

A Study on How Education Streaming System Affect Self-Identity and Stigmatization of Secondary Stage Students in Singapore

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Abstract

Education streaming system is a system designed to distinguish students to different education paths. It has a great influence on the students and related stakeholders in educational practice, psychological effect, social economy and other aspects. This paper takes Singapore's education system and students as the research subjects, and explores the education streaming system, which affects the self-identity and stigmatization of the students in the secondary school stage. Through literature analysis and collection of information on the Internet, media, books and other materials, this paper finds that Singapore's education streaming system reveals the dominant streaming, which has the greatest impact on the self-identity and stigmatization of the secondary school students. It shows the phenomenon of clear self-identity and obvious stigmatization.

Keywords: Education Streaming, Education System, Self-Identity, Stigmatization

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1. Introduction

Education Streaming/Tracking System refers to a system design that groups the educatees into different educational systems. In other words, it employs different practical education measures for different educatees in the system. The goal of education streaming is in the dynamic process of categorizing the recipients of education, into multiple instructional groups seeking to let these individuals receive education of differential genres at different periods of time and in different ways. Giving full play to their abilities, interests and potentials and in the meantime, enabling the government's limited educational resources to be properly used for cultivating talents (Adams, 1988). However, in reality the practice of education streaming is met with both positive and negative results in a great amount which as a result, pose much impact concerning psychological effects and social economy on the educated and stakeholders.

Singapore enjoys much global reputation for its national competitiveness and high GNP per capita. Among the numerous factors affecting its combined overall strength, the development of education has always been within the focus of the Singapore government. In the course of several major educational reforms, the educational system in Singapore has also been adjusted along with the national economic development. Education indeed is playing an important role in Singapore, due to which “the Singapore story” truly won much attention from over the world and set a good example for the globe. Singapore's educational system either in global university rankings or PISA achievements, or any other academic rankings, often ranks top in Asia and even in the world. In Singapore's education

system, the education streaming system is not only a featured characteristic in its education, but also considered as one of the key factors determining the best performance of Singapore's education. Since its independence in 1965, the government of Singapore has always adopted the education streaming system as its education policy. The system, though undergone several major reforms, was made only minor adjustments. It still requires the PSLE tests after students finish their primary education. The test results determine for the students which kind of streaming class in the secondary school to enroll in (Express class, Normal (Academic) (or NT) class, or Normal (Technical) (or NT) class). There are also such exams such as O Levels, A Levels to attend later. Apart from those, there are different textbooks, arrangement of tests, and even different years of study.

However, in March 2019, the Singapore's government announced that it would take on substantial reform for the current education streaming system. By 2024 as it is planned, it would abolish the Express, NA, and NT. The three streaming methods in all secondary schools. In the future, there will be no streaming classes. Students of both genders with different PSLE results will blend and sit together in one room; but for some subjects there are three competency grades (G1, G2, G3); students will no longer be labeled and sent for O Level and A Level tests; the years of study will uniformly be four years. This major reform will not only dramatically change Singapore's future education, but also act as a spur on scholars' interest in research and further exploration.

On March 5, 2019, Ong Ye Kung, Singapore's Minister for Education, announced major reforms about the above mentioned education streaming system. Just one week ago, in the congressional budget meeting held on February 27, Louis Ng Kok Kwang, a member of parliament (MP) of the Singaporean Ruling Party---People's Action Party, delivered a speech on the education streaming system entitled "Make Every Class a Good Class: Doing Away with Streaming" (Ng, 2019). In his speech, Mr. Ng mentioned that Singapore's education streaming system played an important role in the development of education in the past few decades, and is one of the factors contributing to today's success of Singapore's education system.

However, the decades-long education streaming system produced a reverse effect. Specifically speaking, it brought inequality in education and problems in psychological and social aspects such as stigmatization, low self-esteem, socioeconomic status that's highly correlated to academic results and social segregation and employment disadvantages. A week later, Mr. Ong made response to this speech in the Parliament acknowledging the inequality related issues, and proclaiming that this major reform will "...[be] breaking out of a dilemma that we have been grappling with for so many years" , and the overhauled education streaming system will "...customise education for students, while minimising the effect of labelling and stigmatisation. It will encourage a growth mindset amongst all our students" (Mokhtar, 2019a).

On the announcement of the new policy direction, it brought about wide concern and discussion among the public in Singapore. The significant reform also caught much attention from local papers, like The Strait Times, The Independent.sg, Channel News Asia, TODAY online, and Lianhe Zaobao, and as well including a variety of online forums, such as The Online Citizen, Singapore Policy Journal, Monthership.sg, Young Parents, Blackbox and COCONUTS SINGAPORE.

In addition, many state-owned media outside Singapore also made reports on this issue. For instance. RICE MEDIA of Hong Kong, South China Morning Post (Hong Kong), The Diplomat Magazine, and so on. Looking through the reports of the above media, in addition to the introduction to the policy and analysis of the possible impact of policy trends, they also touch on parents' reaction to the new reform and some exposed the bad effects of stigmatization and negative feeling of self-identity via their own academic experience, under the education streaming system. In the paper, the educatees and stakeholders are targeted as study objects, and by means of reviewing the concepts "stigmatization" and "self-identity" in educational psychology and educational sociology, and by the method of content analysis. We study psychological effects caused by the education streaming system in Singapore. We focus especially on the dynamic about the issues of stigmatization and self-identity in the coming reform and try to clarify: to what extent will these issues be improved around 2024? What new problems will appear? And which are the social factors deep behind them? All of the above will be elaborated at length.

2. Literature Review

(1) The definition of education streaming:

As mentioned above, education streaming is a different institutional education measure for different educatees in the system, with its goal to enable individuals to fully utilize their abilities, interests and potentials, and to properly take advantage of limited educational resources. To help them become useful in society. The education streaming not only embraces the educational principles of “teaching students according to their aptitude” in pedagogy, but should also be understood comprehensively from pedagogical perspectives of sociology, economics, psychology and others.

At the initial development of sociology, Emile Durkheim proposed in the “The Division of Labor in Society” (“De la division du travail social”) two types of social solidarity: “mechanical solidarity” and “organic solidarity”. In a “mechanical solidarity” society and its members have high similarities and social division of labor is not so apparent as today. The “organic solidarity” was in a state of division of labor at high level which boosted up social economy, but also led to lower homogeneity of social members and a lower collective consciousness (Durkheim, 1984). In modern society, organic solidarity has gained the dominant position in place of mechanical solidarity, and it advances hand in hand with the expansion of social division of labor and the development of individualism (Giddens, 1971). The highly developed division of labor in modern society has led to the specialization of laborers and tools, which increased production efficiency but also caused extreme differentiation between social classes and social stratification. Therefore, the emergence of the education streaming system has a close structural relationship with the increasing division of labor and social stratification in modern society. From the viewpoint of economics, what is investable is human capital, land and money that are a form of capital as economic input into production. According to the perspectives of human capital theory by American economists, Theodore William Schultz and Gary S. Becker. Human capital is an important resource that mainly stemmed from investment education and is therefore, often used to explain the government's decision-making behavior in the education system, and the relationship between education and the job market. As the classic proposition of economics demonstrates: “unlimited wants and limited resources” shows that the government cannot invest resources in the education system without restriction. The distribution of educational resources and the competition between the recipients for resources (including having the choice and opportunity to gain more educational resources and employment opportunities). Became one of the key issues in the education streaming system.

The education streaming is mainly based on academic test scores and academic/occupational orientation tests. Students are introduced to different schools and curriculum tracks, and then cultivated into different types of talents, ready to engage in different occupations and enter different social classes. The education systems of countries all over the world use the system of education streaming to varying degrees, but the implementation is different. One of the big differences is that: At which stage of education do you start streaming, or at what age will the child start streaming? Countries with early streaming such as Germany and Singapore began streaming in primary education, and countries that implemented streaming later such as the United States, began to stream at senior high school. Regarding the timing of education streaming, we are going to deal with it by quoting Erikson.

Erikson believed that human development has its different stages. He believed that human development is affected by different major external environments and different crises as well. The stages of development related to the timing of the education streaming are mainly stage 4 (about school age before adolescence) and stage 5 (adolescence). At stage 4, the most important external environment for the child is school, and the basic conflict and crisis is “industry vs. inferiority”. At this stage, the child begins to develop the ability to complete tasks while feeling a sense of competence. Children who are appreciated by parents and teachers will enhance the confidence in their abilities and build the competencies, and those who do not receive or receive little appreciation will doubt their ability to succeed (Erikson, 1959). In adolescence, what is important in an external environment is a peer relation. The main crisis is “identity vs. identity diffusion.” During this period, the adolescent will constantly keep in mind a question: “who am I?” If they do not successfully form their identity, they may repudiate others, having a sense of insecurity and confusion about themselves; but if they properly establish a sense of self, they will shape a strong self-identity and develop a direction

towards a tangible future (Erikson, 1959).

Judging from this, as for the initial streaming in education, if the initial streaming begins in the primary school stage, it may have an impact on the children's confidence in self-ability; if in secondary school, they may develop a good habit of self-discipline, but it may well affect the psychology of the peers in peer relations and self-identity. This also shows that except for a few countries, the time of education streaming in most countries is in secondary school (even in the post-secondary stage).

Finally, let's come back to the pedagogy to take a look at the meaning of education streaming. According to the above, we can find a close relationship between the education streaming system and social, economic and individual psychological development. Therefore, many scholars have put forward further views on how social and economic aspects affect education streaming. R.H. Turner (1971) pointed out that a country's social mobility has a great impact on the country's education system, and education streaming. It can be divided into two main types: "sponsored mobility" and "contest mobility" .

The "sponsored mobility" education system usually emphasizes the selection of elites and non-elites, through the characteristics of early differentiation: ability, talent, and aptitude. It also allows unselected people to accept their abilities early and pick a pragmatic plan based on their own situation. The "sponsored mobility" stresses the importance of congenial talent, prefers control over the process of selection, and excludes the model of competition. A typical example is the United Kingdom. Whereas a "contest mobility" society tends to develop an open competitive situation, and delays the final reward so that it allows competitors to work hard to achieve their goals. Quite the opposite from "sponsored mobility", such as the United States.

The United States focuses on being a "contest mobility" society. Based on this concept, Hopper joined the further elaboration of the impact of social ideology on education streaming. He proposed two main ideologies: "elitism" and "egalitarianism" . The society in which elites are extremely in favor of emphasizes the influence of innate factors. It is believed that the genetic factors determine the educatees intelligence and educability. Therefore, how much education the educators receive, is mainly determined by congenial advantages and future contribution to economic productivity. The society favoring egalitarianism conceived that education is the right of citizens, regardless of their contribution to society in the future; intelligence and educability are also mainly determined by the acquired environmental factors, so it is emphasized that the educated should have equal access to education.

From the above viewpoints, the education streaming is deeply influenced by the ideology of the society. There is an education system that emphasizes the spirit of elitism, develops a culture of sponsorship, and a competitive system that emphasizes egalitarianism and maintains individual rights, of that composed the two major types of social mobility and education streaming.

In the relationship between education streaming and economic system, as the German scholar Luhmann proposed in terms of social system theory. The choice of education system and the choice of economic system are interconnected, because the individual economic ability is not present at birth, but needs to be cultivated through the education system. The education system, just like the economic system, faces differentiation. Therefore, the education system must also take into account the future and prepare the educated for future career transitions (Luhmann, 1990; 2002: 138). As mentioned earlier, competition for educational resources is related to employment choices and educational choices. In other words, in order to enter an ideal career, we must acquire a good educational accomplishment first and in order to do so; we have to try our best to obtain more educational resources.

However, educational resources are limited and competition is needed to obtain better opportunities for choice. It is inevitable as not all can choose the right career they are chasing for, nor can they be capable of getting the ideal job. In the process of selection, the educators may also have psychological dissatisfaction. Therefore, Hopper (1971) pointed out that the education system should have the function of the regulation of ambition, on the one hand to warm-up the intentions of the educatees and to encourage them to accept more deepening and professional training until the final occupation. On the other hand, cool-out the intentions of some educatees, directly guide them into the workplace and engage in work that suits their abilities. It can be seen that the education streaming is not only

highly correlated with economic activities and career choices, but also in the process of competition for educational resources and choices. As well as the psychological development of the educatees.

(2) Stigmatization

In the work of “Stigmatization: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity” by Erving Goffman, he conducted a lot of research on the cause and effect of stigmatization. In the book, he pointed out that stigmatized individuals would be shunned and ostracized by others, because they are considered to be different from common people—they have “undesired differentness” (Goffman, 1963: 5). Later, many scholars further shared their opinions about the definition and content of stigmatization. Crocker et al. argued that “stigmatized individuals possess (or are believed to possess) some attribute, or characteristic, that convey a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context” (Crocker et al, 1998: 505). Dovidio et al. also agreed that stigmatization is a negative social construction product, an undesirable, anti-social and even abhorrent social identity (Dovidio et al, 2000).

As for the connotational features of stigmatization, Link & Phelan (2001) pointed out that stigmatization is composed of the following five elements: labeling, stereotyping, separation, loss of status and discrimination. For stigmatized individuals or groups, prejudice or discrimination is a common experience, whether it is from other people's overt hostility and rejection, or subtle insults and slights (Link & Phelan, 2006).

The concept of stigmatization has also been applied in education-related research. In a study on marginalized individuals and stigmatized groups, especially Black and Latino males, social psychologist Dasgupta (2004) pointed out that the Black and Latino males would have skewed conceptions of self, because they see themselves through the eyes of others. In addition, some studies also showed that being aware of stigma can also lower intrinsic motivation (Lepper et al, 2005). Eccles et al. also held that pupils of middle school who experience racial discrimination, especially black males, appear decreases in many aspects of intrinsic motivation, including academic self-concept, self-efficacy, curiosity and persistence (Eccles et al, 2006).

As for the studies of education streaming, academic achievement and stigmatization, Solga (2004) pointed out in a study about the situation of German education streaming that students who are streamed to lower tracks often feel stigmatized. It is in the social context that Germany is one of the countries with the lowest dropout rate in the world. In Germany's population, the age group 19-21 had a rate of 9% to fail to complete (remaining years of) secondary education, France 25%, and the UK 20%. Under this circumstance, however, the number of students in Germany who failed secondary education has gradually mounted. They are regarded as “inability” due to their failure to meet the rising performance requirements in schools, further vocational development or the workplace. These young with less educational advantages will experience re-construction, develop a negative social identity overshadowed by others' effect, and then continue to be left in a high-risk state—marginalization. So, they may “protect” themselves against more social stigmatization by self-exclusion (such as dropping out of school, giving up educational programs, or escaping from work) (cf. Pfahl, 2003). As a result, we can see that many young people with less education will deny themselves from career development and “disidentify ” with educational and employment goals, so as to be free from the possible humiliation and negative reaction (Jones Et al, 1984: 111).

The above discussion about the concept of stigmatization and related research let us know that stigmatization is the product of social construction, representing a negative and devalued social identity; it also provides us with an analytical structure for discussion of stigmatization of the education streaming in Singapore by the five stigmatized elements: labeling, stereotyping, separation, loss of status and discrimination.

3. Self-Identity

According to the American Psychological Association database, self-identity and self-perception, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-confidence are among the 50 self-concepts. However, unlike many self-concepts have a relatively close relation with individual's inner emotions, the concept of self-identity is the response to the external environment, and is closely linked to the concept of “social role” in social identity theory (Ellemers et al., 2002; Dörnyei and Ushioda,

2009). Therefore, the concept of self-identity and social identity are quite similar in theory (Tajfel, 1974), and some scholars even purported that self-identity and social identity share the same form (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Just like social roles and socialization is a long term process, self-identity is constructed from individual biographies (Giddens, 1991). In the process of socialization, the individual's social role and social identity means that the individual needs to act in a certain way to meet the society's expectation from the role. The formation of self-identity will affect the selection process of education and occupational trajectories (Linan et al., 2018). To be more specific, the process of self-identity is normally the process of seeking "belongingness"—You want or do not want to, allowed or not allowed to belong to certain groups. Just as Griffiths (1993) said: As we wonder which groups we belong to and which we do not, which we want to belong to and which we do not, which ones we will try to belong to and which ones we will not, we are in the act of doubting and discovering our own self-identity.

The concept of self-identity will help us to deeply analyze the social and psychological impacts on the educated in Singapore's educational streaming system, especially for those who feel stigmatized. By the concept of self-identity, we are expected to explore the streaming of education, which are not only the competition of educational resources, but also the imagination and competition of employment opportunities, occupational status and the sense of belonging of social class.

3. Research results and discussion

(1) Stigma: Streaming's side effects

From the speech "Make Every Class a Good Class: Doing Away with Streaming " delivered by Singapore's MP Louis Ng Kok Kwang at the parliamentary budget meeting on February 27, 2019, to the announcement by Education Minister Ong Ye Kung on March 5 of a major reform of the educational diversion system, the period is only one week. On September 24, 2018, CNA (Channels News Asia) published a 48-minute 37-second video "Regardless of Class that triggered social concerns about Singapore's class issues and educational diversions, the period was less than half a year. However, from MP Ng's speech to Minister Ong's policy notes on reform, it is pointed out and acknowledged that stigmatization in Singapore's education system is indeed a long-standing problem.

Especially after the announcement of the reform policy, there were a lot of reports and discussions about the policy in many newspapers, media and online forums and some people talked about their negative experiences of being stigmatized in the past, which rarely happened before September 2018. For example Faris Mokhtar is a senior journalist with TODAY covering education, security and politics and used to be a student of Normal Stream. In TODAY's special report on education diversion reform, he talked about his experience: As a former student who studied in the Normal (Academic) stream, I experienced first-hand the negative effects of streaming. I was seen as academically inferior or, to put it bluntly, 'stupid'. My pathways were deemed limited: At best, I might end up in a polytechnic, and the worst-case scenario would be to continue my studies at an Institute of Technical Education (ITE). (Mokhtar, 2019b)

In another feature report, he interviewed several interviewees with similar experience. Dr. Felix Tan, an interviewee, mentioned: People tend to say you're not good enough, you're a failure...And at the age of 12 or 13 and by being labelled as a failure and so many other names which I'd rather not say, it kind of creates a sense of incompetence in yourself. It discourages you from doing a lot of things. (Mokhtar, 2019c)

Mokhtar attended secondary school from 1987 to 1990. The system of distribution at that time was Special, Express and Normal streams. By 1994, the Normal stream was divided into Normal Academic and Normal Technical. He was assigned to Normal stream at Sec.1 and was assigned to Express stream at Sec.2 due to his excellent academic performance. Although he entered Express stream, the Normal stream label on him was still attached to him in the first few months. "I was made fun of like, 'Oh, you were from Normal stream, so you were the success story of the Normal students. So, you're better than them' " (Mokhtar, 2019c).

Another 23-year-old respondent, Mr. Fathul Hanif Ariffin, also talked about his experience in secondary stream. He stated: "The Express students would make snarky remarks that Normal stream students are not as smart as them

or we're slow learners..." (Mokhtar, 2019d). Not only did the classmates make fun of them, but even the teachers also looked down upon them and compared them with Express stream's classmates. "There were times when my classmates and I didn't do well, they would say, 'Don't you want to go to Express? Do you want to spend an extra year?'" (Mokhtar, 2019d). Another time, he clearly remembered that there was a photo of the ITE (Institute of Technical Education) on the desktop of the teacher who had a class. One of the students asked the teacher why they should put photos of ITE? "He told us, 'I don't want to send my students there'. So, he created a stigma where ITE is a place where students who fail secondary school go and that they could only get mediocre jobs if they study there (Mokhtar, 2019c). Mokhtar made a summary and concluded that "...When the education system deems that students in a certain stream are 'smart', while others are 'stupid', it sends the message to parents and students that it's okay to make similar judgments." (Mokhtar, 2019b). In this full-blown education system, Express Stream students are often seen "more superior than Normal stream students" "could not go far in life (Mokhtar, 2019d).

Two members of Congress have been teachers in the past, and they talked about how their education streaming influenced students' self-esteem and limited their potential when they were in school. In 1999, Dr. Intan Azura Mokhtar was a math teacher in a normal stream class in the third grade of high school. Mokhtar taught that class for two years and recalled: I faced a lot of difficulty in getting my students to take an interest in algebra or trigonometry. Between my cajoling and scolding, one of my students said to me in exasperation, "Cher, we cannot do maths. We're Normal Tech. (Chua, 2019). That broke my heart. Not because they really could not do mathematics, but because they believed they could not. To this day, those words are still so vivid. (Chua, 2019).

Another member of Congress, Ang Wei Neng, was an internship science teacher 30 years ago. He pointed out that students of Normal Stream would have a sense of "resigned acceptance and defeat, especially when he tried to teach them the topics beyond their syllabus. "However, the Normal-stream students were quick to dismiss most of what was in their textbooks. They said: 'We are taking the reduced syllabus, no need to learn'" (Teng, 2019).

Through the above cases, we can see the stigmatization in Singapore's education streaming system, these are the "unintended side effects" which Singapore does not want to see (Cheng, 2018). Although these cases may be just a few stories told in the experience of many educators, they are enough to draw a contour. As MS Phua Shih Wen, who has seven years of teaching experience at Jurong Secondary, put it, stigmatization could be present in subtle forms. Phua said: I had a friend who took a group of Normal (Technical) students out during a camp, and she asked them about how they feel being in the Normal (Technical) stream...Many of them cried. (Chia, 2019). I think the stigma is there, and they feel it, but they don't usually verbalize it...So with this new system kicking in, I hope students will feel less labelled." (Chia, 2019)

(2) Self-Identity: Identity to Class

Can Singapore's reformed education diversion system successfully improve the labeling and stigmatization of the educatee? For a long time, the education streaming system is like a "sacred cow" in Singaporean society, but now it has become the primary target to deal with education reform. From the discussion among the government, scholars and the public, we can find that the problem of stigmatization caused by education streaming can not only be discussed from the educational system itself, but also needs to be further analyzed deeply from the social factors. In order to get a better understanding of the overall picture of the problem. Therefore, we will discuss the impact of education streaming on the stigmatization of the educatee, by the concept of "self-identity" and the analysis of context.

First of all, let's discuss why "sacred cow" becomes "sacred cow"? Even Mr. Ng, who first proposed to "slain this sacred cow", affirmed in his speech the contribution and function of education streaming to Singapore's development in the past. He said: We introduced streaming in 1980, and I understand the rationale. It caters to the different learning needs and pace of our students and it has helped to lower our attrition rates which is now less than 1%, compared to 30%-40% at the start of our education journey. (Ng, 2019)

He also cited Dr. Intan's positive assessment of Singapore's streaming system in 2017: "... (streaming) helps teachers in being more focused in their teaching so that they are able to pitch their teaching content and pedagogy that is suitable for the students they teach" (Ng, 2019). From the explanation of Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's policy reform on his Facebook, we can see why the "sacred cow" has to be dealt with. In addition to affirming the positive effects of the education streaming that began in Singapore about 40 years ago as mentioned above, he also raised the issue of education streaming and the government will implement reforms with the SBB (Subject-Based Banding) policy. For example: "The system has also enabled students of different abilities to learn at their own pace. It has helped nearly every student to complete secondary school, and most to go on to post-secondary education. But streaming has some drawbacks-it lacks flexibility, and students in the slower streams may become demotivated. Banding overcomes these difficulties, while enabling each student to learn at the pace which suits their aptitude and level, depending on the subject". (Lee, 2019)

The so-called Banding (SBB) is a system where "Secondary students will be able to study subjects at the appropriate band, depending on whether they are strong or weak in that subject. The 'N' and 'O' Level exams will be replaced by a new common national exam. Students will take individual papers at different levels, matching the bands" (Lee, 2019). He appealed: "We must acknowledge that children differ enormously in their abilities and interests. Schools should tailor the education they offer to the students' varying needs and talents" (Lee, 2019). Lee also hopes that after the new education streaming reform, schools can "...create opportunities for students to interact with one another across different races and social backgrounds, so that they grow up at ease with one another and share a sense of identity, mutual responsibility, and nationhood" (Lee, 2019).

From the above explanation of Singapore government's policy, we can observe that the goal of SBB is to preserve the advantages of teaching in the past, and to eliminate the side effects of labeling and stigmatization caused by education streaming. From a macro perspective, they also hope that the social inequality problem can be improved by reforming the educational inequality in Singapore, so as to promote the mutual identity of people of different races and social backgrounds within society. However, some scholars' comments and popular discussions have suggested that although the new policy may "reduce" stigmatization, it may not completely "eliminate" stigma. For example, although the three types of streaming (Express, Normal Academic and Normal Technical) will be abolished, SBB will still maintain the three levels of streaming (G1, G2, G3) for academic subjects. In this way, the "elite" can still be distinguished by academic ability.

Therefore, under this background Associate Professor Tan believes that the Elite schools which only receive the highest streaming students. Will not be affected by the reform and the demarcation between "elite" and "non-elite" schools will still exist. Former Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP) Calvin Cheng also thinks so, he said: "It's now the top 10 percent and the rest... You cannot un-stream away differences. Policy cannot make equal what nature has made unequal" (Mokhtar, 2019). Even in the same school and class, because each student may choose different amounts of G1, G2 and G3 subjects, it is difficult to avoid stigmatization of students choosing less G3 subjects (Anwar, 2019). In summary, although the education streaming system is about to be replaced by SBB, the education system and social environment will likely become just as OH (2019) said: "...and it would be a pity if the banding system became just another set of labels in disguise, deepening the social stratification that we already see." That is to say, although "sacred cow" was killed, stigmatization may still exist.

Following is also our second discussion. The reason why the Singapore education streaming reform cannot completely solve the stigmatization problem stems from the anxiety of "self-identity". It's a society where "elitism" and "meritocracy" is valued. In order to become "elite" and achieve "success", it is very important to obtain excellent academic results in the education system. Because of this, students (as well as their parents) in Singapore eager to enter Express streaming, stand out in the O-Level examination and enter into a good JC (Junior College) and continue to compete in the A-Level examination for the opportunity to enter university.

Having a college degree means that one will gain a higher social and economic status and a higher starting salary in the future. According to MOE statistics, the starting salary for college graduates in 2017 is SGD \$37,200. In contrast, the starting salary for ITE graduates is only SGD \$22,800 (Ng, 2019). As mentioned earlier, the experience in the process of discovering one's own self-identity is the process of "belonging to", and the competition under the education streaming (mainly the competition of academic results) becomes the battlefield that decides the future belonging of the educatees. Nobody wants to be left behind in the battlefield. Singapore's famous "fear of losing" (kiasu)--- "...a Hokkien word meaning 'afraid to lose' ---may explain why parents enrol their children in extracurricular tuition in the hope they will excel in test scores" (Jelita, 2019). Such competition will still exist after SBB implementation, so Dr. Singh believes "...parents will still rely on tuition as a form of 'extra security' as they still feel the pressure from perceived competition(Mokhtar, 2019d).

The anxiety of self-identity will not disappear because of the educational streaming reform, when the education streaming is connected to a large extent with the future social stratum of the educatee, the process of education streaming is the process of social streaming. That is equivalent to the anxiety of self-identity experienced by the educatees in the secondary school stage or even earlier from the primary school stage. This period is the embryonic and developmental stage of building "competency" and forming "identity", according to psychologist Erikson. The educatees are anxious and fear of being left behind because they do not want to belong to lower education/social streaming and fear not being allowed to enter higher education/social streaming, so as to confirm their self and social identity which is devalued by others in society. Here, self-identity and social identity(identification) are subtly combined. It is because the devalued social identity is stigmatized, and the link through education streaming leads to the stigmatization of the educatees.

Finally, we discuss how education streaming can be reformed to truly solve the anxiety of self-identity and the problem of stigmatization. From the above discussion, we can know that the stigmatization of the educatees is because the educational streaming is highly linked to the social streaming, and the devalued social identity which linked to the lower education streaming is stigmatized first. Therefore, to really solve the problem, we must start from two aspects. First, cut off the high connection between educational and social diversion. That is, the education system should not be too early, too single-way, too emphasis on the selection of elites and the differentiation of elites/non-elites. Instead, the education system should stress the right of individuals to receive education and postpone the streaming. At the same time, it emphasizes the market function and cultivates talents in various fields in a pluralistic way, that is, from "elitism" to "egalitarianism" and from "sponsorship mobility" to "contest Mobility".

However, these two types of education systems are not absolutely good or bad. They both have their own advantages and disadvantages, which is a choice-making question, depending on how the country and the public choose or adjust their own education systems. We can start from another aspect to solve this problem, that is, the social public must face the issue of devalued social identity being stigmatized ahead of education streaming. As Grace Yeoh said in the article "We Stigmatise 'Normal' Students Because We Don't Respect Blue-Collar Work": "The way I see it, the biggest elephant in the room is still the social and economic stigma we attach to blue-collar work, as well as technical subjects and skills...technical skills are associated with blue-collar jobs, and society doesn't respect blue-collar jobs. (Yeoh, 2019)

In conclusion, it is not easy for people to change their values, but at least starting with advocacy and discussion, we can think about whether there is "labeling", "stereotyping", "separation", "loss of status" and "discrimination" for certain occupation or social class/identity. As the discussion prompted by the reform of the education streaming system is an opportunity for reflection, members of the society can take this chance to better understand the root of the stigmatization.

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