

Paving the Road for Strategic Change in Malaysia: Tracking the *Terra Incognita* of National Educational Vision

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Bio

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Abstract

The paper traces the birth of the education system and the overarching constitutional, cultural and political frameworks of educational provisions. It analyses the structural and organizational relationships of various entities in the centralized educational system while noting other structural educational alternatives within the Malaysian educational milieu. The author identifies and discusses several strategic reforms which were implemented in the education sector during the last 50 years or so. The paper discusses and distinguishes such concepts as reengineering, restructuring, renewal, initiatives, change, reform and revolution. The paper also discusses continuous as well as discontinuous change and argues that it is necessary to distinguish reforms, failed reforms and initiatives. The paper describes the several initiatives in the education sector driven by a significant numbers of national elites from all other sectors. The educational initiatives constitute an integral dimension of the overall Governmental Agenda of achieving Vision 2020 and becoming a High Income Innovation Nation. The paper discusses the contemporary focus on the Government Transformation Programme, the Economic Transformation Programme, the National Key Results Areas (NKRA), the Ministerial Key Results Areas and the National Key Economic Areas within the context of the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) under the prime Minister's Department. These several initiatives in education are initiatives in progress. The success or failure of such initiatives is dependent on leadership, capacities, commitment, coherence and sustainability. The paper also discusses contestations of ideas regarding the shaping of the nation state and the implications for the education system. The various pressures groups, institutions and stakeholders in the educational drama of the exercise of power and dominance are identified. The paper also distinguishes the reforms in policies and practices and the various levels at which educational reforms can occur. The Roadmap of Educational development for the future is assessed critically. Lessons learned from the experiences of reform initiatives are identified and discussed.

Introduction

The earlier generations of researchers, scholars and writers have documented the History of Malay and Malaysia as well as the History of Malaysian Education and Educational Policies comprehensively. These earlier intellectuals have enhanced understanding of the relationship of Education to Society, to politics, economics, culture, religion and language. Their analyses also encompassed explanation in history and in law, the various provisions related to education in the Malaysian Constitution. While Education is a Federal Matter and the National Education System is the responsibility of the Federal Government, educational institutions related to religion are the responsibility of the States of the Federation, as religion is under the responsibility of the Rulers and the states. While most of the educational writings are focused on the National Educational system, a few writers have also researched and written on state Islamic religious schools.

Five Decades of Strategic Reforms and Initiatives in Education

As the Malaysian nation developed there were many different kinds of initiatives which came from different authorities. The initiatives for change were labeled differently by different power brokers. Initially the drives for change for almost fifty –years was “bottom-down” and gradually became more consultative, particularly in 2009, but still not “bottom-up.” Among the various terms used to drive changes, which were considered as Programmes and projects for national development were concepts such as restructuring, reorganization, reengineering, renewal, reforms, revolution and initiatives. While many of the changes that occurred during the last five decades were in continuity

of philosophies, principles and policies, a few of such changes were discontinuous, and sometimes labeled as paradigm changes. While there is recognition of the nuances in meanings and implications of the scope and impact of such changes, in this brief paper, there is no attempt to discuss the epistemological, ontological, and axiological substance of the concepts. The paper uses the terms Reforms and Initiatives interchangeably.

1] Of the most significant strategic reforms and initiatives in the nation, since Independence, were the implementation of the National Language policy and the use of Malay as the medium of instruction in all national schools. The National (Malay) medium schools replaced the former English Schools and Malay replaced English as the medium of instruction in schools. As enshrined in the Constitution with regards to the rights to learn and use a citizen's own mother tongue, Chinese and Tamil schools are also permitted to provide education in Mandarin and Tamil at the primary level. The indigenous people are also to be provided with mother tongue education when at least fifteen students and parents request for such provision.

2] A significant initiative was the expansion of Teacher Education from the early institutions of the Sultan Idris Teachers College and the Malay Women's Teachers College, to the Brinsford and Kirby Malaysian Teachers Colleges in England. In the 1960s, there were the establishment of the Teachers Day Training Colleges and the Malaysian Teachers Colleges. The School of Education was established in the University of Malaya in the early 1960s and was later upgraded to become a faculty. With the expansion of Universities, almost all Universities established Departments, Schools and

faculties of Education. In 2009, the Teachers Colleges became Institutes of Teacher Education with the authority to award degrees.

3] In 1979, the Malaysian Education Staff Training Institute (MESTI), later to become the National Institute of Educational Management and Leadership –Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB) was established. The Institute was responsible for the continuing professional development of all Head masters of Primary Schools and Principals of Secondary Schools, Polytechnics and Teachers' Colleges. IAB was also responsible for addressing the training needs of all support staff in the education system. The institution also took the initiative to train untrained teachers at State levels, particularly religious and “attachment” teachers to the level which enabled such teachers to be recognized by the authorities. IAB also created opportunities for University leaders to be involved in its various programmes customized for advanced management courses and seminars.

4] When the Curriculum Development Centre was established in 1972, it led to a series of initiatives in the domain of indigenous leadership in Knowledge Generation. The first all Malaysian Members of a Curriculum Development Committee was established. The History Curriculum Committee formulated the History syllabus from Standard Four to Form Six. Soon after the first comprehensive reform in education known as the New Primary and Secondary School Curriculum was launched. Later in the late 1970s, the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate took over the responsibilities from the Cambridge Examinations Board for the conduct of all Public Examinations, particularly the Ordinary and Advanced Levels School Certificates. The Examinations Council was established and

was responsible for the Higher School Certificate (STPM) for the Advanced Certificate of Education.

5] In the early 1980s, National Universities made it compulsory for all university students to take a Paper on Islamic Civilization. This Course was later to become a compulsory course on Islamic and Asian Education. At school level it becomes mandatory for all Muslims students to take Islamic studies while non Muslim students take moral Education. History and Citizenship Education received serious attention in the formal curriculum and well as in Co curricular activities, including the National Service Programmes after high school and before University.

6] In the mid 1990s, the policy to make Malaysia as a Centre of Educational Excellence was articulated. This policy saw the establishment of the National Accreditation Council (NAC), which was assigned the responsibility of ensuring Quality in private Higher Education. The National Accreditation Council was restructured to become the Malaysian Accreditation Agency (MQA) responsible for the Quality Standards of both Private and Public Higher Education Institutions. In 2010, it was decided that the distinction of private and public Higher education would be removed and both types of institutions would be responsible for the provisions of Higher Education for Malaysian and non Malaysians. The policy of the export of higher education was formulated and the processes of conducting Exhibitions abroad to invited foreign students to pursue higher Education in Malaysia were accelerated. The ideas of edutourism and edupreneurship were also promoted.

7] The idea/policy/initiative of the Democratization of Higher education was promoted in the mid 1990s. Since then, there were a series of initiatives to extend the age profile of the Higher Education community of student scholars from the norm of 17-24 to those of working adults as well as other adults who missed the opportunities for higher education. The profiles of learners have begun to change to include those from 24- to learners who are 70 or 80 year olds. Portfolio Review Committees were established in Universities to admit non traditional students and to formalize policies of the Accreditation of Prior Educational Learning Experiences. (APEL).

8] When the Multimedia Super Corridor was established, one of the Flagships of the National Information Technology Communications Agenda was the Smart Schools. Different kinds of initiatives were formulated to move the use of ICT from the existing practices of Computer Aided Learning, Computers in Education, Computer Aided Instruction, Computer Education, to the institutionalization and enculturation of Computer Literacy for all. The provision of Distance education was in existence but was limited and was later to transform to e Learning. To this end, Virtual and On line Universities such as University Tun Abdul Razak and Wawasan University as well as the Open University and Asia e University were established, with initiatives such as Virtual Online Instructional Support System (VOISS). Traditional universities also began to adopt online education and use ICT extensively. Both Traditional and Online Universities have focused on Blended Learning.

9] In the wake of Technological advances were paradigm shifts in almost all aspects of lifestyles as well as learning. The Multimedia Super Corridor Project instituted -Seven Flagships as supportive *Infrastructure, namely*, World-wide Manufacturing Webs, Borderless Marketing Centers, Research and Development Clusters, TeleMedicine, National MultiPurpose Card, Electronic Government, and as stated earlier, Smart Schools. The National Information Technology Council (NITC) and the new ICT elites created Metaphors of Strategic Agenda and Strategic Thrusts. Ideas such as E-Sovereignty, E-Learning, E-Economy; E-Community and E-Public Services became ideas in popular currency.

10] The advent of ICT created the Agenda of the national ICT Literacy for All. The Stages of promotion of the KICT Agenda (not necessarily in linear order or progression are as follows:

1. Creation of National Awareness.
2. Ensuring that Technological Infrastructure is in place.
3. Ensuring Access to ICT-Creative Incentives.
4. Promoting ICT Literacy.
5. Create Conditions for Advanced Mastery of Literacies.
6. Fostering Applications of ICT skills Literacy.
7. Fostering Creative Use of Skills.
8. Ensuring Generation of ICT Production and SMEs.
9. Knowledge Information Communication Technology (KICT) Leadership.

The idea of a paradigm change was articulated by the Secretary of the National Information Technology Council in the following words:

“We are the last generation of the old civilization and we are the first generation of the new civilization. The dividing line between the old and the new civilization is the Computer and the Internet” (Tengku Azman Syarifuddeen).

11. The Technology Revolution has created a Knowledge Revolution in all fields of knowledge, for instance, Biotechnology Initiatives

. Universities and Research organizations and the MultiMedia Super Corridor Corporation begun to identify niche and focus areas of Research, Development and Commercialization. In 2002 the Malaysian Government launched the Biovalley and Biotechnology Initiative. The Biotechnological Initiative would focus on the following:

- Genomics and Molecular Sciences
- Agro-Based Industries
- Nutraceutical Sciences
- Biopharmaceutical Sciences
- Natural and Herbal Sciences
- Marine Sciences

Educators concerned with holistic development of knowledge fields and disciplines voice concerns as follows: *Where are the Humanities in the Big Picture-In the Details and In Subjects, Disciplines and Relevant Contents and Processes?*

12] The challenges of Globalization, the rapid scientific and technological advances fostered rethinking regarding national Development and the Imagery of the Future. All

reforms have to do with the Futural Imagery Metaphor of a people. It is noted that “... .Our identity is a figure which we fix against the ground of the time perspective we acquire. The resulting role conditioned by time can be called the “future-focused role – image.” The FFRI is the self-image projected into the future, and it lends meaning to much of what we do in the present. “(Alvin Toffler [Ed.], *Learning for Tomorrow*, 1974. p. 21). Planned change for the future led Malaysian scholars to envision Models, Markets and Mind in terms of Open Minds, Open opportunities, Open Challenges, open competition, world models, world standards, world sourcing. In the context of the creation of a Malaysian society for the future, the following societal change was envisioned, specifically, Conceptual Stages of Development of Virtues –Based Knowledge Society with High Culture: 1] Learning Individual. 2] Learning Family. 3]. Learning Society. 4] Reading Culture. 5] Writing Culture. 6] Thinking Culture. 7] Research Culture. 8] Documentation Culture. 9] Heritage Culture, and 10] Knowledge Society.

13] Besides the quest for relevance in the curriculum, there is the focus on Global Skills or the Soft Skills considered as survival skills in the new world order. In school and universities, there are the initiatives to address thinking skills, critical and creative thinking. One aspect of Thinking that receives attention is Breakthrough Thinking. The exploration of Breakthrough Thinking for Change leads to the deeper questioning of thinking systems, such as raised by the following observations:

“The ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical

in nature...to live by a metaphor is to have your reality structured by that metaphor and to base your perceptions and actions upon that structuring of reality...(Lakoff and Johnson).

In the Eureka Pursuit to understand the breakthrough logic of evolution, extended and integrated metaphors are used as follows:

“A Wilderness of Possibilities, Clueless Plateaus, Narrow Canyons of Explorations and Oases of False Promise”... (David Perkins).

14] Within the educational domain, scholars began to inquire regarding Knowledge Obsolescence in Education as they begin to understand knowledge obsolescence in other fields, for instance in ICT. In trying to understand the educational knowledge life cycle Framework, the following questions are raised:

- What can happen to Educational Knowledge?
- Knowledge can be Born
- Knowledge Can Die
- Knowledge Can be Owned
- Knowledge is Immanent as well as Extant.
- Knowledge Can be Stored
- Knowledge Can be Categorized

(Housel Bell 2001).

15] European Leaders have, for instance articulated their Futural Imagery of Europe as follows:

“To make Europe the most competitive and dynamic
Knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of
Sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs
and greater social cohesion...

(New Strategic Goal for Europe by 2010 set by the European Heads of State at the Lisbon Summit in March 2000).

As European leaders formulate such Reform Agenda, leaders from other nations do likewise and take heed from the insights provided by credible economics, such as Thurow who notes the following:

“The new global economy is linking the fortunes of every nation on every continent-for good or for ill. Its hallmark is a rising instability and a growing inequality between the first and third worlds, in spite of rising average incomes. Financial crises in the third world come frequently and are increasingly severe...”

“Globalization is invoked to explain riots, civil disobedience, and as a factor in the rise of terrorism...now is the time to shape globalization into what we want it to be – before it is too late...we are at a crossroads in the development of the global economy. We can sit back and let it grow as it will or we can *seize the moment* and build economic systems that will minimize instability...”

Lester Thurow (2003). *Fortune Favors the Bold: What We Must Do To Develop A New and Lasting Global Prosperity*).

The education sector has been assigned the direct and indirect responsibility of creating an enlightened citizenry, eradicating illiteracy, and ignorance, assisting in eliminating poverty and fostering the creation of wealth.

16] The Gestalt of what needs to be done is acquired by leaders of nations as they interact with each other in various kinds of Regional and International Organizations. One such organization which has encouraged Malaysian leaders to accept and promote Life Long Learning is the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM). The Lifelong Learning Initiative has to do with the development of Human Talents, Potentialities and Human Capital. Among other reforms and initiatives the Lifelong Learning Agenda leads to rethinking with regards to education in terms of employment and reemployments, active and participative citizenship, personal life span development and inclusiveness of education for the disadvantaged, marginalized and handicapped and those with special needs.

17] The role of the Malaysian Nation in the United Nations and its various agencies, leads to the understanding of the Global Educational Crises and the constructive roles nations could play to set Benchmarks of Educational development for their own societies, while at the same time, when possible, to contribute to help other societies. One such Global reform agenda to which Malaysia subscribes is the Millennium Goals (United Nations 2003) as follows:

Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Goal 2; Achieve Universal Primary Education

Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower women

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS., Malaria and Other diseases.

Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability.

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for development.

While being engaged in the Global Educational Benchmarks, Malaysia sets its own national Benchmarks, usually in its various Five Year Malaysia Development Plans, the Long term Outline Perspective Plans and the Blueprints of Actions Plans of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. The overall direction of reforms and initiatives of educational development are articulated and documented as follows:

The National Mission presents Five thrusts as follows:

1st Thrust: To raise the Malaysian economy up the value chain.

2nd Thrust. To raise national knowledge and innovation capacity and to foster the development of "first class mentality."

3rd To address the recurring socio-economic gaps and imbalances in constructive and productive ways.

4th To raise the level and sustainability of the Quality of Life.

5th To strengthen institutional capacity building and implementation capacity.

(The 9th Malaysia Plan and the National Mission)

Education Development Plan 2001-2010- Generating Educational Excellence through Collaborative Planning

The Quality Agenda underpins the thrust of the Master Plan which focuses on these following areas:

- 1st. To build a Malaysian Nation
- 2nd. To develop Human Capital
- 3rd. To Make National Schools Attractive
- 4th. To narrow the Educational divides
- 5th To raise the prestige and status of the Teaching Profession
- 6th To Quantum Leap (Enhance) Excellence of Educational institution.

The Seven Thrusts of Higher Education

1. Provide Wider access to Higher Education
2. Improvements of Teaching-Learning Methods
3. Strengthening of Research and Innovation
4. Strengthening of Institutions of Higher Education
5. Enhancement of Internationalization to turn Malaysia into an educational hub.
6. Promotion of Life Long Learning
7. Strengthening of the MOHE delivery System

18] One of the most important reform policies or initiatives is the agenda to ensure that all secondary school teachers will be university graduates by 2010 and that all primary school teachers will be university graduates by 2020. This reform idea has been around

for many decades but had to wait for the idea of the need for developed and highly skilled human capital in a competitive and globalised world to take root in society before it was articulated in the education sector in the late 1990s. It is interesting to note that like many other ideas, this idea was driven from outside the education sector and responded to by the education sector almost diffidently because of the ingrained fear of not getting the support of the bureaucracy because of the scope of the policy and initiative.

19] The educational wisdom, fact and insights that the best investment that any nation can make would be for its young children before primary schools. And yet for almost five decades, large allocations were given for higher education and the pre school level was neglected. Policy reform and initiative to give serious emphasis to pre school education only began in 2009.

20] Schools of the Future or the Future of Schools

Schools of the Future or The Future of Schools contribute to be increasingly significant topics for discussions by educators. Related to the Themes are the themes of Principalship or University Leadership for the Future or Future Challenges of Educational Leadership. Schools and Universities will continue to be built and to be closed, understandably related to the population growth of a society and the demand for schooling or higher education for the young, or for an ageing society with fewer demands for school places at the primary levels right across to university level. Whatever the future, policies of schooling and higher would be closely related to the various scenarios of local, national and regional development for the future.

The development of schools and universities must necessarily be related to other aspects of the development in the wider society, in terms of infrastructure, infostructure, technological facilities, community facilities and amenities, ideas of civil society and social conscience and responsibility, human resources development, talent development and the development of human capital. Of the various nations of the world, multiracial, multireligious, multilingual Malaysia remains an exciting case study for school, university and national development in all aspects of policies, practices and ideas generation.

In interrogating the claims of success or failure or effectiveness of educational policies in schools and other educational institutors, there must be assessment tools through their structure and contents should help to measure the critical measures of policy and practice engagement and participating by all those who matter. Such tools should go beyond the managerial and mechanistic to the dynamic human-centered focus of development.

Of Omissions, Gaps, Unaddressed Issues

In present day circumstances schools learn from best practices at university levels and universities learn from best practices at school level. To ignore happenings at other levels of education would create further gaps in expectations and aspirations. One of the unaddressed issues of gaps between the various levels of education is the issue of continuity of relevance of values, experiences, cumulative and non cumulative

knowledge, habits of mind and learning and preparedness or otherwise for the next stages, as well as carry over deficits or intellectual assets.

21] Leaders exercise significant and strategic roles in ensuring that there is effective move from Rhetoric, Promise, to Policy and Implementation. As Malaysia strides forward to develop itself the former prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamed outlined the directions of reforms and development, ideally and practically, thus:

Malaysia should not be developed only in the economic sense.

It must be a nation that is fully developed along all the

Dimensions: economically, politically, socially, spiritually,

psychologically and culturally. We must be fully developed in

terms of national unity and social cohesion, in terms of our economy,

in terms of social justice, political stability, system of government,

quality of life, social and spiritual values, national pride and confidence...

By the year 2020, Malaysia can be a united nation, with a

confident Malaysian society, infused by strong moral and ethical

values, living in a society that is democratic, liberal and tolerant,

caring, economically just and equitable, progressive and prosperous,

and in full possession of an economy that is competitive, dynamic,

robust and resilient.

(Mahathir Mohamed, 1991, Malaysian Business Council, Kula Lumpur)

Whys and Wherefores of leadership Let downs (1)

The Whys and Wherefores of leadership Let downs at all levels is always not because of lack of positive intention or ideas. There are Leaders who Promise and Leaders who do not promise; Leaders with Substance and Leaders with Rhetoric. Often from the articulation of ideas and the initial formulation of policies, problems arise because of the adage that “The Devil is in the Details” albeit the ideal of the “The Angel is in the Big Picture. Political will, bureaucratic will, the will of the community and professional will must come together if articulated and shared visions and goals of global, national, local or institutional dimensions are to be achieved.

22] The current government administration under the leadership on the Prime Minister Mohd Najib Tun Razak had declared that it would continue to develop the nation to achieve Vision 2020. To this end the Government has to mobilize its resources and strengthen its machinery if it were to achieve t Vision 2020 within the next decade. On receiving the mandate to rule the Government articulated the Principles of 1 Malaysia, People First, Performance now, and, also mapped out the Government Transformation Programme. The Government Transformation Programme provides the Roadmap with Objectives, outcomes and initial actions in Areas identified as National Key Results Areas (NKRAs) and Ministerial Key Results Areas (MKRAs). Simultaneously, the National Economic Action Council formulates the New Economic Model while the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) develops the 10th Malaysia Plan. The Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), in the Prime Minister’s Department

oversee the implementation, assess the progress and facilitate and support the delivery and drive the progress of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

Education is considered one of the most critical drivers to transform Malaysia from a middle income to a high –income nation. 131 Entry Point Projects are to generate big results fast. A total of 13 EPPs have been developed to raise the overall education standards and deliver significant results within a 10 year time-frame. The 13 Reform Projects or Initiatives are as follows;

1. Scaling up early child care and education centres.
2. Improving early child care and education training
3. Scaling up international schools
4. Expanding private teacher training
5. Scaling up private skills training provision
6. Expanding international distance learning
7. Building an Islamic Finance and Business Education Discipline Cluster
8. Building a health Sciences Education Discipline Cluster
9. Building an Advanced engineering science and Innovation Discipline Cluster
10. Building a Hospitality and tourism Discipline Cluster
11. Launching EdCity@ Iskandar.
12. Championing Malaysia's International Education Brand
13. Introducing private-public partnerships in basic education.

Besides the above EPPS, the Education National Key Results Area (NKRA) aims to improve student outcomes across the school system and to provide access to quality education for all. To this end, four imperatives for Education are the following:

1. The need to ensure that every child succeeds
2. The need to hold schools accountable for changes in student outcomes
3. The need to invest in great leaders for every school, and,
4. The need to attract and develop top teachers.

All these reform initiatives are to be implemented in the context of the Newsweek's report that The Malaysian Education system has been ranked 8th in the world.

23] As there are many success stories of policy and practice reforms in various sectors of development, there have also been many stories of failed reforms. Among the failed reforms and initiatives in education are the Nuffield Science and Mathematics Project, the Islamization of Knowledge Agenda, the Bahasa Baku (Standard Malay) Project, and the Vocational Schools Project. There are also reforms and initiatives which could not be considered as failed or ineffective projects but rather reform policies which are withdrawn or let to fade because of political confrontations.

24] In the Education sectors as in other sectors, there are ideological, professional as well as school of thoughts confrontations and contestations. At any particular point of time, the ruling government does have the final decision in the exercise of power. However, it must be noted that even the ruling government is often swayed by the articulate,

dominant or confrontational pressure groups within its own ranks. Educational policy making and reforms continue to be political and politized, in subtle and blatant ways by those who have vested interest of various kinds.

25]. Lessons learned from Education Policy Reforms and Initiatives during the Last Five

Decades

Among the lessons learned from educational initiatives and reforms are the following:

1] An idea whose time has come and has the support of many constituencies is likely to be implemented successfully.

2] An educational initiative or reform which is a part of broader social, economic and political reforms is likely to be received broadly and implemented effectively.

3] Educational initiatives or reforms which are supported by Champions or a Critical mass of leaders and Teams all the way would be assured of successful implementation.

4] Changemasters who drive educational reforms and initiatives are more likely to achieve success when they understand profoundly authentic theories of Change and Reforms in the local contexts.

5] It is critical to drive educational reforms and initiate at the institutional level as the unit for effective change rather than to drive change from the complex web of power relations in the educational bureaucracy.

6] When any particular educational initiatives or reforms are coupled and bounded to other significant and successful powerful ideas in integrated ways, the initiatives and reforms are more likely to be sustained.

7] When appropriate resources are allocated and made available for the implementation of initiatives and reforms then such reform are more likely to be well received by the implementers and other stakeholders.

8] Educational reforms and initiatives are more likely to be accepted when such reforms and initiatives are founded on the Integrity and authenticity of educational ideas.

9] Educational reforms and initiatives are more likely to be implemented successfully when there are few distracters and detractors.

10] Educational reforms and initiatives are more likely to be achieved when there is clarity of the agenda of change and outcomes and there is a sense of urgency and understanding of the importance of change.

11] Reforms and initiatives which demonstrate Understanding of Global Practices and global best practices which are not in contradictions with local cultures are more likely to receive support of a wide range of stakeholders.

12] Reforms and initiatives which are in the interest of students , which are for the common good and for national survival and competitiveness are more likely to be well received.

13] There are lessons to be learned from successful as well as failed educational reforms and initiatives.