



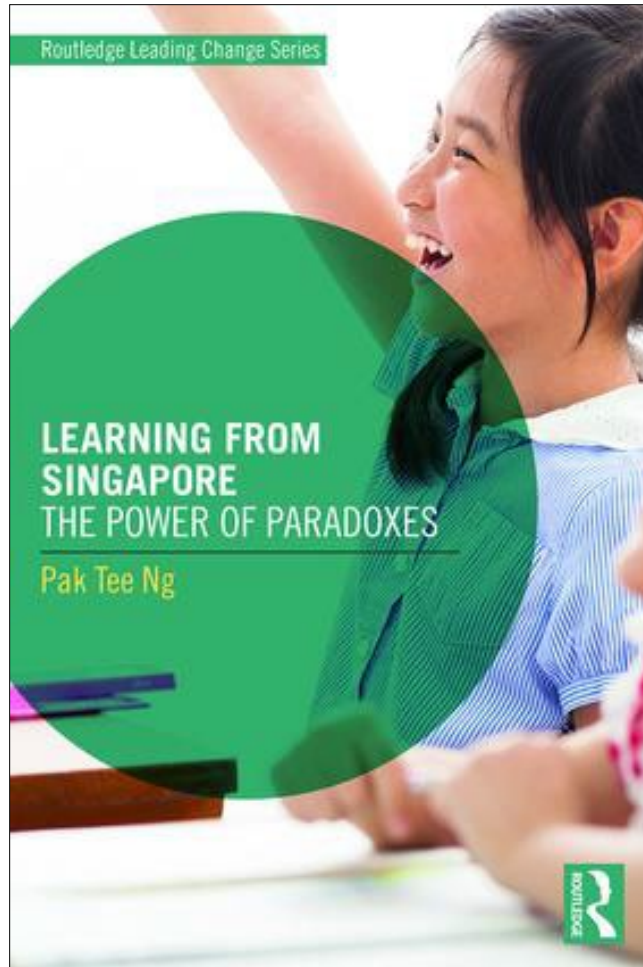
Educational change in Singapore: equity, excellence and well-being

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The Singapore Story



*Learning from Singapore:
The Power of Paradoxes
Pak Tee Ng (2017)*

**Timely Change,
Timeless Constants**

Timely change is about keeping up with the times and staying ahead of the curve.

Timeless constants are our beacons as we navigate the turbulent waters of change.

Part 1

Timely Change

Education has to change with the times...

But why change when you are successful?...

It is better to change from a position of strength... than from a position of desperation.

From Quantity to Quality...

- **Thinking/appreciation of subject**
- **Creativity & innovation**
- **Engagement & Joy of Learning**
- **More and different pathways of success**
- **Character and Citizenship Education**
- **Student well-being**
- **Learning for Life, rather than exams**
- **Self-directed and self-regulated learning**

Part 2

Well-being, Equity and Excellence

Question

- There are people who love wall/rock climbing, even though the sport is tough. They train very hard and fail many times before they succeed.
- When they are climbing, they are tired. They are sweaty. But they are happy. They have well-being. Their being is well. Why?

Possible reasons

- They love what they are doing.
- They have an aim. They have a challenge.
- They are doing something tough, but there is joy because they are doing what they enjoy!
- They don't want you to make it easier (eg. build a lift). They want to get up there themselves.
- They are engaged. They want to do better.
- Their BEING is WELL!

Well-being, Equity and Excellence

A good education system creates different pathways for children to experience true joy of learning and find their own success.

Education is not devoid of hard work, but it has meaning and joy in the process.

This is the confluence of equity, excellence and well-being.

From Quantity to Quality

- Examination grades and paper qualifications are not sufficient for life.
- Holistic Education - so that children grow up to become wholesome young people with a broad range of thinking and life skills.
- **Teach Less Learn More.**

Values Driven

- Central set of core values—respect, responsibility, integrity, care, resilience, and harmony.
- Emphasizes Social and Emotional Competencies as a foundation for students to manage themselves and relate with others.
- Values in action - contribute to something bigger than themselves.

A more holistic approach for well-being

- The more we focus on holistic education, the more wellness the students may actually and eventually experience.
- Instead of bubble-wrapping students, create appropriate learning challenges and provide support for them to overcome difficulties.

Continuous Well-being

- Well-being is a continuous process.
- It should not be a short-sighted “well-be” or a future “well-been”.
- If students are shielded too much from challenges now, they become more vulnerable in the future!

Part 3

Timeless Constants

Timeless constants...

**In Singapore, education is
investment, not expenditure.**

Timeless constants...

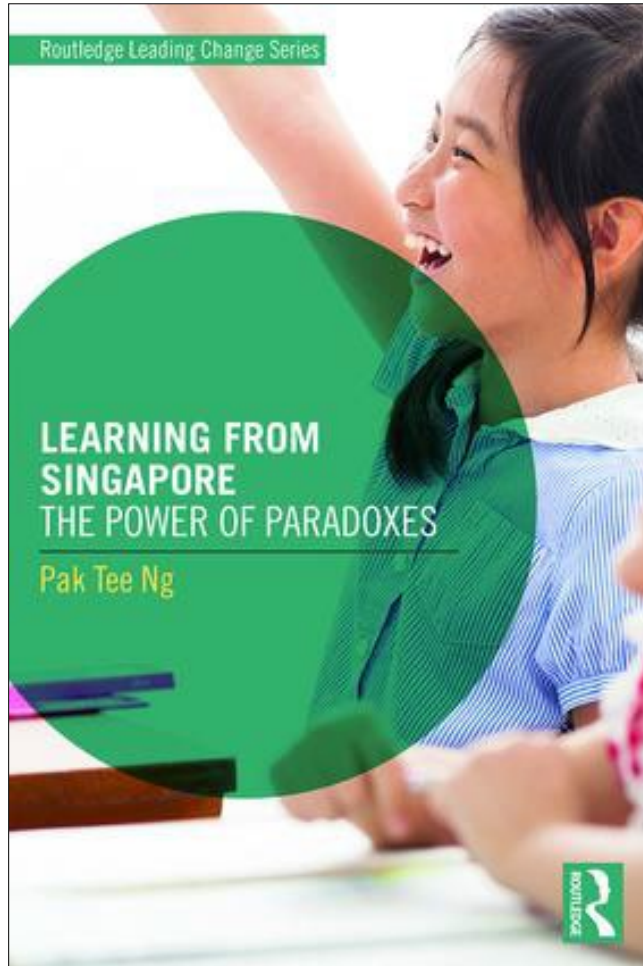
Teaching is a respectable profession. School leaders and teachers are nation builders.

Leadership in Education...

Leadership in education is about having the skills of a CEO, but the heart of a loving teacher.

(Pak Tee Ng)

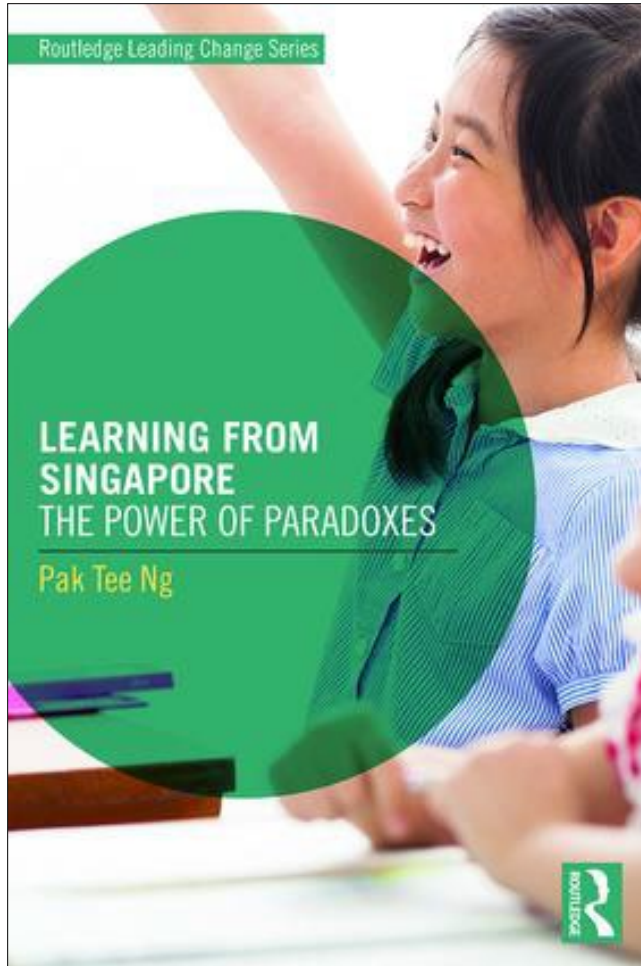
Teachers...



People who plant trees, so that others can sit under those trees ... and no one knows who planted them in the first place.

(Pak Tee Ng)

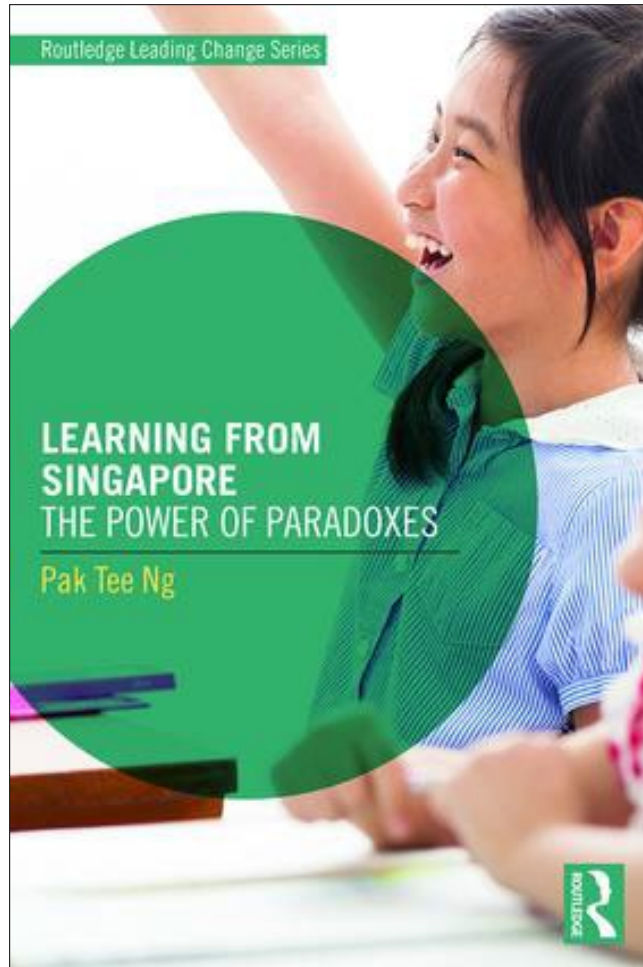
School Leaders...



Teachers who rally other teachers to plant those trees.

(Pak Tee Ng)

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**Education is the
human enterprise of
paying it forward.**

Take care of yourself ...

We may not be able to change the world. But we can change our inner world to embrace the external world so much better. That means the world to the people around us.

Stand tall and be an encouragement

**So, please take good care of yourself.
Don't just get "angry upset angry upset".
Be a breath of fresh air!**

**When the going gets tough, stand tall as
an educator and be an encouragement to
one another! Keep the education narrative
positive!**

**Leadership in education is about
long-suffering & tenacity ...**

**Dig deep into your heart... be wise, be
courageous, be of good cheer ... bite the
bullet and persevere!**

The Spirit of Education...

Never forget the teacher's heartbeat...

(Pak Tee Ng)