



The future of foreign labor's education: benefits and risks.

Last week, I talked about Gen. Prayut Chan-ocha. He is interested in reading books and human resource development. Therefore, I proposed that he should actively push human resource as a national agenda. Nowadays, human resource development in Thailand is no longer a small issue. The new government may consider some of my proposals. 2 leading countries emphasizing on human resource have already renamed this ministry. Singapore called it “Ministry of Manpower”. Human became their national strategy. They no longer use the word “labor”. Every year, Singaporean government organizes Human Capital Summit to promote human as an important issue. If they do not develop people, their country will not succeed. However, Singaporean model cannot perfectly fit Thailand. Human is not a machine. Intangible and qualitative factors must be also considered. These factors are more commonly found in Thailand than Singapore.

- Mindset
- Compassionate
- Passion
- Loyalty
- Teamwork
- Conflict Management
- Happiness at work (Work-life balance)

Thais may have more of these factors than Singaporeans but still lack competencies. For people capacity building, India currently has Ministry of Human Resource Development taking care of people from birth to death.

APEC or Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation has APEC HRD Working Group. I was elected as the Chairman called “Lead Shepherd”. The works are divided into 3 main parts which are interlinked to be the connected human resource system as follows.

1. Education

2. Capacity building develops working age people. Thailand does not have any ministries taking care of this group of people. There is Department of Skill Development. This is not enough. 4.0 era increasingly demands for digital skills. They must also take care of capable aging population.

3. Labor problem and labor survival in crisis is called “Labor Protection”. The examples are social security and minimum wage.

I hope that this information can benefit the Prime Minister's taskforces. They can know that our Ministry of Labor has not covered all of these works and perfectly done all of them. None of ministry takes care of people aged 25-60 holding Bachelor's Degrees. In the future, labor skills will be replaced by AI or robot. They must adapt to disruption. They can talk about this but cannot make it. They must do it step by step with continuity and small wins.

Finally, I must congratulate UNESCO, Chulalongkorn University and Ministry of Education on applying one of the seventeen sustainable goals. That is the promotion on immigrants' educational rights to be equal to the citizens'. It must be done with wisdom to ensure the equality, sustainability, ethics and self-immunity.

The problem is that the presentation is good. However, it looks only at the education rights for the foreign labor's children. They have human right but it is hard for them to participate in educational system. Thailand's Ministry of Education has effectively worked on this. Nowadays, more than 70,000 foreign labor's children study in the Thai education system. I said that Thailand better provided education for immigrants than many countries like Syria. When they move to other countries, they lack food and education. We must take care of our limited resources and education quality.

-We must share our limited resource to immigrants.

-We must find the win-win results between Thais and foreign labor.

Several Burmese students are good examples. They learn from pains. They better concentrate on learning English than Thais do. However, the education quality in their country is poorer than ours. Thais love staying in the comfort zone. This point should be also considered.



Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom's work as the Lead Shepherd of APEC HRD Working Group



Ms. Duriya Amatavivat, the Secretary-General of Thai National Commission for UNESCO kindly invited Prof. Dr. Chira Hongladarom on behalf of Social Science Program Committees to join Thailand National Launch of the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report “Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, not Wall” on June 13, 2019 at Chulalongkorn University.

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