

Globalization and Education

The Quest for Quality Education
in Hong Kong

Edited by

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AND

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Contents

Foreword by Professor Ruth Hayhoe	vii
List of Contributors	xi
Introduction <i>Joshua Ka-ho Mok and David Kin-keung Chan</i>	1
Part One: Theoretical Framework and Historical Context	21
1 Economic Rationalism, Managerialism and Structural Reform in Education <i>Joshua Ka-ho Mok and Anthony R. Welch</i>	23
2 The Quest for Quality Education: The Quality Assurance Movement in Hong Kong <i>Kai-ming Cheng</i>	41
Part Two: Approaches to Quality Education	67
3 Multi-models of Education Quality and Principal Leadership <i>Yin-cheong Cheng</i>	69

4	Managerialism and ISO 9000: Its Relevance to Quality Education <i>David Kin-keung Chan and Patrick Lai</i>	89
5	Culture and Quality Education: Ethical Leadership and School Organization <i>Kam-cheung Wong</i>	123
Part Three: Policy Change and Education Reform		141
6	A Critical Review of the Quality Education Movement in Hong Kong <i>Thomas Kwan-choi Tse</i>	143
7	Towards 'School Management Reform': Organizational Values of Government Schools in Hong Kong <i>Nicholas Sun-keung Pang</i>	171
8	Student Learning and the Quest for Quality Education: A Case Study of Secondary Schools in Hong Kong <i>Ho-mun Chan, Joan Yin-hung Leung and Norman Flynn</i>	195
9	A Reflection on Quality Assurance in Hong Kong's Higher Education <i>Joshua Ka-ho Mok and Hiu-hong Lee</i>	213
Part Four: Reflection and Conclusion		241
10	Policy Implications of Adopting a Managerial Approach in Education <i>David Kin-keung Chan</i>	243
11	Reflections on the Impact of Globalization on Educational Restructuring in Hong Kong <i>Joshua Ka-ho Mok and Janice Currie</i>	259
	Index	279

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Introduction

JOSHUA KA-HO MOK AND DAVID KIN-KEUNG CHAN

Introduction

In the opening paragraph of the Policy Objective for Education and Manpower Bureau of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), education is regarded as the key to the future development of Hong Kong. Like other societies, Hong Kong has to face the challenges of the twenty-first century and, therefore, there is a strong need to prepare Hong Kong for a rapidly changing, knowledge-based global society (Wong, 1997). Openly recognizing the significant role of education, not only in imparting basic knowledge and skills, but also in nurturing people to be independent thinkers and lifelong learners, the HKSAR government is committed to providing quality education at all stages. In order to offer this quality education, the Education Commission (EC), which is the highest advisory body on education policy in the territory, has started a comprehensive review of the existing education system to map out a blueprint for the twenty-first century. In its recent review of the Hong Kong education system, the EC adopted the idea of 'life-long learning' as the guiding principle (EC, 2000b).

The principal goal of this book is to examine how the HKSAR has tried to map a course of action in its quest for quality education in Hong Kong. More specifically, the major focus of this book is to examine and analyse the most recent reform measures adopted by the HKSAR in its

quest for quality education. As various types of education-related reforms have been launched by the government in the past few years, this book will focus mainly on how the HKSAR has attempted to restructure the education system and to assure/promote quality education in Hong Kong society. Other reforms such as the reform of the Education Department management, the language proficiency issue and other related education reforms will not be covered in this book. In addition, different contributors will examine whether the government has changed its role in education, particularly in exploring the changes in the mode of governance in education for the HKSAR.

The Quest for Quality Education in the HKSAR

The Popularity of Managerialism and the Call for Quality Service

The 1980s saw the development in Britain and elsewhere of a new concern for quality in public and social services. Prior to the 1980s, the word 'quality' hardly figured in the vocabulary of policy analysis. By the mid-1990s, it was firmly entrenched as a central concern. For example, the World Bank review *Priorities and Strategies for Education* (World Bank, 1994), and the *Policy Paper for Change and Development in Higher Education*, published by UNESCO in 1995, pinpointed the enhancement of quality in education as one of its key areas of reform (p. 155), and devoted a chapter to an analysis of improving quality.

It is important to understand why quality has emerged as an important policy concern in recent years. The roots of the concern are both practical and ideological in nature. In the early years of the post-World War II period, the primary concern for public services was bound to be with quantity — in securing enough school places or hospital beds to cater for the growing social needs. The quality of the service was inevitably and properly secondary. When the initial and obvious quantity problems were solved, the concern turned to the quality. Hence, the concern for service quality can be seen as a natural stage in the evolution of public services (Harman, 1996; Craft, 1994).

Serving for better performance in the public sector, such fashionable terms as 'excellence', 'increasing competitiveness', 'efficiency', 'accountability' and 'devolution' have been introduced. Likewise, different strategies, such as internal audit, quality assurance, performance pledges, management-by-objectives, strategic management, linking performance

with outputs and so forth, have been adopted in trying to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services (Sankey, 1995; Pollitt, 1986; Aucoin, 1990). Central to all these reform initiatives is a main concern with the principle of 'quality' in public service. Education, being one of the main public services, is not immune from this tidal wave of 'management-oriented' reforms. Schools, universities and other learning institutions now encounter far more challenges and are subjected to an unprecedented level of public scrutiny (Currie and Newson, 1998; Jones, 1998).

The growing concern for 'value for money' and 'public accountability' has also altered the way that education is managed. Controlling, monitoring, assuring and assessing the quality of education are becoming a universal phenomenon (Caldwell, 1997; Welch, 1998; Mok, 2000). Undoubtedly, systems of education in all parts of the world are in a state of change, with increasing interest in upholding the notions of 'accountability', 'value for money' and greater access. Increased accountability has inevitably driven educational practitioners and academics to devise and search for different mechanisms and strategies to ensure quality, with particular attention to the three major stakeholders in education; the academic community, state and the market (Ball, 1998; Barnett, 1990; Altbach, 1999).

Concern about quality in public services reached Hong Kong in the 1990s under the wider and global policy context discussed above and was expressed in such initiatives as the former governor Chris Patten's performance pledges (Lee and Cheung, 1995). Since the early 1990s, the Hong Kong government has adopted different strategies along the line of 'managerialism' to reform its public policies, such as the housing and health services. Hoping to make the public sector more responsive and sensitive to the public, different reform measures like 'quasi-marketization' in the health sector and 'corporatization' in the housing sector have been proposed or implemented in recent years (Cheung, 1997; Chiu, 1997). These initiatives have begun to make a powerful impact at all levels in the HKSAR including education. In Hong Kong, as in many other countries, a concern for quality also had its roots in managerialism and the new public management (Tse, 1999; Mok, 1999). This term is shorthand for dramatic changes in the approach to public service. Questions such as economy, efficiency and effectiveness were asked in the provision of public services. A concern for effectiveness led easily and logically to a concern for quality, thus raising the issue of how performance is to be measured (Welch, 1998; Barnett, 1990).

Quality Assurance in Education

When a country goes through a period of rapid economic and social changes, or has doubts about the nature of its future role or its likely economic success, attention quickly turns to its education system. Education is a central mechanism both for the transmission of culture and for the inculcation of the knowledge and skills on which future economic prosperity depends. This is particularly true when we are entering into a new era of the knowledge economy, when we are transforming Hong Kong into a knowledge-based society. 'Education will become the centre of the knowledge society, and the school its key institution' (Drucker, 1996: 405). As policy makers and researchers in the HKSAR pondered the territory's future, they reviewed educational expenditures and achievements in key regional competitors. Hong Kong emerged as a relatively low spender (about 3% of GDP), especially when compared to the other two dragons — Taiwan (about 7% of GNP) and Singapore (about 6% of GNP). A concern for the quality of education in Hong Kong followed logically from such a discovery.

Education policy, in many countries, has been dominated by the education professionals, which is seen as part of their professional territory. Hence, starting from the late 1970s, the standing of professionals worldwide came under critical attack. Their knowledge base, competence and professional ethics were all challenged. The quality movement in education can be seen as an expression of concern about professional power and achievements in education. It is also concerned with priorities in policy agenda and as an expression of a conflict between professional and lay beliefs about educational practice. Another element on the assault of professional dominance in education policy making was the rise of 'consumerism' — the belief that consumers had a right to express their views about services and that their knowledge and opinions had value and validity (Currie and Newson, 1998). Furthermore, a generalized concern about 'value for money' was another element in the rise of the quality movement. More has been spent, but was 'value for money' being achieved? Was additional spending producing better quality products and higher quality outcomes?

In education, it meshed with very specific concerns about: whether Hong Kong's educational standards were keeping up with improvements in the standards of its competitors; whether Hong Kong's educational achievements would ensure its economic competitiveness in the future; specific issues like English competence of the graduates of the current school system; and whether rapid expansion in higher education in the

1990s led to a decline in the overall academic standards, and so forth (Tsang, 1998). In 1996, the EC set up a special task group on school quality and school funding to make recommendations in promoting quality education in the territory. It was these generalized and specific concerns which led to EC *Report No. 7: Quality School Education*. In choosing a theme of 'Quality School Education', the task group proposed different ways to assure quality education in the Hong Kong school system, with particular reference to coping with problems and issues that had resulted from the massive expansion of education for the past two decades (Education Commission, 1997).

Quality School Education in Hong Kong

The seven objectives of the *Report No. 7: Quality School Education*, are set out on p. xi:

1. to enhance community appreciation of the need for quality school education;
2. to inculcate a quality culture in the school system to contribute to the personal growth of students, and the pursuit of excellence;
3. to provide a practical framework for key players in the school system to achieve the aims of education in an efficient, cost-effective and accountable manner;
4. to recommend an integrated strategy for quality assurance and development;
5. to provide incentives for quality performance;
6. to assist and remedy underperforming schools to encourage initiatives and continuous improvement; and
7. to recommend a framework for raising the professional standards of principals and teachers and enhancing their professional education and development.

These are set out more generally in the Report's statement of the purpose (p. ii):

The recommendations have been made with a view to enhancing the community's appreciation of the need for quality school education; inculcating a quality culture in the school system; providing a practical framework for key players in the school system to achieve the aims of education in an

efficient, cost-effective and accountable manner; presenting an integrated strategy for quality assurance and development; providing incentives for quality performance; assisting under-performing schools; and outlining a framework for raising the professional standards of principals and teachers and enhancing their professional education and development.

The Report has altogether eight chapters. Chapter 1 explores the nature of quality education. Chapter 2 focuses on quality indicators. Chapter 3 looks at quality assurance mechanisms. Chapter 4 looks at the links between quantity and funding systems. Chapter 5 sets out the case for a Quality Education Development Fund to promote initiatives deemed by the Commission to be likely to improve quality. Chapter 6 looks at raising standards among principals and teachers. Chapter 7 is concerned with related issues. Chapter 8 summarizes the recommendations and discusses the question of implementation.

The Report also includes a lot of interesting ideas, and no one could question its starting point — the need to promote quality in education (Education Commission, 1997). Central to the spirit of the Report is about:

- delivery of educational outcomes which meet the needs and expectations of the community in an efficient, accountable and cost-effective way;
- pursuit of excellence in both academic and other domains of education;
- participation of front-line educators in choosing the best teaching and learning model that best suits the needs of teachers and students of individual schools; and
- provision of educational diversity and choices to parents and students choice (Education Commission, 1997).

If one views the policy document as a text, instead of a technical blueprint, what is not put on the public agenda is worth serious discussion (Ball, 1994). This Report, along with a number of consultation papers and measures in recent years, clearly signifies a move away from meeting quantitative targets to qualitative improvement, a search for a more open and accountable school system and a concern with the related issues of school quality and school funding. As Tsang (1997) and Lo (1997) convincingly argue, after the implementation of nine years of compulsory education since 1978, school quality and school effectiveness have emerged to be prominent themes in the education policy discourse in Hong Kong. In an attempt to promote quality, the government has

introduced to the educational sector management strategies and 'quasi-market' mechanisms.

Ideas central to the Report are quality, quality assurance, management, incentives, accountability, competitiveness, performance, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, standards, choices, appraisal, value-added, excellence, clear, measurable merit, funding, transparency, indicators, inspection, measure(ing), monitor(ing), and clients. On the other hand, professional, school-based, autonomy, participation, self-evaluation, flexibility and co-operation have become part of a merely residual vocabulary. The call for diversity and choice, as well as the proposal to allow schools to develop their own individual characteristics, can be understood as a further step towards a 'market-oriented' approach in educational governance (Ball, 1998).

However, it is most regrettable that words like equality, rights, democracy, 'education for all', and educational opportunity are completely missing in this educational discourse. The quality of school education is an international trend. Many developed countries have been studying ways to improve their school education and carrying out reforms. Hong Kong follows the trend, yet without paying due respect and attention to some of the more fundamental and important issues, such as equality, justice, democracy and humanity. Therefore, the definition of quality education is, in fact, narrowly conceived and the focus of reform is largely school-based, without taking into account broader institutional factors (Comparative Education Policy Research Group, 1998).

The Comprehensive Review of Education System in Hong Kong

Like his predecessor the former governor Chris Patten, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, has given special attention to the policy area of education and has adopted a more macro-planning approach to deal with educational development (Mok and Lau, 1998). Realizing that the existing education system has problems and weaknesses, Tung called for a comprehensive review of the whole structure in his first policy address. Thus, a comprehensive review was started in late 1997. The whole review process was divided into various phases. The first stage of the review was to look at the aims of education and the result was *Education Blueprint for the 21st Century: Review of Academic System – Aims of Education Consultation Document*, published in January 1999. The

second stage reviewed the education system as a whole in September 1999; while the third and final stage was made in May 2000.

After the first and second stages of review, the EC had made it explicitly clear as to what had gone wrong with the existing education system. One major problem the EC considered is related to the heavy emphasis on examinations, such that students are geared to examination results, but have never enjoyed learning, let alone creative thinking (Education Commission, 1999a). Believing that Hong Kong is now facing a fundamental transition from an industrial society to a knowledge society, and as the economy shifts its emphasis from manufacturing to knowledge-based activities, new knowledge and creative thinking are most essential to daily lives and the economy. In order to strengthen the Hong Kong citizens' competitive edge in the global market, there is a very strong need to reform the existing examination-oriented education system (Education Commission, 1999b). After the completion of the first stage of the review, the EC published a report which stated that:

Hong Kong faces strong competition from neighbouring economies in many areas, including trade, finance, transportation, communication and tourism. The Asian financial turmoil has prompted us to reflect upon the problems we face, our future and how we should meet the challenges ahead . . . In the knowledge-based economy, existing knowledge is being updated at an ever faster pace. Our young people must be outward-looking, imbued with a spirit of exploration, able to make the best use of IT, able to master different kinds of knowledge, and willing to strive to improve through continuous learning. To enhance our competitiveness, Hong Kong has to shift to high value-added and technology-based production and services. We need people who are creative, versatile, knowledgeable and multi-talented. (Education Commission, 1999a: 9)

Hence, for the past two to three years, the EC has been engaging in a thorough review on Hong Kong's existing education system. Making reference to the *School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims* published in September 1993, the EC sets out the overall aims of education for Hong Kong for the twenty-first century as follows:

To enable everyone to develop to their full and individual potential in all areas covering ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, so that each individual is ready for

continuous self-learning, thinking, exploring, innovating and adapting to changes throughout life; filled with self-confidence and team spirit; and is willing to strive incessantly for the prosperity, progress, freedom and democracy of the society, and to contribute to the future well-being of the nation and the world at large. (Education Commission, 1999a: 15)

After considering all the comments received during the first consultation, the EC embarked on the second stage of the review. In September 1999, the EC published the second consultation document entitled *Learning for Life*, which focused on the review of the academic structure, the curricula and the assessment mechanisms. More specifically, this stage of review is primarily concerned with the framework for education reform. In the consultation document, the EC states explicitly that 'Learning brings enjoyment. Learning creates opportunities.' In order to nurture the environment for lifelong learning, the EC further states that:

Society is undergoing fundamental changes. As it transforms from an industrial society into an information society, and as our economy shifts its emphasis from manufacturing to knowledge-based activities, knowledge has become an essential element of our daily lives and our economy. Knowledge is being created all the time. New knowledge continues to emerge as existing knowledge becomes obsolete. Learning is no longer confined to school subjects or limited to classrooms; learning is no longer the prerogative of those aged 6 to 22. The age of lifelong learning has dawned. (Education Commission, 1999b: 15)

Finding the fundamental flaw of the existing education system, with its stagnation in the industrial age since it only caters to a selected few while disadvantaging the majority and creating a large number of losers, the EC is committed to launch a large-scale restructuring of the existing education system by eliminating, in stages, all public assessments and banding system at the primary level for the purpose of allocating secondary school places. Additionally, the EC believes that the existing system has failed to produce people with appropriate skills and knowledge for the knowledge-based economy, and as such the EC has called for 'lifelong learning' in the society. In short, the EC has adopted five major principles guiding the future development of education in the territory:

- **Student-focused:** Learning should be focused upon students' personal development. Our reform should aim to give more room and flexibility for students to be the masters of their own learning.
- **No-losers:** There should not be, at any stage of education, dead-end screening that blocks further learning opportunities. Everyone should be given the opportunity to learn anywhere, any time, and to be given due recognition for what they achieve.
- **Quality:** The basic objective of our reform should be to enable all citizens access to the most appropriate learning opportunity in order to realize their potential. Everybody should achieve basic standards and strive for excellence.
- **Life-wide learning:** Learning is not limited to school subjects or examination syllabuses. Students should have a comprehensive learning experience through the formal, nonformal and informal modes.
- **Society-wide mobilization:** Lifelong learning is the key to a person's success, and to Hong Kong's success. The government, educators, all sectors of the community as well as the learners themselves should all contribute to the reform (Education Commission, 1999b: 16).

In May 2000, the EC published another consultation document with the theme of *Excel and Growth*, stating that all students should be able to enjoy all-round development through lifelong learning. More specifically, the EC hoped that the new generation could communicate effectively, think creatively and develop a strong sense of commitment (Education Commission, 2000a). Central to the review exercise is the proposal to pave *one through-road* for students so that they can enjoy learning and studying for nine years of universal basic education. Besides enhancing basic knowledge, the EC also proposed a whole-person approach in senior secondary education. Holding the belief that students must have some experience in the academic, vocational, organizational and social services as well as in aesthetics and sports, the EC also recommended doing away with the streaming between natural science and the humanities.

In order to reduce pressure generated from public examinations, it also proposed that there should be only one public examination after universal basic education and before the commencement of higher education. To realize the goal of 'life-wide learning', the EC introduced the idea of continuing education, with the establishment of full-time post-secondary colleges and community colleges. With the ultimate goal to develop a transferable credit-unit system, the EC hoped that the

qualifications of students from the community colleges can be fully transferable (Education Commission, 1999a: 18).

By September 2000, the EC published its final report by outlining the reform strategies for improving the existing education system. Choosing a theme of *Learning for Life, Learning through Life*, the EC sees learning as the key to one's future, and that education is the gateway to Hong Kong's future. Strongly believing that students are the focal point of the entire education reform, the EC stressed the importance of 'all-round development' and 'lifelong learning'.

It is noteworthy here that the call for quality education and the construction of a 'learning society' does not only happen in Hong Kong, but it also appears in both Taiwan and Singapore. There is no doubt that since the 1960s, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore have had prosperous economic growth. The rapid growth in these countries has led the World Bank to regard them as High Performing Asian Economies and the term of 'Asian Tigers' or 'Dragons' was adopted to describe them. But what is common to these three dragons is the importance of 'human capital'. In order to maintain their competitiveness in both the regional and global markets, the governments of these societies have attached great significance to the role of education. The proposal to create a 'Learning Society' is closely related to the intention to strengthen the 'global competence and competitiveness' of their citizens (Education Commission, 2000b).

The final outcome of the overall review on the education system was announced by the Education Commission on 28 September 2000 and the following are its major recommendations (EC, 2000b).

Visions of the Education Reform

1. To build a lifelong learning society.
2. To raise the overall quality of students.
3. To construct a diverse school system.
4. To create an inspiring learning environment.
5. To acknowledge the importance of moral education.
6. To develop an education system that is rich in tradition but cosmopolitan and culturally diverse.

Focuses of the Education Reform

1. Reform the admission systems and public examinations so as to break down barriers and create room for all.
2. Reforming the curricula and improving teaching methods.
3. Improving the assessment mechanism to supplement learning and teaching.
4. Providing more diverse opportunities for lifelong learning at senior secondary level and beyond.
5. Formulating an effective resource strategy.
6. Enhancing the professionalism of teachers.
7. Implementing measures to support front-line educators.

Overall Aims of Education for the Twenty-First Century

In building an education system conducive to lifelong learning and all-round development, the priority is to enable our students to enjoy learning, enhance their effectiveness in communication, and develop their creativity and sense of commitment.

Early Childhood Education

1. Single authority to monitor kindergartens and child-care centres.
2. Raise qualifications of kindergartens and child-care centre teachers.

Basic Education

1. Written Primary One exams and interviews will be banned.
2. Discretionary places for Primary One will be cut from 65% to 20% in five years; and up to 10% to be reserved for applicants outside of the school district.
3. Academic Aptitude Test will be replaced by assessment of school academic performance.
4. Introduce basic competency assessments in Chinese, English and mathematics at various stages of basic education.
5. Bandings of five categories will be reduced to three categories for the junior secondary level.

6. Nine years of basic education will remain as it is.
7. 'Through-train' for primary and secondary schools whenever possible.

Senior Secondary Education

1. Three-year senior secondary schooling is being proposed and a working group will submit its final recommendations to the government by 2002.
2. It should provide a broad-based curriculum, avoid premature streaming.
3. The fine grades in the Hong Kong Examination of Education (HKCEE) and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) will be abolished by 2002, to be replaced by a new public examination in Chinese and English.

Tertiary Education

1. Universities have to adjust length of study for certain first-degree programmes.
2. Universities have to resolve their own resource-related problems.
3. Universities are recommended to overhaul their existing admission mechanism to give due recognition and consideration to students' all-round performance.
4. A transferable and articulated credit unit system among institutions and departments is recommended to allow room for more flexibility in university education.
5. Increased numbers of research postgraduate places and self-financed taught postgraduate places are recommended.
6. A conducive environment should be provided for the development of private university/higher education institutions.

Continuing Education

1. Establishment of multiple channels of continuing education, such as distance learning, community colleges, and so on.
2. Society-wide lifelong learning centres to be set up.
3. Establishment of a database for continuing education.
4. A working group will be set up to advise on policies of continuing education.

At the same time, the Chief Executive's fourth Policy Address, *Serving the Community, Sharing Common Goals* on 11 October 2000 put much emphasis on the education reform. He addressed the issue with a section called 'Holistic Education for the New Century', in which he outlines his vision and commitment to education (Tung, 2000: 17–27):

1. Total expenditure on education for this financial year will amount to HK\$54.4 billion (4.25% of GDP), a jump of 43% when compared with that in 1997;
2. A Quality Education Fund of HK\$5 billion has been set up to sponsor school projects of various kinds;
3. A five-year Information Technology strategy, costing over HK\$3.2 billion, for all primary and secondary schools;
4. An increase of over 2,800 teaching posts, thus improving the teacher-pupil ratio by 10% to 1:21.8 in primary schools and 1:18.7 in secondary schools;
5. Percentage of whole-day primary school places has been increased to 40% from 20%, with the ultimate goal of providing whole-day schooling for all primary students by year 2007;
6. Graduate posts in primary schools have increased to 20% from less than 5%;
7. The plan 'One Social Worker for Each Secondary School' launched in 2000–01 for all secondary schools;
8. A plan to provide about 6,000 more subsidized school places by the 2002–03 school year so that all Secondary 3 (Grade 9) students in public sector schools can be provided with subsidized Secondary 4 (Grade 10) places or vocational training (the present figure is 85%), costing an extra HK\$740 million in recurrent expenditure by 2007–08;
9. Increase the range of learning options at the senior secondary school level to allow students more choice of schools and subjects according to their own abilities and interests;
10. HK\$500 million will be provided in 2000–01 to implement the principle of 'teaching students according to their aptitude' more effectively, so that teachers will be freed to concentrate on their teaching duties and cater to students' individual needs;
11. An additional HK\$10 million will be allocated to design enrichment courses for gifted children;
12. An additional expenditure of about HK\$50 million will be devoted to children with special education needs in regular schools for the coming four years;
13. HK\$10 billion has been earmarked for the completion of the School Improvement Programme within the next two years;

14. The objective in tertiary education is to have 60% of our senior secondary school-leavers receiving tertiary education within the next ten years (the present figure is about 30%, 18% in university, and 12% in other post-secondary/vocational institutions), thus providing about 28,000 additional places for tertiary education, bringing the total number to around 55,000;
15. In this regard, there will be a shortening of secondary education from seven to six years, with an extension of the usual length of degree programmes from three to four years;
16. A diverse, multi-level, multi-channel system of tertiary education, with a common transferable credit unit system will become accessible to all, so that lifelong learning will become the norm for the HKSAR in the future;
17. Full implementation of all the plans will increase the annual recurrent expenditure on education by about HK\$2 billion.

This is the basic historical background upon which we will try to focus our discussion and analysis of the various aspects and dimensions of the Quality Education Movement in Hong Kong society.

The Primary Objectives of the Book

This book is set out in this wider policy context to examine and critically reflect upon the origin, evolution and development of the Quality Education Movement in Hong Kong, with particular reference on whether and how education in Hong Kong has been affected by the global trend of economic rationalism and managerialism. The major objectives and research questions are:

1. What have been the major educational reforms of recent years in Hong Kong in the past decade or so? What have been their major effects in terms of financing, management, the quality of education and the shape of the curriculum?
2. What are the strategies/ways have been adopted by the HKSAR in response to the strong tide of managerialism and marketization?
3. In what ways has the HKSAR been able to counteract such a tidal wave? If not, what has been the impact of the strong market forces on educational development in Hong Kong?
4. To what extent do these proposals mirror some of the principal features of structural adjustment principles and practices, both within education and more broadly within Asia Pacific region?

5. How far and to what extent have local education policies in Hong Kong been shaped by the global trend outlined before? Has the considerable convergence at the level of policy rhetoric and general policy objectives really affected the fundamental processes and structures of education policy making in Hong Kong?

Structure of the Book

Part One of the book provides a major focus on the theoretical/conceptual framework and historical context for the book. In Chapter 1, Mok and Welch examine how the process of globalization has affected educational development in Hong Kong, with particularly reference to the discussion of the increasingly popular ideas of postmodernism, economic rationalism and managerialism, as well as the impact of these ideas on public sector management. The authors argue that education, being part of the public service/policy sphere, is not immune from the influence of these ideas and practices. Arguing from this perspective, Mok and Welch set the conceptual framework for the book by linking the recent educational restructuring in Hong Kong to the global tide of management-oriented reforms and ideologies. In Chapter 2, Cheng discusses when and how the Quality Assurance Movement emerged in Hong Kong's education sector, focusing on how schools and higher education institutions have been affected by strong market forces and the popularity of managerialism. As a whole, the two chapters in Part One try to set a scene for the theoretical/conceptual framework, as well as for the socio-political and socio-economic context of the book.

Part Two focuses on approaches to quality education. In Chapter 3, Cheng examines various models of quality education with insightful observations of the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches. In Chapter 4, Chan and Lai analyse one of the ways of promoting quality education in schools, with the use of ISO 9000, one of the most current private business practices. The discussion in this chapter raises different issues related to whether market-oriented practices could really promote quality education in the school setting. In Chapter 5, Wong examines culture and leadership issues in school governance. When reviewing the implementation of the School Management Initiatives (SMI) in the school sector in Hong Kong, Wong points out the importance of taking cultural and value dimensions into consideration. According to Wong, the success of any management-oriented reforms launched in schools is closely

related to the school culture and management style of individual schools. Therefore, any direct policy transfer must be contextualized, paying particular attention to the culture and ethical leadership.

Part Three focuses on policy change and on how the ideas of managerialism operate in school and higher education institutions. In Chapter 6, Tse offers a critical review of Quality Education Movement in Hong Kong, highlighting different types of problems and issues if education is run and managed in line of management-oriented ideas and practices. Pang's chapter discusses the School Management Reform in Hong Kong by examining the organizational values of government schools after implementing school management reform. Chan, Leung and Flynn's Chapter 8 concentrates on variables and factors that affect student learning attitudes. Based upon a survey on students' learning attitudes in secondary schools, the authors identify some major variables that affect student learning and make an attempt to analyse the relationship of equality of education and quality education, with particular reference to reflecting on the most current education reform in Hong Kong. In Chapter 9, Mok and Lee focus on the Quality Assurance Movement taking place in Hong Kong's higher education, exploring how academics in the university sector have been affected by the ideas and practices of managerialism. In their conclusion, Mok and Lee argue that Hong Kong academics are increasingly affected by strong market values and practices, and that they are experiencing the process of 'academic capitalization' in the higher education sector.

Part Four is a reflection and the conclusion. Chan's Chapter 10 examines the impact of managerialism on educational development, with particular reference to policy implications after the launch of education reforms in the HKSAR since the 1990s. Chan further examines the impact and the cost of managerialism in the education sector, and suggests a re-examination of this ideological underpinning if we really want to have a more humane society in the future. In the last chapter, Mok and Currie draw conclusions by reflecting upon the impact of globalization on educational restructuring in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the comparison of Hong Kong's experience with those of similar education reforms in the region.

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Index

- absence of problems model
 - of education quality, 73 (table 3.1), 78, 81 (table 3.2), 83
- Academic Aptitude Test (AAT), 206
- 'academic capitalism', 33–4, 253, 256n1
- academics, univervisty
 - alienation of, 251
 - evaluation and perception of quality assurance, 231–4
- access to education, 44
- accountability, 106–7, 247, 265
 - concept of, 60–1, 147
 - in education, facets of, 60
 - impact on education systems, 3
- Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ), 166n4
- aided schools, 176, 177
 - compared with government schools, 178 (table 7.3)
 - impact of SMI on, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189
 - organizational values of, 182–5
- Asia Pacific region
 - economies, 36
 - educational reform agenda, 34–5
 - quality education concerns in, 69
- assessment
 - education quality, 72
 - of school performance, 150–2
- audit, quality, 60, 108
- Australia, 27, 191
- awards
 - schools and teachers, 161
- basic education (*see also* nine-year education, primary education)
 - aims for Hong Kong, 12–3
 - low cost of, 45
- benchmarking
 - language, 160
- Biggs, Professor John, 232
- Board of Education, 176
- Bought Place Scheme (BPS), 166n1

- centres of excellence
 - in universities, 224
- Cheung, Professor N S, 232–3
- China
 - education as priority in modernization, viii
- choice
 - parental, in education, 146, 147, 163
- civic attitudes, 201
- Code of Aid, 177, 183
- competition
 - between schools and universities, 230, 246–7, 250
- compulsory education
 - enforcement of, 63n2
 - implications of, 47
 - introduction, 42
- Confucius, 132–3
- consultation documents
 - Education Commission, 5, 9, 10
- consumerism, 248
- continuing education, 10
 - aims for Hong Kong, 13
- continuous improvement, 112–3
- corporate models
 - in higher education, 31
- corporatization, 31–4
- cultural diversity, 124
- cultures (*see also* organizational culture)
 - Chinese and Western compared, 127–9
 - as issue in educational administration, 129
- curriculum (*see also* Target Oriented Curriculum)
 - movement towards quality in, 51–3
 - sixth form, 46
- Curriculum Development Council (CDC), 46
- customers
 - concept of, in education, 102–4
- decentralization
 - in education, 174, 188–9, 254–5, 267
 - role of government in, 106–7, 254
- Democrats (political party)
 - opposition to DSS, 58
- Deng Xiaoping, vii
- Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS), 207
 - introduction, 58, 162
- early childhood education
 - aims for Hong Kong, 12
- economic rationalism, 27
- education
 - aims, 12–3, 155–6
 - central role of, 4
 - ideal, loss of, 248–9
 - principles of good education system, 196
 - as ‘public good’, 107
- Education Blueprint for the 21st Century: Review of Academic System*, 7, 205, 206
- Education Commission, viii, 1, 166
 - establishment, 144
 - reports, 48–9, 59, 144–5
- Education Committee, 176
- education constituencies
 - satisfaction of, 70, 76
- Education Department, 50, 176
 - review of, 54
- education development
 - quantitative era, 41–6
- Education Indicators for the Hong Kong School Education System*, 157
- Education and Manpower Branch, 50
- education market, 95
- Education Ordinance, 177, 190
- education policy
 - external influences on, 123
 - implications of managerial approach, 246–50

- education professionals
 - alienation of, 251
 - making of education policy, 4
- education quality, *see* quality education
- Education Regulations, 177, 190
- education system in Hong Kong
 - aims of, 8–9
 - based on meritocracy, 209
 - challenges to, 62–3
 - concern for equality, 208
 - fundamental issues to be addressed, 164
 - principles for future development, 9–10
 - reliance on British model, 61
 - review of, 1, 7–11, 196
 - recommendations, 11–3
- educational institutions
 - changing environment of, 23
 - privatization, 35
- educational reform, 63, 114–5, 165
 - agenda in Asia Pacific region, 34–5
 - outlined in policy address, 14–5
 - theme in public policy, 195
 - vision and focus of, 11–2
- effective school movement, 49–50
- effective schools
 - quality and, 164
- efficiency
 - cult of, 44
- ethical leadership, 131, 133–4, 135
 - in Chinese context, 132–3
- ethics
 - students' responses, 203–4
- examinations, 10, 52
 - emphasis on, 8
- Excel and Growth*, 10
- excellence
 - centres of, in universities, 224
 - components of, in schools, 105–6
- expenditure
 - on higher education, 220
 - as percentage of GDP, 44
 - public, on education, 144, 221
- extra-curricular activities
 - students' participation in, 201–2
- faculty deans, 229
- family background
 - as factor in academic results, 199–200, 204–5
- Feeder and Nominated Schools System (FNSS), 207, 208
- French, Nigel, 222
- gender
 - as factor in academic results, 199
- General Teaching Council
 - proposed, 160
- globalization, 259–62, 266–74
 - defined, 24
 - distinguished from global trends, 269
 - impact of, 24–5, 260, 268
 - state-government and, 270–2
- goal and specification model
 - of education quality, 72, 73 (table 3.1), 80, 81 (table 3.2)
- governance
 - educational, changing philosophy in, 244–6
 - in higher education, 31, 33, 215–6, 233, 234, 244
 - new vision of, 28–9
- government schools, 177
 - compared with aided schools, 178 (table 7.3)
 - impact of SMI on, 184, 185, 187, 189
 - need for management reform in, 190–1
 - organizational values of, 182–7
 - role in education system, 191

- higher education
- aims for Hong Kong, 13
 - changing socio-economic context, 214
 - expansion, 56, 219–20
 - governance in, 31, 33, 215–6, 233, 234, 244
 - impact of managerialism, 32, 213
 - institutions, management reviews, 227–9
 - monitoring, 222–3
 - neo-colonization of, 273
 - quality assurance movement, 55–7, 213–35
 - resource allocation, 223, 230
 - transformation from elite to universal system, 215, 220
- Hong Kong Council for Educational Administration, 50
- housing
- impact on academic results, 199–200
- independent schools, *see* private schools
- indicators, *see* performance indicators
- inequality, 208, 250
- information technology, 214
- intelligence quotient, 105
- ISO 9000
- application to Hong Kong schools, 99–101
 - audit, scope of, 108
 - concept of quality, 98–9
 - continuous improvement and innovation, 112–3
 - documentation required, 247
 - editions, 93–4
 - introduction in education, 89–90
 - limitations of documentation and monitoring, 108–10
 - origins, 93
 - standards set by, 110–1
- kindergartens
- application of ISO 9000, 101
- knowledge society
- transition to, 8
- languages
- benchmarks for teachers, 160
 - decline in standards, 47–8
- leadership (*see also* ethical leadership)
- importance, 111–2
 - multi-models of, 80–3
 - school, change in, 248
 - theory, 130–2
- learning
- moral aspect, 132–3, 134
- Learning for Life*, 9, 196
- legitimacy model
- of education quality, 73 (table 3.1), 76–7, 81 (table 3.2), 82–3
- Li Yuet-ting (former Director of Education), 43
- 'life long learning', 9
- McDonald's (fast-food chain), 25
- MacLehose, Sir Murray (Governor of Hong Kong), 42
- Mak, Professor Grace, 231–2
- management reviews
- in higher education institutions, 227–9
- managerialism, 28, 145
- in education, 114, 115, 148, 244–5, 265
 - human and social cost, 250–3
 - impact on higher education, 32, 213, 267
 - policy implication of, 246–50
 - public sector reform, 3, 219
 - unintended consequences, 163
- market-oriented model
- in higher education, 215–6, 244
- marketization
- in education, 32, 253, 265, 267

- as strategy in response to resource scarcity, 30
- manufacturing model
 - application to education, 97–8
- measurement, *see* assessment, performance indicators
- meritocracy, 209
- missionary schools, 176
- models
 - corporate, in higher education, 31
 - education quality, 71–80, 84–5
- motivation
 - intrinsic and extrinsic, of students, 202–3
- nation states
 - globalization and, 26–7, 261–2, 263–4
- ‘national curriculum’
 - in United Kingdom, 52
- nine-year education, 43
 - ‘through-train model’, 10, 206
- non-academic units
 - university, restructuring, 230
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 31
- organizational culture
 - change in, 249
 - definitions and patterns of, 125–6
 - in schools, 124
 - significance of, 124
- organizational learning model
 - of educational quality, 73 (table 3.1), 79–80, 81 (table 3.2), 83
- organizational values
 - in Hong Kong schools, 179–87
- Outstanding Teacher and School Awards (OTSA), 161
- Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), 166n3
- parents
 - choice in education, 147, 163
 - participation by, 153
- Patten, Chris (Governor of Hong Kong), 3, 7, 161, 196
- performance indicators, 157
 - design of, 151
 - introduction, 91
 - negative responses to, 234
 - quality education, 71, 72, 75, 76
- performance pledges, 161–2
- postmodernism, 26
- primary education (*see also* basic education)
 - compulsory, 42
- private schools, 162, 177, 207
- privatization
 - attempts towards, 57–8
 - educational institutions, 35
 - as strategy in response to resource scarcity, 30
- process model
 - of education quality, 73 (table 3.1), 74–5, 81 (table 3.2), 82
- ‘product’
 - education as, 104–5
- Professional Teachers’ Union, 64n7
- ‘public good’
 - education as, 107
- public sector management, 28–9
- public sector reform, 219, 262, 272
- public services
 - concern for quality, 2–3
- ‘publish or perish’, 56, 223, 252
- qualifications, 45, 159–61, 166n4
- quality
 - aspects of, 217–8
 - concept in ISO 9000, 98–9
 - perceptions of, 96–7
- quality assurance
 - definition, 217, 218, 222
 - in education, 4–5

- framework, 149
- in higher education, 55-7, 213-35
- inspection, 55
- introduction to school system, 53-5
- Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)
 - proposed, 54
- Quality Assurance Inspectorate (QAI), 149, 150, 251
- quality audit, 60, 108
- quality education
 - concern for, 4, 59
 - definition and concept, 70-1, 97, 146
 - emergence as issue, 47-8
 - levels of perception, 113
 - limited progress towards, 58
 - models of, 71-80, 84-5
 - narrow conception of, 7
 - poverty of discourse on, 146-8
- Quality Education Fund, 157-8
- quality education movement
 - advent in Hong Kong, 143-4, 171
 - study of, 15-16
- Quality School Education*, 6-7, 90-1, 145, 171
 - objectives, 5
 - critique of, 146-8
- quality systems
 - quality outcomes and, 110-1
- reform, *see* educational reforms, public sector reform
- registered teachers, 166n5
- research
 - emphasis on, 223-4, 251-2
- Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), 56, 61, 223-5, 251
- Research Grant Council (RGC), 223
- resource-input model
 - of education quality, 72, 73 (table 3.1), 74, 80, 81 (table 3.2)
- satisfaction model
 - of education quality, 73 (table 3.1), 75-6, 81 (table 3.2), 82
- school based management, 95, 153, 171-3, 196
 - introduced, 54, 91
 - resistance to, 55
- School Education in Hong Kong: A Statement of Aims*, 155
- school management
 - quality in, 49-50
- School Management Initiative (SMI)
 - aims, 174
 - impact, 182-5, 187, 188
 - implementation, 153-5, 175, 188
 - introduction, 50-1, 91, 152, 171, 196
 - school participation, 176 (table 7.2)
- school places, 143-4
 - allocation system, reform of, 206-7
 - 'buying' from private schools, 63n1, 166n1
 - increase in, 44
- school principals
 - as leaders, 111-12
 - school management reform and, 189-90
- school sponsors, 48
- school system in Hong Kong, 176-7
 - reform of, 53-5
- school values inventory, 179, 180 (table 7.6)
- schools
 - construction, 46
 - as factor in academic results, 200, 205
 - survival, 77
- secondary education
 - junior, creation of places, 42
 - senior, aims for Hong Kong, 13

- secondary schools
 banding, 200, 210n1
- self-efficacy
 students' levels of confidence, 203
- self-esteem
 students', 202
- Singapore, 195, 271
- sixth form
 curriculum, 46
- South Korea, 195
- standards (*see also* ISO 9000)
 decline in, 47
- Stewart, Dr Frederick, 176
- strategies
 education quality, 71
- student survey, 197, 198–204, 209–10
 implications of results, 204–6
 independent variables in, 209–10
 non-academic performance, 201–4
 variables in, 198 (table 8.1)
- subject syllabuses, 159
- Taiwan, 195, 271
- Tan Keng-yam (Minister of Education, Singapore), 49
- Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC), 53, 158–9
- Target and Target-Related Assessment (TTRA), 52, 158
- teacher training, 159–60, 161, 166n4
- teachers
 personal values, 185–6
 student attitudes to, 204
 career structure, absence of reform, 55
 qualifications, 45
- Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review (TLQPR), 56–7, 223, 225–7
- teaching quality
 in higher education institutions, 229–30
- technical education
 expansion, 43, 46
- tertiary education, *see* higher education
- top down management, 233, 247
- total quality management
 in schools, 85, 114
- Trench, Sir David (Governor of Hong Kong), 42
- Tung Chee Hwa
 attention given to education, vii, viii, 7, 95, 196
- University Grants Committee (UGC)
 development of quality assurance mechanisms, 221, 222–3
 established, 221, 254
 introduction of
 RAEs, 56, 223
 teaching quality review, 56–7, 223, 225
 role, 221–2
- 'value added'
 concept, 151
- 'value for money'
 impact on education systems, 3
- Vocational Training Council (VTC), 43, 46
- World Bank, 31