

Educational Reform: An Essential Pathway to Successful Education

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“Education is learning what you didn’t even know you didn’t know.”
-Daniel J. Boorstin

HISTORICALLY, social advancement has always been accompanied by educational development, and reforms in education have never failed to attract the attention of the global community. Educational reform is an intrinsic need of the education system per se, as well as a crucial pathway to higher-quality, more equitable and inclusive education. First off, educational reform prompts the education system to adapt to societal changes and technological advancements. A nation’s reforms in education can upgrade the governance structure and management mechanisms of its educational system, enhancing its capability of reaching scientific and transparent decision-making. In the digital transformation of education, for instance, the introduction of data-driven decision-making mechanisms enables the system to accurately identify problems, adjust strategies, and optimize resource allocation (McLure & Aldridge, 2023).

Furthermore, educational reform is a catalyst for high-quality development of education. It can significantly enhance the quality and efficiency of education by introducing new teaching theories, methods, and technologies. For instance, the integration of digital technology in education pushes back the spatial and temporal boundaries of education making large-scale personalized learning and stratified instruction possible (Wang et al., 2024). This technology-driven educational transformation renders education more flexible, efficient, and able to suit the needs of diverse learners. In the meantime, educational reform bears the objective of promoting equity in education. It seeks to eliminate educational inequalities caused by differences in socio-economic status, race, gender, etc. among people, providing educational support to disadvantaged groups (Eden et al., 2024). Equity-oriented educational reforms help boost social harmony and stability. In addition,

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educational reform inspires educators to rethink and update their notions of education. Modern educational philosophy typically places a heavy emphasis on the development of critical thinking, creativity, collaborative skills, and lifelong learning tendencies in learners. These qualities are beneficial for their navigation of challenges of future society (Cohen et al., 2018).

In the context of technological advancement and socio-economic structural transformation, educational reform has become a pivotal avenue for enhancing national competitiveness, promoting social equity, and achieving sustainable development. The literature has documented the progress and outcomes of reforms in education in different countries. For example, Shimizutani (2011) examines the history and objectives of educational reform in Japan; Ng (2008) focuses on analyzing the core philosophy behind Singapore's educational reform: a transition from the focus on "quantity" to emphasis on "quality", as well as its impact on the nation's schooling system. Studies like these exhibit diverse approaches and common goals in educational reforms in various countries, providing valuable insights for global educational transformation.

Cambodia's Educational System Reform and Development toward Quality and Accessibility of Education in this issue gives an overview of the historical evolution, reform endeavors, and the current state of Cambodia's educational system. It displays the strides Cambodia has made in the quality and accessibility of education as a result of the introduction of a series of educational reform strategies and policies since 1998, while also pinpointing the remaining challenges, such as inadequate teacher training, uneven distribution of educational resources, and the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Cambodian education. The article also emphasizes that further strengthening teacher training, improving educational management, and popularizing digital education are key to sustainable development of education in Cambodia (Chhy, S., & Kawai, 2025). The study is an illustration of educational reform endeavors in developing countries, a valuable contribution to the literature of educational reform research.

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