



Learning from Shanghai: Lessons on Achieving Educational Success: 21 (Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects)

Charlene Tan

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The Shanghai school system has attracted worldwide attention since its impressive performance in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009. The system ranks as a ‘stunning success’ according to standards of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Shanghai also stands out for having the world’s highest percentage of ‘resilient students’ – students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds who emerge as top performers. Learning From Shanghai: Lessons on Educational Success offers a close-up view of the people and the policies that have achieved such world-class performance. Based on research and personal observation gathered during the author’s recent field work with school principals, teachers and students, this book explores the factors that explain Shanghai’s exceptional success in education. The approach combines high standards of scholarly research and analysis with the author’s unique personal insights, as evidenced by chapters entitled Education is Filling a Bucket and Lighting a Fire and Tiger Mothers, Dragon Children. Drawing on her experience as an education professional and a teacher of teachers, Charlene Tan thoroughly examines and analyzes the people, the policies and the practices that distinguish Shanghai educators. The contents include comprehensive details on the Shanghai approach to quality education, from discussion of the balance between centralization and decentralization, to school autonomy and accountability, to testing policy and professional development for teachers. The book includes detailed tables on curriculum and school performance targets, sample appraisal forms for teachers and students, and dozens of photographs. The author is an Associate Professor at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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