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<th>Educational problems of gifted children in Southeast Asia</th>
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<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Ruth H. K. Wong</td>
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<td>S. Mudd (Ed.), <em>Conflict resolution and world education</em> (pp. 180 - 190)</td>
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<td>Published by</td>
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Educational Problems of Gifted Children in South-East Asia

by

Ruth H. K. Wong
Department of Education, University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

PREAMBLE

The countries with which this paper is concerned are Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and South Vietnam. Much of the information on which it is based has been gleaned through observations made on visits to the countries concerned in March and April of 1980 (Indonesia excepted) and through the use of a questionnaire sent out in July this year to Education authorities, University departments of education, colleges of education and principals of a sample of primary and secondary schools in each country.

The response to the simple questionnaire is disheartening for two reasons:

(a) Of the forms sent out, only 14% were returned; Laos and Cambodia did not respond.
(b) The returned questionnaires illustrate, in general, a gross lack of knowledge. For, although a total of 450 replies refer to a special programme for the gifted, over 60% refer to the remaining countries, and indicate no special programme for the gifted.

This paper is necessarily subjective since the sample of replies is too small for firm generalizations to be made and there is but little data from research or experimentation of consequence in the area on which one could draw. Heavy reliance is therefore placed on the observations during personal visits.

WHO ARE THE GIFTED?

Anticipating the question “Who are the gifted?” may have varying connotations in different countries. The first question in the form sent out specified possible definitions for the term. Excluding the Philippines, where the Government and educational institutions have begun, in one form or another, to consider seriously the specific needs of the gifted, 16% of the responses from the remaining countries fared the definition, “a child who is in the top ten per cent of his age group in one or more areas of study in school.” 16% favoured alternative (d) viz., “a child exceptionally endowed with talent, e.g., poetic, musical, artistic or mechanical talent.” The rest of the opinion was divided between a combination of (c) and (d); 12% definition (c) only; 12% and definition (f), 7%.

Of the responses relating to (d), 11% indicated that there was a special programme for the gifted. Yet when comparing these responses with those for Questions Four, Six and Seven on the same forms, it was noticed that the usual criteria of selection through examination was followed in the identification of the gifted; that these were then put in accelerated classes or top streams in schools and treated to a specially intensified programme with extra topics given to them for study. In other words, while there was an awareness that gifts varied, the educational systems which admitted the importance for the nurture of these gifts, did not necessarily cater to these gifts severely except in a very small way within the normal class-group structure. Perhaps the absence of a coherently organized programme for the gifted as defined by (d) accounts for the nil returns to Questions Four, Six and Seven in the rest of the forms subscribing to this definition (e,f).

It is also interesting to note here that the majority of the (d) replies and all the combination (c)–(d) replies, excepting those from the Philippines, came from Malaysia, a country where the T-S Secondary Selection Examination has only recently been abolished and Comprehensive Education introduced at the Junior Secondary School level. One of the expressed aims of the new education is to cater to the individual needs and capabilities of pupils. How this is to be done, however, has yet to be substantiated in practice. Grouping and streaming of pupils on the overall results of a battery of teacher-made, non-standardized achievement tests continues to be adopted. Each child, after the initial classification, remains in a group kept rigidly together in a lock-step process.

The acceptance of a particular definition of “giftedness” seems very closely related to the educational system which obtains in a particular country. In Malaya, where a change has occurred in the status quo and a slow transition is being made from an examination-dominated system to one admitting of the need to cater to individual differences, the gifted child is viewed by some in terms of definition (b), harkening the orthodox view, or in terms of (d), a more liberal view in keeping with the new aims, or in terms of both. Replies from Thailand, Sarawak, Sabah, Burma and South Vietnam where examination and elimination continue to be twin practices in the control of school cohorts, all favoured (c) without a single exception. One respondent added the definition, “a child in the top 10 per cent in the main area of study.” 16% of the (c) responses, however, indicated that the educational system did not cater to the gifted child.

Similarly, in the Philippines, in which the system of education is less organized as a governmental effort, where more flexibility of organization
Educational Problems of Gifted Children in South-East Asia

by

Ruth H.K. Wong

Doe, Faculty of Education, University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

PREFACE

The countries with which this paper is concerned are Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and South Vietnam. Much of the information on which it is based has been gleaned through observations made on visits to the countries concerned in March and April of 1972 (Indonesia excepted) and through the use of a questionnaire sent out in July this year to Education authorities, University departments of education, colleges of education and principals of a sample of primary and secondary schools in each country.

The response to the simple questionnaire is disheartening for two reasons:

(i) Of the forms sent, only 6 were returned; Laos and Cambodia did not respond.
(ii) The returned questionnaires highlight, in general, a vast area of lack. For, although 6% of the replies refer to a special programme for the gifted, 6% were positive replies from the Philippines; 6% of the replies from the remaining countries indicated no special programme for the gifted.

This paper is necessarily subjective since the sample of replies is too small for firm generalisations to be made and there is but little data from research or experimentation of consequence in the area on which one could draw. Heavy reliance is therefore placed on the observations during personal visits.

WHO ARE THE GIFTED?

Anticipating that the term "gifted" may have varying connotations in different countries, the first question in the form sent out specified possible definitions for the term. Excluding the Philippines, where the Government and educational institutions have begun, in one form or another, to consider seriously the specific needs of the gifted, 60% of the responses from the remaining countries favoured the definition, "a child who is in the top ten per cent of his age group in one or more areas of study in school." 60% favoured alternative (d) viz., "a child exceptionally endowed with talent, e.g. poetic, musical, artistic or mechanical talent". The rest of the option was divided between a combination of (c) and (d). 19% definition (b), 10% and definition (b), 10%.

Of the responses relating to (d), 11% indicated that there was a special programme for the gifted. Yet on comparing these responses with those for Questions Four, Six and Seven on the same form, it was noticed that the usual criteria of selection through examination was followed in the identification of the gifted; that these were then put in accelerated classes or top streams in schools and treated to a specially intensified programme with extra topics given to them for study. In other words, while there was an awareness that gifts varied, the educational systems which admitted the importance for the nurture of these gifts, did not necessarily cater to these gifts severely except in a very small way within the normal class-group structure. Perhaps the absence of a coherently organised programme for the gifted as defined by (d) accounts for the nil returns to Questions Four, Six and Seven in the rest of the forms subscribing to this definition (e.g.),

It is also interesting to note here that the majority of the (d) replies and all the combination (c)+ (d) replies, excepting those from the Philippines, came from Malaysia, a country where the n+ Secondary Selection Examination has only recently been abolished and Comprehensive Education introduced at the Junior Secondary School level. One of the expressed aims of the new education is to cater to the individual needs and capabilities of pupils. How this is to be done, however, has yet to be substantiated in practice. Grouping and streaming of pupils on the overall results of a battery of teacher-made, non-standardised achievement tests continues to be adopted. Each child, after the initial classification, remains in a group kept rigidly together in a lock-step process.

The acceptance of a particular definition of "giftedness" seems very closely related to the educational system which obtains in a particular country. In Malaysia, where a change has occurred in the status quo and a slow transition is being made from an examination-dominated system to one admitting of the need to cater to individual differences, the gifted child is viewed by some in terms of definition (d), harkening the orthodox view, or in terms of (d), a more liberal view in keeping with the new aims, or in terms of both. Replies from Thailand, Sarawak, Sabah, Burma and South Vietnam, where examination and elimination continue to be twin practices in the control of school cohorts, all favoured (c) without a single exception. One respondent added the definition, "a child in the top 10 per cent in the main areas of study." 60% of the (c) responses, however, indicated that the educational system did not cater to the gifted child.

Similarly, in the Philippines, in which the system of education is less organised as a governmental effort, where more flexibility of organisation
through a philosophical approach to the environment. Historically, the gift of the East was first and foremost a wise man who could apply his wisdom to the fruitful use of his gift-giving. These were regarded as similarly available to all men in varying degrees. But the gift was essentially he who nurtured his gift; others lost them through neglect. Thus in Chinese history and folk-tales, tales of boy prodigies abound — prodigies who themselves were gifted to men. The gods were no respecters of persons; many of these prodigies were born into the most ordinary of ordinary homes. Among them were young cowherds and slave children. One, for example, described as studying the logistics of war with the stories he gathered from the roadside; another read by the light of glow-worms. All had great powers for reflection.

From among the scholars of Buddhist temple schools in Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam were those of the past gifted in leadership and in the arts of government and peace. Tradition dies hard. This humanistic view of gift-giving as potential quite beyond the reach of environmental influence has been made good until persisting even though most of the South-East Asian territories have been through a period of colonial rule. Its influence persists in the conduct of teaching in the classroom and in the general organization of activities. He who applies himself to learning will in the end prove his gift-worthiness. Hence the great respect for textbooks and for the teacher’s word. The idea of the original remains but the substance has given way to the shadow in practice. For a technological age, this view of gift-giving seems inadequate.

It is, however, encouraging to note that all who supported the early identification of gifted children for special attention also agreed that there was no adequate programme for the nurture of the gifted and made suggestions as follows:

1. Research must be undertaken to study proper motivational devices to help the gifted to respond to their work positively.
2. Different criteria and instruments for the identification of the gifted should be established.
3. Existing school curricula should be examined so that special provision may be made to meet the pupil’s talents.
4. Special schools should be set up for each talent (gift) as mentioned in item 6.
5. Where flexibility in school administration should be allowed. (To appreciate this suggestion, it must be understood that most of the school systems in the newly emergent territories in South-East Asia are Government-determined. In some places schools are not allowed to deviate either from the pattern of organization imposed or from the given syllabus for the subjects to be taught in the curriculum.)
6. Relaxed age requirements should be permitted.
7. Specialist teachers should be trained to identify and meet the needs of gifted children. In general, the standards of teacher training could well be raised.
8. A system of scholarships should be instituted in order to meet the needs of the gifted poor.
9. Good guidance and counselling should be made available to the gifted.
within each institution is permitted, and where the pattern of education is rather closely associated with that of the United States, the respondents have tended to favour both (g) and (d) and have fanned out over the whole range of the choices of alternatives to Question Six. Methods of work with the gifted too cover most of the measures set out in Question 7 with the strongest emphasis on (e), (d) and (a). Items significantly lacking in returns from respondents in other countries.

The IQ definition has not been favoured except by respondents in the Philippines, because, perhaps, of the lack or absence of standardised IQ tests suitable for use in the region.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF THE GIFTED FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION

Every one of the respondents, except for two, agreed that early identification of the gifted for special attention was necessary. The two who dissented gave respectively the following reasons:

(a) We may find children who seem to be gifted at an early age but turn out later not to be so. Hence it is better to wait a year or two for this.

(b) Early identification is psychologically unsound; it is unnecessary. The geniuses of history were not identified for special attention. They developed despite society and environment.

The first reason against early identification came from an Elementary School principal in Malaya. In this country, children of parents of middle income groups who are relatively well-off are sent at the age of four or five to private Kindergarten schools (Government does not organise pre-school education). Many of these schools incorporate in their curriculum both play and the traditional study of the three R's. Thus children who attend Kindergarten and enter the first year of Elementary School are well ahead of their less fortunate peers who have not had the same opportunities. Because they are more articulate in their speech, more facile in their use of vocabulary, and more advanced in number skills, teachers tend to regard them as 'gifted'. Such children are generally diverted between the ages of seven and nine to 'express' or 'accelerated' classes where they do three years' work in two. Their academic superiority is not always maintained at the dissenting reason given above has already implied.

The lack of distinction between pure academic advantage, gained through a better cultural and material environment, and true giftedness may have accounted for the replies from the rest of the Malaysian Elementary School principals who responded to this questionnaire positively in respect of Question 3 and elaborated by checking off item (a). At any rate their responses to item 3 do not bear out the presence of a programme for the gifted.

Associated with the second reason may be the typically Eastern concept of learning. The school seeks continually the truth and meaning of life through a philosophical approach to the environment. Historically, the gifted of the East was first and foremost a wise man who could apply his wisdom to the fruitful use of his gift-gifts. These were regarded as similarly available to all men in varying degrees. But the gifted was essentially he who nurtured his gift; others lost them through neglect. Thus in Chinese history and folk lore, tales of boy prodigies abound—prodigies who themselves were gifted to men. The gods were no respecters of persons; many of these prodigies were born into the most ordinary of ordinary homes. Among them were young cowherds and slave children. One, for example, was described as studying the logistics of war with the stories he gathered from the wayside; another read by the light of glow-worms. All had great powers for reflection.

From among the scholars of Buddhist temple schools in Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam were those of the past gifted in leadership and in the arts of government and peace. Tradition dies hard. This humanistic view of giftedness as potential quite beyond the reach of environmental influence to mar or make good still persists even though most of the South-East Asian territories have been through a period of colonial rule. Its influence persists in the conduct of teaching in the classroom and in the general organization of activities. He who applies himself to learning will in the end prove his gift-worthiness. Hence the great respect for textbooks and for the teacher's words. The idea of the original remains but the substance has given way to the shadow in practice. For a technological age, this view of giftedness seems inadequate.

It is, however, encouraging to note that all who supported the early identification of gifted children for special attention also agreed that there was no adequate programme for the nurture of the gifted and made suggestions as follows:

(a) Research must be undertaken to study proper motivational devices to help the gifted to respond to their work positively.

(b) Permissive criteria and instruments for the identification of the gifted should be established.

(c) Existing school curricula should be examined so that special provisions may be made to meet the gifted students.

(d) Special schools should be set up for such talents/gifts as mentioned in item (d).

(e) More flexibility in school administration should be allowed. (To appreciate this suggestion, it must be understood that most of the school systems in the newly emergent territories in South-East Asia are government-determined. In some places schools are not allowed to deviate either from the pattern of organization imposed or from the given syllabus for the subjects to be taught in the curriculum.)

(f) Relaxation of age requirements should be permitted.

(g) Specialist teachers should be trained to identify and meet the needs of gifted children. In general, the standards of teacher training could well be raised.

(h) A system of scholarships should be instituted in order to aid the needs of the gifted poor.

(i) Good guidance and counselling should be made available to the gifted.
In private institutions, particularly those of the Philippines, the age requirement is waived at one or more levels of school though not at the University.

Respondents generally associated the age at which the gifted are identified with those at which pupils at the various selection examinations in the school system.

RESEARCH

No research on gifted children is currently carried out in any Southeast Asian country except in the Philippines. In Malaysia, a five-year follow-up study of student progress began in 1946 and continued both the 1946 and 1947 cohorts, examining the relationship between high achievement in school examinations and final success at the University. A related problem for study is the extent to which high achievement may be accepted as an indication of giftedness.

Studies in the Philippines are being conducted by the Philippine Institute of Filipino Children and Youth. This Institute is charged with conducting and encouraging research among public and private institutions with a view to making a scientific and thorough study of the needs of Filipino children. At the Philippine Women's University a study is currently conducted on the background of Gifted Children. A particular sample of students in Maquilacking school was given the WISC, the Philippine Mental Ability Test (Form 25) and the Zenrin Culture-Free Test in an attempt to find out the particular needs of these children and to suggest special educational provisions for the gifted. There are limited studies too for the setting up of developmental norms. On the whole what research is being carried out on gifted children in Southeast Asia is still meagre, haphazard and hardly worth citing.

The responses to the questionnaire as a whole have given some indication of the highly selective and competitive process which governs the opportunities for education within the Southeast Asian region. Giftedness tends to be identified with high achievement in the school. There is a lack of clear and coherent thinking on the needs of gifted children although there is certainly a kind of intuitions feeding for them. There is the impression that more organized effort could be made to meet their needs, that officially at any rate, Government lack an appreciation of the importance of the contribution which the gifted can make to society.

It rests with research not only to indicate how talents may be identified but also how they may be properly developed. In the context of Southeast Asia these are crucial problems and difficult to solve. To try to find a perspective it is necessary to appreciate the social conditions which seem to militate against rather than nurture the gifted.
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Students generally associated the age at which the gifted are identified with those at which pupils at the various selection examinations in the school system.

Research
No research on gifted children is currently carried out in any South-East Asian country except in the Philippines. In Malaysia, a four-year follow-up study of student progress, begun in 1948 and using both the 1944 and 1945 cohorts, examined the relationship between high achievement in school examinations and final success at the University. A derived problem for study is the extent to which high achievement may be accepted as an indication of giftedness.

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It rests with research not only to indicate how talents may be identified but also how they may be properly developed. In the context of South-East Asia these are crucial problems and difficult to solve. To get at them in perspective it is necessary to appreciate the social conditions which seem to militate against rather than nurture the gifted.
PROBLEMS OF THE GIFTED ARISING FROM THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OBTAINING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. Nature of the gifted is difficult in the context of traditional values held. According to traditional thinking, giftedness is a child of "happens". Well enough if it grows and manifests itself, it may not even be right to pay much attention to it lest the gods think we take the possession of the gift away. Thus in families where children, particularly boys, show promise, they are given nicknames such as "Pooh" and "Rabish" so that they may be mistaken for what they are not and thus protected from the evil eye. Among more sophisticated urban peoples of the region there is hardly any of this thinking left and ambitious parents like those in the West push their children hard if there is any indication of ability at all. But only 15% of the population in this region as a whole live in urban areas. A great number are still rural and essentially inhibited by the values and superstitions which have been handed down.

Again in societies which have been mainly feudal, there is an unquestioning acceptance of one's lot. Only education can correct such an attitude and promote social mobility, but for education to work there must first be a rise in the level of aspiration. In the villages of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and South Vietnam, for example, much his will to be done to bring children in to schools. Such conditions are not conducive to the identification of talent. Besides, talents do not flourish in economically underprivileged homes or a culturally impoverished environment.

2. The too-rapid rate of educational development cannot ensure sound programmes for the gifted.

With limited means and scant resources some countries in the region cannot even give four years of free compulsory primary education to all children of the correct school age. But when the goal was set at the Karachi Conference of 1966 for all countries in Asia to reach at least a 10-year target, the case became staggering in respect of teachers and teaching facilities. In trying to establish this broad base to the educational pyramid standards are necessarily lowered. Mass education brings its innumerable problems of strained resources and poor teaching. In Malaysia, a further effort is added through making available, to all who demand it, a place in secondary school up to the age of 15-16. A programme for the gifted which calls for special facilities and special teachers can hardly be expectable to thrive in these circumstances, unless new measures are sought for the deployment of teachers and the grouping of pupils. New methods may involve the decreasing of the staff-pupil ratio, idea and the use of mass communication media for instruction.

There has been mention made also of the establishment of schools for the intellectual elite (in Singapore, for example). If the general tone of education is poor in the average school, the setting up of a special school for schools merely enhances the invidious comparison between the gifted have's and the average have-nots.

3. The highly selective and competitive system of education causes unnecessary range of talent.

No follow-up studies have been made in any country to establish the validity and the reliability of the selection procedure used at different levels of the schools system. Malaysia has three such selective points - at 15, 19, and 19. Those who go on to the University have to submit to further selection. The attrition rate seen at the University level is heavy. The following tables are revealing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Success of Science Students admitted in 1966/67 vs 1967/68</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1966/67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. admitted in first year</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduated with pass degree after 5 years</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduated with honours degree after 5 years</td>
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<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Success of Science Students admitted by those entry in the Second Year in 1967/68 and 1968/69</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1967/68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. admitted to second year</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduated with pass degree after 3 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduated with honours degree after 3 years</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table II gives the numbers of those students who according to the definition of item 3(c) of the questionnaire may be termed gifted. Yet for both 1960/61 and 1961/62 groups there were those who failed to arrive at the honours degree qualification (six and four, respectively) and would never have a second chance at it again. The wastage rate in Table II is quite alarming. Seeing that Science students are much in demand in a developing economy such wastage can scarcely be justified and less so because at each of the previous levels so many have been turned away from completing their progress through the educational system.

In all countries except the Philippines, promotion from one level to the next is determined by a statistic, a practice which assumes that a constant
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success of Science Students admitted to universities in different levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966/67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. admitted in first year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduate with pass degree after 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. graduated with honour degree after 4 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Success of Science Students admitted by those entering in the Second Year in 1966/67 and 1967/68</td>
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<td>No. graduated with honour degree after 4 years</td>
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In all countries except the Philippines, promotion from one level to the next is determined by a statistical, a practice which assumes that a constant
intelectual quantum exists from year to year. Yet this practice, in view of the limited numbers of places available at each higher level, seems to be necessary. The unimpeded escalation of youngsters through the years of elementary and secondary levels of school in the Philippines does not afford a better solution since the general standard of education, excepting that in certain well-endowed institutions, is too low for the educational output to be of value to society.

Aggravating the wastage through failure is the practice of retention of which there is high incidence in countries like Burma and South Vietnam. In the former, retentions average about 5% in the first two years of primary education, rising to near 20% in the last two years. In the latter, there is an average retention of 10% of the pupils in primary school. The pupil does not necessarily improve through retention since no remedial work is provided and having been put through the course for a second year he often becomes a bored and disinterested "over-ager."

Wastage also occurs through drop-out. This may be due to lack of aspiration, poverty, lack of the necessary home support, or the need to assist in the work in the fields. The drop-out rate can be very heavy. In Cambodia for example, there was a total primary enrolment of 115,000 with 83,000 entering the first year in 1925. At the end of a year, only 55,000 went on to Grade Two, 18,000 having either dropped out or been retained.

According to the figures supplied by the UNESCO publication, World Survey of Education, 1966, there were in 1964 96.5% of South-East Asia's total school enrolment at the first level of school, 88.9% at the second and third levels respectively. The North American continent with a comparable population had 70%, 80% and 67% at the same three levels. A comparison of the two educational pyramids speaks for itself. The South-East Asian case draws attention immediately to the two causes of drastic elimination and heavy drop-out.

CONCLUSION

I have not so much tried to explain the problems of gifted children in South-East Asia as leave them for inference by quoting to the conditions which obtain in the region. Much remains to be done. For the academic, the greatest problem in circumstances of need is how to convince the Government that educational research is not a luxury which can easily be dispensed with and that improvement and development are more likely with proper experimentation and evaluation.

EDUCATION OF GIFTED CHILDREN IN ASIA

QUESTIONNAIRE ON GIFTED CHILDREN

[Gen. Instruction: For each question below, please place a X in the appropriate box]

1. Below are different definitions of a gifted child.
Check the definition/definitions which you feel has/have common usage in your country:
   a. A genius ☐
   b. A child of IQ greater than 140 ☐
   c. A child who is in the top 5% of his age group in one or more of the areas of study in school ☐
   d. A child exceptionally endowed with talent e.g. poetic, musical, artistic or mechanical talent ☐
   e. Other definition (if not covered by above) ☐

2. Should gifted children be identified early for special attention? Why?
   YES ☐
   NO ☐

3. Does your government/institution have a special programme for the gifted?
   YES ☐
   NO ☐

4. If your answer is YES, check which of the following methods is/are adopted for the identification of the gifted.
   a. Selection by Testing (☐)
      (i) on results of examination ☐
      (ii) by IQ tests ☐
      (iii) by standardized Achievement test ☐
      (iv) by aptitude tests ☐
      (v) by all of the above ☐
      (vi) other tests (specify) ☐

b. Use of Cumulative Records (☐)

c. Through observations and interviews (☐)

d. Through the help of: (i) guidance counselors ☐
   (ii) psychologists ☐
   (iii) teachers as a team ☐

5. At what age are they identified?
   ☐ 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

6. Check the programme/programmes adopted in your country/institution for catering to the needs of gifted children after they are identified.
intellectual quantum exists from year to year. Yet this practice, in view of the limited numbers of places available at each higher level, seems to be necessary. The unimpeded flow of youngsters through the years of elementary and secondary levels of school in the Philippines does not afford a better solution since the general standard of education, excepting that in certain well-endowed institutions, is too low for the educational output to be of value to society.

Aggravating the wastage through failure is the practice of retention of which there is high incidence in countries like Burma and South Vietnam. In the former, re�ention rate varies about 50% in the first two years of primary education, rising to nearly 80% in the last two years. In the latter, there is an average retention of 40% of the pupils in primary school. The pupil does not necessarily improve through retention since no remedial work is provided and having been put through the course for a second year he often becomes a bored and disinterested "over-aged."

Wastage also occurs through drop-out. This may be due to lack of aspiration, poverty, lack of the necessary home support, or the need to assist in the work in the fields. The drop-out rate can be very heavy. In Cambodia, for example, there was a total primary enrollment of 136,000 with 13,000 entering the first year in 1959. At the end of a year, only 60,000 went on to Grade Two, 12,000 having either dropped out or been retained.

According to the figures supplied by the UNESCO publication, World Survey of Education, 1960, there were in 1954/5 90.5% of South-East Asia's total school enrollment at the first level of school, 6.7% at the second and 3% at the third level respectively. The North American continent with a comparable population had 7%, 19%, and 6.2%, respectively, at the same three levels. A comparison of the two educational pyramids speaks for itself. The South-East Asian case draws attention immediately to the two causes of drastic elimination and heavy drop-out.

CONCLUSION

I have not so much tried to explain the problems of gifted children in South-East Asia as leave them for inference by referring to the conditions which obtain in the region. Much remains to be done. For the academic, the greatest problem in circumstances of need is how to convince the Government that educational research is not a luxury which can easily be dispensed with and that improvement and development are more likely with proper experimentation and evaluation.
Existing International Institutions which Approximate, or Might Become, World Universities

selected and described by

Harold Tator

At the present time no single institution exists which can properly be called a world university— that is, an institution with a fully-international curriculum of the major university disciplines of knowledge, with a student-body and faculty representing every major cultural and geographical area of the world. Some are closer to the concept than others, all are limited to some measure by present circumstance.

In the following summary an effort has been made to judge the degree to which each institution approximates the concept of complete internationality, and to identify institutions which, if developed further, could become genuine world universities. For example, if the East West Center in Hawaii were open to students and faculty from all major continental areas, including Communist China, and a curriculum were planned to include all major cultures and sciences, it would become a world center rather than an American-sponsored Asian-American Institute. Or, if a series of regional world centers were established, with completely internationalized curricula in the arts and sciences, open to students and faculty of all countries, the interchange of faculty and students among them would form a global network within the world's present academic community.

On the other hand, there are institutions staffed by scholars which in structure are already world institutions, such as the Economic Development Institute of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, or the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, but which serve a more limited purpose than that of a world university. These are extremely valuable as examples of international structure, since they point to a form of organization—international governing bodies, financial subsidy by a variety of nations, research projects of significance to world problems, work by scholars in which graduate students may join — which could be transposed directly into the field of higher education were there sufficient interest in making such a transposition.

Also, please include available literature with the return of this questionnaire. Thank you.