The Comparison Of The Chinese And Australian Education Systems

Structure of Systems

The Chinese education system is comprised of three stages. There are three years of primary school, then three years of junior middle school, which is when Chinese students are tested to see which senior high school they can attend ?? ?ZhongKao?. If students do not pass this test, they can attend a vocational secondary school that aims to train and prepare students with skills for employment. If students pass this test they will then go onto the third stage, three years of senior secondary education where ???GaoKao?is the final exam, notoriously known as being “impossibly difficult” (Faletto 2017) to score well on. This final exam will determine which university a student is able to enter and thus which careers they can pursue.

The Australian education system is quite similar, all states and territories have final exams in the last two years of highschool where these examinations result in an ATAR score used as a university entrance score to higher education. Those who would prefer options otherwise may attend other programs such as TAFE where more specific skills for employment or other jobs can be learnt there.

Subject Choices

The subjects offered by each of the systems also differ depending on the location of the schools. However generally, during the final years of senior education in China, students are given the option of whether to study liberal arts or the sciences. So along with the Chinese language, English and Mathematics, a subject from the chosen major will also be examined on. Subjects offered in Australia are more extensive and students are able to explore more possibilities in the workforce than their Chinese counterparts. The Australian education system is more so focused on the development of an individual’s character. The belief of an “all rounded education” is encouraged so there are many opportunities outside of the classroom for students to explore (Schools in Australia, n.d.). Since Australia’s Westernised history is relatively short, the colonisation of Australia follows deeply in the roots of English society thus education system is similar to that of Western countries.

Impact of Population and History

Following on this aspect of the history of Chinese and Australian education systems, the factor a population also plays a large role for how and why the education systems are established the way they are.

The Chinese education system is based around a more rigid structure focused on educating as many people as possible. Thus the main learning strategy and proven quite effective in Chinese schools is rote learning; learning through sheer repetition and memorisation. This type of learning is very restricting as it allows no room for objection which is why in a typical Chinese classroom, tables are set in neat singular rows where the teacher teaches up front with limited

input from students. This is also a result of the sheer size of the population that the education system has to go through thus competition to enter higher education is very competitive.

With a population of around 1.4 billion people (WorldOMeter 2020) in the world, China is the world's most populous country. It's ancient history dating back to 1250 BCE and since then the teachings of the Chinese philosopher, ?? KongZi, who taught that "that education is the key to mobility and success" is "so deeply rooted" (Coughlan 2012) within Chinese culture. As this was how one in Imperial China could be able to climb the social ladders, the education one receives is still regarded highly and important to one's worth and status in contemporary China. Additionally due to factors such as the abolishment of the One Child Policy in 2015 to balance out its uneven demographic, the population of China continues to increase once again resulting in the pressure on young people to excel academically to be heightened; as only the best of the best have a chance to enter higher education and thus school times for Chinese students are longer than students in Australia. With so many people wanting to enter into good universities, competition amongst young people to do well and succeed is very tough. Even more so for children from a lower socioeconomic status to do well as these exams are the only chance for them to create a better future for themselves.

Westernised Australia as seen in today's society did not exist until around 200 years ago from the colonisation of Europeans, resulting in an inherited education system from the West. From its early colonisation, Australia had a sparse and vast population meaning it was difficult to establish education systems. However once established, the system was able to focus more so on the personal development of each child and compared to the education system in China that was developed for educating a large scale population. The Australian learning approach is more so an open system, encouraging creativity and imagination to be explored by the individual. The population of Australia is around 25 million people (WorldOMeter 2020) which is not anywhere as large as the population that China needs to educate. The focus Chinese education system is not as 'personalised' for each student compared to the Australian education system; it is developed to suit a larger population to meet its demand of its need to educate the growing population.

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Comparisons

Despite the demands of education for the population, it seems that "China has an education system that is overtaking many Western countries" (Coughlan 2012). From standardised testing such as the Pisa tests, there have been findings that the Chinese education are creating young people with "incredible resilience… even in rural areas and in disadvantaged environments, you see a remarkable performance' (Coughlan 2012) as stated by OECD's Andreas Schleicher, one of the people responsible for these standardised tests.

Below are the most recent results:

As indicated in the graph from The Guardian, it is evident that the Chinese education systems are out performing other nations in these tests, more noticeably Australia, where "Australian students have recorded their worst results in international tests" (Baker 2019). There have been many factors brought up as to why the results of Australian students are slowly declining each year thus education ministers and groups are collectively working on a "curriculum reform"

(Baker 2019).

Furthermore, there are advantages and disadvantages of both the Chinese and Australian education system. Simply put, there are many differences between the two deriving from cultural differences such as the historical value of education and the approach to delivering classes. However, both education systems serve with good intentions to prepare its young people for future endeavours as both systems recognise simply, the importance of receiving a good education.

(Overseas students? 2+ million Chinese in Australia and around 1.7 million enrolled in higher education? large population= to look elsewhere for job opportunities ((FInALISE))

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