COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCIES IN EDUCATION POLICY: FINDINGS FROM 10 COUNTRIES AND ECONOMIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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1. Background

Growing debate on the importance on “21st century skills” (e.g. OECD and Voogt 2013)

International initiatives
- DeSeCo project
- Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills

Existing studies mainly focus on western region

Education reforms in the Asia-Pacific region introducing 21st century skills
- Australia, “general capabilities”
- Thailand, “life skills”

These movements are not widely documented and shared

The regional research to collect and document perspectives and insights from the region
1.1 Background: the regional research

Comparative Study on 21st Century Skills in Education Policies in Asia-Pacific Region

1) Country reports
- Document analysis (Ed policies, curriculum guidelines)
- Interviews (policy makers)
- Survey questionnaires

2) E-contest for students and teachers
- Skills mapping
- Similarities and diversities in skills and competencies

3) Regional synthesis report
## 2 Working definition: transversal competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Example of key characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical and Innovative Thinking</td>
<td>creativity, entrepreneurship, resourcefulness, application skills, reflective thinking, reasoned decision-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>presentation and communication skills, leadership, organisational skills, teamwork, collaboration, initiative, sociability, collegiality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal skills</td>
<td>self-discipline, enthusiasm, perseverance, self-motivation, compassion, integrity, commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Citizenship</td>
<td>awareness, tolerance, openness, respect for diversity, intercultural understanding, ability to resolve conflicts, civic/political participation, conflict resolution, respect for the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical and Psychological health</td>
<td>healthy lifestyle, healthy feeding, physical fitness, empathy, self-respect</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research framework by UNESCO Bangkok (2013)
3. Shared Skills and Competencies

Key Findings 1
Top 10 skills introduced in education policies
• critical thinking (10)
• innovative thinking (10)
• reflective thinking (10)
• reasoned decision-making (10)
• communication skills (10)
• collaboration (10)
• creativity (9)
• entrepreneurship (9)
• compassion (9)
• awareness (9)

Skills and competencies related to ICT are also widely included in the education polices
Examples:
• “ICT capability” (Australia)
• “ICT ability ” (China)
• “digital literacy” (Malaysia)

Key Findings 2
Skills in Critical and Innovative Thinking domain are evident

Key Findings 3
Communication skills and collaboration are the most selected in inter-personal skills domain

Key Findings 4
All Skills in Global Citizenship domain are selected in more than half of countries and economies

Key Findings 5
All Skills in Global Citizenship domain are selected more than half of countries and economies

Critical and Innovative Thinking
Inter-personal skills
Global Citizenship
4. Diversities in Skills and Competencies

**Key findings 1**

Skills observed in a few countries

- togetherness, sense of community (Australia)
- patriotism (China)
- national identity (Malaysia)

**Key findings 2**

Skills specific to certain countries

- “Dealing with stress” (India)
- “Emotional intelligence” (Malaysia)
- “Global Spirituality ” (Philippines)
- “Language etiquette in speaking and writing” and “Cyber etiquette” (Republic of Korea)
5. Preliminary Conclusions

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The current guideline for curriculum promotes abilities to think, express and make decisions through diverse verbal activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Problem-solving is considered as important by policy makers, education experts and teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Implementation issues are identified including need for an appropriate assessment system, proper teacher learning and support from different stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Skills in Critical thinking and innovative thinking domain is mostly shared by 10 countries and economies</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Skills and competencies unique to specific countries are found illustrating diversity in transversal competencies in Asia and the Pacific</td>
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Back-up Slides
3.3 Survey Findings

- **Purpose**: to illustrate the perspectives of policy makers, education experts
- **Methodology**: questionnaire survey and interviews

- Teachers from two schools
  - 33 responses

- Policy makers and education experts
  - 12 survey responses
  - 18 interviews
3.3 Survey Findings (cont’d)

Rationale behind policy towards transversal competencies

Meeting societal needs

- low interpersonal skills due to diluted relationship with others
- decreased students' motivation and independence

Increased international competition

to balance academic skills and other skills

decreased students' physical strength

decreased students' academic performance

to prepare students for the world of work

Boosting economic development

Policy makers/Education experts: N=12

Teachers: N=33

Others
3.3 Survey Findings (cont’d)

**Key findings 2**

**Important skills for students**

Skills selected only or mostly by teachers:

- Teachers N=33
- Policy makers/Education experts N=12

**Problem Solving** is selected by both groups

- Integrity
- Perseverance
- Self-discipline

Survey Findings (cont’d)

Important skills for students

- Integrity
- Perseverance
- Enthusiasm
- Decision-making
- Others (please specify)
- Respect for the Environment
- Openness
- Self-discipline
- Organisation skills
- Leadership
- Entrepreneurship
- Tolerance
- Awareness and Respect for diversity
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Digital Literacy
- Civic/political participation
- (Career)planning
- Media/information Literacy
- Ability to resolve conflicts
- Intercultural understanding
- Working with others
- Collaboration
- Reasoned decision making
- Creativity
- Presentation Skills
- Application Skills
- Resourcefulness
- Self-Motivation
- Reflective thinking
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Decision-making
- Enthusiasm
- Perseverance
- Self-discipline
- Openness
- Organisational skills
- Leadership
- Entrepreneurship
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- Self-Motivation
- Reflective thinking
- Communication
# 3.4 Lessons learned

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Need for establishing <strong>appropriate measurement methodology</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Need for <strong>teacher training</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Need for <strong>raising awareness</strong> among stakeholders to assist students’ development of transversal competencies</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Need for careful consideration on <strong>entrance examination system</strong></td>
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3.1 “Zest for Living”

Solid academic Prowess
- Basic Knowledge
- Learn & think themselves
- Make decisions
- Reach the solution

“Zest for Living” has been incorporated in the Courses of Study (national guideline for curriculum) since 1998
→ 1998 Courses of Study (2002 to 2012)
→ 2008 New Courses of Study (2011 – ongoing)

Source: MEXT (2011)
3. 2 Education Reforms in Japan

Basic Act on Education (2006)

1) Education goals:
   - Enriched sense of morale
   - Self-reliance, civic responsibility
   - Respect for Japanese culture & tradition
   - World peace and contribution
2) Enhancement of “individual unique ability”
3) Other new ideas: lifelong-learning, collaboration among schools, parents and communities

Amendment of “School Education Act” (2007)

Three elements of academic purposes:
1) Learn basic knowledge and skills
2) Acquire decision making, thinking, and expression skills to solve issues
3) Positive attitude toward learning

Challenges & issues
- Reading comprehension, applied learning
- Learning attitude, study habit, lifestyle
- Lack of confidence, uncertainty about future
- Decline in physical strength

The 2008 New Courses of Study was developed to fulfill the concept
3. 2 Education Reforms in Japan (cont’d)

The 2008 New Courses of Study (2011~)

1. Curriculum change
   - To foster abilities to **think, express and make a decision**
   - To learn more about Japanese culture and tradition
   - To enrich moral education
   - To keep students healthy
   - To cover current social and global issues for teaching and learning
   - To increase experience-based learning opportunities
   - To foster math and science skill
   - To increase foreign Language education opportunities

2. Increase in lesson hours and contents
   - Japanese language – all grades
   - Math and Science – upper grades

3. Collaboration among schools, families and communities
धन्यवाद
ありがとうございました
Maraming salamat po
Thank you very much
謝謝
고마웠습니다
Terima kasih
Баярлалaa
ขอบคุณ ค่ะ

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