

The Future of Geography and Geography Education in Southeast Asia: Issues and Challenges

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Outline of Presentation

- 1. Background**
- 2. Challenges**
- 3. Opportunities**
- 4. Research and Publications**
- 5. Concluding remarks**




1. BACKGROUND

- **Geography as a compulsory subject in Yrs 7 & 8, as elective after that.**
 - **In general the above applies to all countries in Southeast Asia**
 - **Offered as a subject specialisation in Arts faculty in Universities in S.E. Asia**
 - **30-50 per cent of graduates go into teaching**
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2. CHALLENGES

Importance of Geography is declining

- **Perception of the subject**
 - **Pragmatic considerations**
 - **Inadequate preparation of teachers**
 - **Curriculum - lacking in some aspects of geography e.g. fieldwork knowledge and skills; physical geography.**
 - **Insufficient well written books or resources, etc.**
 - **Integrated in Social Studies**
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<u>Malaysia</u>	'O'	'A'
1990	154,751	
1993	86,673	19,774
2000	66,125	10,491
2004	51,722	19,206


<u>Singapore</u>		
1995	18,562	414
2000	21,248	460
2004	22,974(EP) 6,887(FP)	892

**Number of candidates who sat for the 'O' and 'A'
Level geography examinations in Malaysia and
Singapore**

3. OPPORTUNITIES

- **Intellectual rigour & critical thinking, real life problem-based approach to learning**
 - **Education for sustainable development**
 - **ICT**
 - **Singapore Context – globalisation; regional issues; sense of place**
 - **Regional opportunities – fieldwork and collaboration in research**
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4. RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

- **Uniqueness of Southeast Asia – variety of geographical research issues**
 - **Interaction among researchers in the region**
 - * **Wider usage of English**
 - * **Southeast Asian Geography Association (SEAGA)**
 - **Biennial SEAGA conferences (7 so far)**
 - **Publications of books and periodicals such as SJTG, MJTG, Asian Geography**
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SEAGA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- 1. 1990** **University of Brunei**
- 2. 1992** **University of Jogjakarta, Indonesia**
- 3. 1994** **University of Malaya, Malaysia**
- 4. 1996** **Chiang Mai University, Thailand**
- 5. 1998** **National Institute of Education,
Nanyang Technological University,
Singapore**
- 6. 2001** **National University of Malaysia,
Malaysia**
- 7. 2004** **Khon Kaen University, Thailand**
- 8. 2006** **National Institute of Education, Singapore**



5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

- **Similar challenges as elsewhere**
- **Educational & Curricular reforms; more creative ways of learning**
- **HEIs – MOE – Schools : Need to influence policies; partnership with schools; professional development of teachers**
- **What geography graduates know and are able to do**

Thank You

