

## Systematic Analysis of School Education

— Based on the Case of Malaysia —

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School education system is one of the most universal social systems in modern times. As a sole entity a school consists of three essential elements, teachers, pupils and what teachers transmit to pupils (knowledge, methods and experience). School education systems are organized by the combination of different types of schools with determined measurement. The system has three important characteristics. Firstly it is flexible in three essential elements in accordance with management organization. Many types of school can be made by adopting various language mediums, specified syllabuses and restriction on age and sex of pupils. Secondly it has developmental nature. In general a modern school is established for elementary education at first, then with increasing the number of schools secondary schools emerge from the elementary ones. In later stages there appear several types of secondary schools, namely normal schools for general education, vocational or some other specialized schools. In the final stage there emerge schools for tertiary education such as medical colleges, law schools and universities. Thirdly it has a certain degree of completeness in itself. A school can recruit its teachers from its own graduates. And in wider sense a school system in a particular society can recruit their teachers within their system.

The society in the region of present-day Malaysia has two fundamental characteristics in historical perspective. One is the variation in administrative units in regard to modernization or industrialization stage. The other one is

the ethnic diversity. Originally there lived Malays in the Peninsula and aborigines in northern part of Borneo Island, but from the latter half of the nineteenth century numerous Chinese and Indians came as labor force. Those immigrants formed almost half of the total population at the turn of the century. With this background, the school education system before independence had four sub-systems clearly distinguished by language of teaching, that is English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil. Each sub-system was self-reliant and bridging different sub-systems was not common occurrence. As for Tamil and Malay education systems, they do not have post-elementary education except for teacher training colleges for Malay. The Chinese maintained Chinese language secondary schools with little support from the government, but they had to send their children to China for tertiary education. Only the English system had complete education system up to university level. Those who studied at English schools had prestigious positions in the colonial society irrespective of their ethnicity. In regard to recruitment of teachers and supply of textbooks each sub-system had close relations with respective societies outside the Malaysian region, e. g. the Chinese and the Indians with their native lands, those from English schools with Britain and its colonies and the Malays with the Islamic world.

After independence tremendous changes have occurred in the school education system by the succession of political power from British to Malaysian. Four sub-systems are proposed to integrate, the first step being to restrict with using English and Malay languages as common medium in secondary schools. Subsequently only Malaysian (formerly Malay) language schools are available except for elementary education. Non-Malay community has opposed to abolishing English schools and government assisted Chinese secondary schools. They themselves established private English/Chinese secondary schools to preserve English/Chinese education in the society.