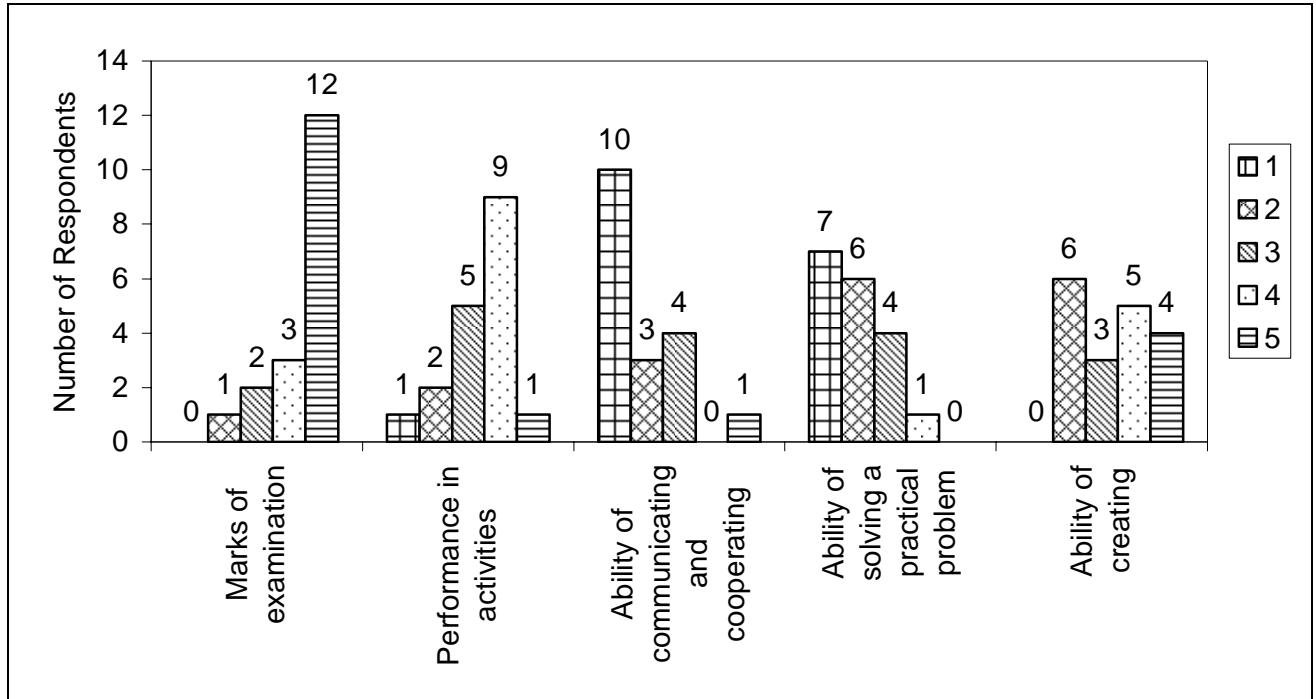
Percentage of education in family expenditure


The question of ranking the statements in order of importance provided us with important information what Singaporeans think about their education. The ability of communicating and cooperating is believed to be the most important, while marks of

examination are considered as the least important. Two of the interviewees didn't answer the question. (See Figure 3)

Figure 3

Ranks of the Following Statements

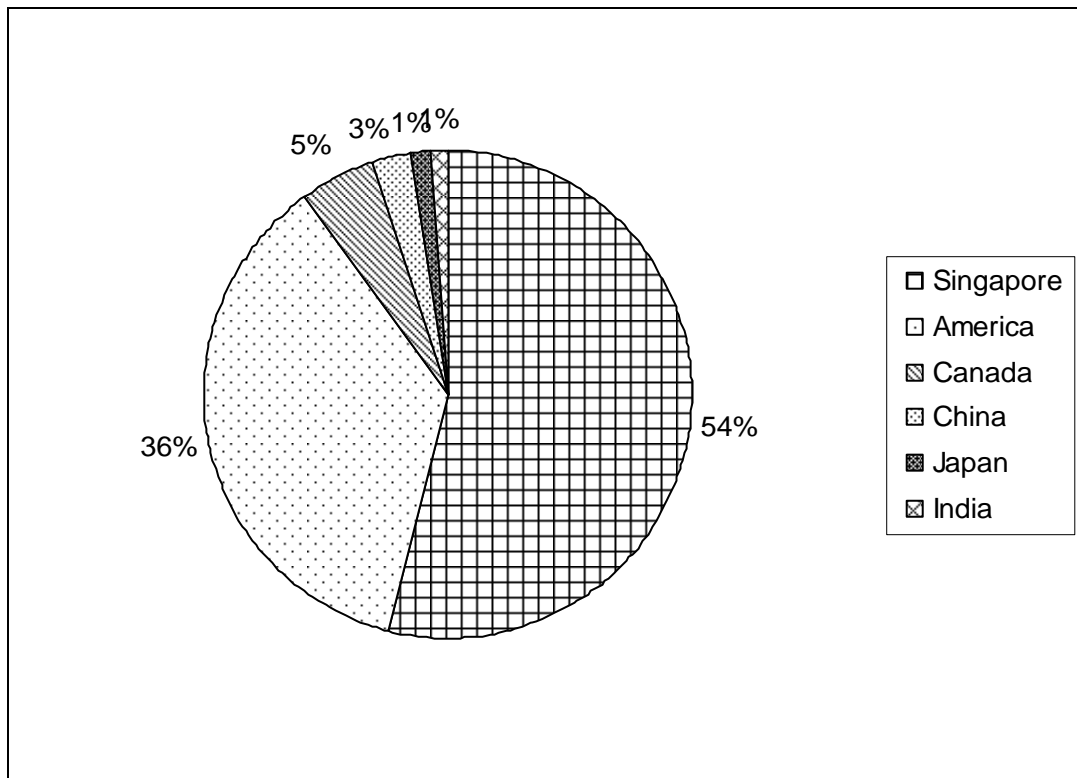


The effect of education is also included in our survey. 25% of the interviewees get a lot of help from what they studied in school/university, 45% benefit from it at times, and 10% don't think what they studied helps them. Still 1 person didn't answer this question.

For the last question, we got a variety kind of answers. Some interviewees chose the same country, but their reasons were not the same. (See Figure 4 on page 6)

Figure 4

Countries that students can get the best education from



### Discussion

First, as it is well known, in China university students work very hard in order to get a chance to go on studying for a higher degree. Things are different here. The results told us that getting a good degree is not the only way to get a good job. So even if one has got a pretty high degree, it doesn't mean a good job. Sometimes it is even easier to find a job with a graduate degree. So most think it is enough to get a graduate degree.

Second, people here are satisfied with the education system and think it one of the best countries to get education from. People who prefer to study in the USA think that the USA has the most advanced facilities and most flexible education system. Studying there can make a student more creative. Also there are a lot of students from all over the world, who can communicate and cooperate well. Conditions are almost the same in Singapore. In addition, the political environment in Singapore is very good. Also there are not so many people as in China and it is easier to enter a university.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

From this survey, we get a general idea of the education system of Singapore. All the people pay great attention to education. Most of them are satisfied with the current education system here. In order to get a good education they will spend a lot of money. For most people they think the education in Singapore is the best in the world. So we think we are very lucky to have the chance to study here.

Besides, people's concepts are up-to-date here. They don't think the purpose of education is just to get a degree, but to increase one's ability. The ability of communicating and cooperating as well as that of solving practical problems are highly valued. Ability is thought highly rather than marks in the examinations. So most of them think a graduate degree is enough, which is quite different from that in China.

## Appendix A

### Questionnaire

#### People's View of the Education of Singapore

We're collecting information on this topic to complete a required report. Please choose the answer that best reflects your opinion or attitude. If you don't wish to answer a question, please feel free to go to the next one.

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1. Do you think education is important to a country and society?

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Very important.   | B. Important.            |
| C. Not so important. | D. Not important at all. |

2. Are you satisfied with the current education system in Singapore?

- A. Yes, I'm satisfied with it very much.  
 B. Yes, I'm satisfied, but I think it needs improve.  
 C. I think it average.  
 D. No, I'm not satisfied with it at all.

3. What basic qualification do you think people should have?

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| A. Diploma. | B. Graduate.  |
| C. Master.  | D. Doctorate. |

4. What do you think the purpose of getting a degree?

- A. Find a good job and earn more money.  
 B. Get more knowledge in order to do scientific research.  
 C. Do more contributions to the country and society.  
 D. Others \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think studying is a heavy burden for student nowadays?

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| A. Yes, it is. | B. Not so heavy. |
| C. No.         | D. I'm not sure. |

6. Do you think it necessary for a student to be an all-rounder? Why?

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

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7. Please rank the following statements in order of importance.

- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marks of examination      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance in activities |



- ☐ Ability of communicating and cooperating
- ☐ Ability of solving a practical problem
- ☐ Ability of creating
- ☐ Others\_\_\_\_\_

8. What percentage of your family's expenditure is spent on education cost in your family?

- A. Under 20%.
- B. 20%~40%.
- C. 40%~60%.
- D. More than 60%.

9. Do you think what you studied in school/university helps you a lot in your work/daily life?

- A. Yes, it helps me a lot.
- B. Yes, it helps me at times.
- C. No it doesn't.
- D. I'm not sure.

10. If given a choice, which country do you think students should go to in order to get the best education? Why?

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## Appendix B

### Data summary

1. Do you think education is important to a country and society?	A	18							
	B	2							
	C	0							
	D	0							
2. Are you satisfied with the current education system in Singapore?	A	9							
	B	4							
	C	3							
	D	0							
3. What basic qualification do you think people should have?	A	1							
	B	13							
	C	5							
	D	1							
4. What do you think the purpose of getting a degree?	A	9							
	B	1							
	C	7							
	D	3							
5. Do you think studying is a heavy burden for student nowadays?	A	10							
	B	2							
	C	8							
	D	0							
6. Do you think it necessary for a student to be an all-rounder?	YES	10							
	NO	9							
7. Please rank the following statements in order of importance.									
Marks of examination	4	3	5	5	5	4	5	3	5
Performance in activities	5	4	4	4	4	2	1	4	3
Ability of communicating and cooperating	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
Ability of solving a practical problem	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2
Ability of creating	2	5	3	3	3	5	4	5	4

7. Please rank the following statements in order of importance.									
Marks of examination	2	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5
Performance in activities	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
Ability of communicating and cooperating	1	1	3	1	3	3	5	1	1
Ability of solving a practical problem	4	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	3
Ability of creating	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	4
Note: the most important is ranked as 1, while the least is 5.									
8. What percentage of your family's expenditure is spent on education cost in your family?	A						2		
	B						8		
	C						6		
	D						1		
9. Do you think what you studied in school/university helps you a lot in your work/daily life?	A						5		
	B						9		
	C						2		
	D						3		
10. If given a choice, which country do you think students should go to in order to get the best education?	Singapore							10	
	America							6	
	Canada							1	
	Singapore and China							1	
	Singapore and America							1	
	Singapore, America, India and Japan							1	

## **Appendix C**

### **Reflection**

#### **People's View of the Education of Singapore**

At first, I drafted the questionnaire with my partner Robert. And then in the interview, I interviewed ten people. After discussion I began to write the report. In all I wrote the instruction, methodology, as well as conclusion and recommendation. After that, I did part of the typing work.

I find that the interview was most difficult. When I conducted the survey in the Jurong Point and MRT, a lot of people were busy and didn't want to be interviewed. Thus I was refused several times. However, I think it worth my effort, because though the survey I am not afraid to talk to an unknown man any more. What's more, I learned some skills in communicating with others, how to clarify myself and how to ask for explanation.

Robert and I cooperated very well. Before we carried our plan, we would talk together, so that we could do it well. When conducted the survey we went out together and helped each a lot. Also we talked about the reason why we were refused when conducted the survey. I think it a pleasant cooperation.

In my opinion, to do the survey more successfully, they should not go to the MRT, because people there are always very busy. They rush to catch a train or a bus, so they are easily to refuse the request. Beside, sometimes, people answer your questions in Chinese, so it is a good idea to interview people who don't know Chinese, such as people from India, Vietnam, Myanmar and so on.

Chen Peng

## **Appendix D**

### **Reflections**

#### **People's View of the Education of Singapore**

1. Outline your contribution to this report.

I designed the questionnaire together with John and printed the copies needed out. After the interview, I finished the Results and discussion part. Also I did some work on the other four parts, in other words, made necessary changes in what John had written. Additionally I carried out most of the typing and printing of our report.

2. Comment on the following: what you learned from undertaking this report, what you found difficult, and the teamwork within your survey group.

I learned from undertaking this report that you need to be active and confident to communicate with others, especially when you are asking them for a favor. Also you should not lose heart however many times rejected. In addition, I got to be familiar with the softwares as “word” and “excel”, and some methods to analyze the results.

I found that the interview was the most difficult part in our survey. We were rejected several times and became more and more confused. In fact we didn't go to a proper place to conduct a survey on that day.

John is a good partner. We worked together happily and friendly through the project. We used to discuss before starting a new step. Also we conducted our interview together. We helped and learned from each other a lot.

3. What advice can you give next year's students so that they can plan, write and improve on your project?

It is important to know well about the APA form so that you can write your report more regular and effectively. The interview is somewhat a tough task and as long as you are confident it does not affect you much.

Kuang Yili