

# **From the East Towards South: Analysis of Education Provision of Korea's New Southern Policy and Taiwan's New Southbound Policy**

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## Abstract

New Southern Policy – South Korea (NSP – SK) through the leadership of Jae-in Moon hopes to contribute to harmonizing the relationship between Korea and the ASEAN community with a core focus on people, prosperity, and peace. Both South Korea and Taiwan have advanced different approaches towards the Southeast Asian region. The New Southbound Policy – Taiwan (NSP – T) under the leadership of Tsi Ing-wen aims to strengthen the relationship and cooperation between Taiwan and southern countries in the region. To be specific, it involves 18 countries to which the following areas for cooperation and exchange will be advanced: tourism, technology, agriculture, medicine, and education. Using the “document as text” approach, NSP – SK and NSP - T are both examined using education perspectives and discourses. Datasets for the study are readily available online and the English versions of both policies were used. The present study aims to describe the NSP – SK and NSP – T in terms of educational provision as an approach to regional cooperation. Common themes or aspects are identified, as education is considered a crucial element for both policies. In addition, both policies are compared and contrasted in terms of educational provisions. Central to the analysis are different education-related concepts to formally determine educational provisions as the analytic content point, with the following emergent themes: people and culture first; human capacity building through education; acculturation through education and sharing for the common good; and education through international collaboration.

**Keywords:** Education, Policy, Regional development, Cooperation, ASEAN region

## **Introduction**

Experts and specialists in the fields of economic and regional development possess a policy-oriented and practical focus mindset about approaches to cooperation and mutual prosperity. As trained professionals, their perspectives are grounded on diverse backgrounds with a desire to arrive at feasible solutions highlighting integrative inputs ranging from local and national to regional perspectives and beyond. For international cooperation to be feasible and successful, public interest is crucial (Bernauer et al., 2020). In the context of the current pandemic, You (2021) describes how South Korea successfully advanced cooperation through 'knowledge and medical resources sharing' with developing countries. Similarly, Kokudo and Sugiyama (2020) note the contemporary health crisis shows a need for 'international cooperation and coordination' for forging alliances in providing medical supplies and assistance.

Development cooperation has long been conceptually associated with developing countries and applicable directions towards development focus. As developing countries strive to meet globally accepted standards for services to their citizens, development cooperation serves as a vehicle in strengthening what is pipelined in development and economic tasks, while prioritizing poverty eradication and championing well-being. Kanbur and Sumner (2012) inquire about the development assistance approach as placing a premium on an individual nation's per capita income, while Kabeer (2105) discusses feminist contributions in relation to international development in the context of inequality, gender, and poverty.

National and international problems concerning political, social, and economic aspects are expected to be found at the core of partnerships through joint effort and knowledge sharing. Problems and issues beyond territories are treated as common challenges. Thus, cooperation and collaboration are seen as effective approaches. Given inter-country engagement, regional and international synergy procedurally foster resource integration towards common goals.

As the ASEAN region gains attention in the international community due to development cooperation policy attempts, South Korea and Taiwan have heightened the focus through their own initiatives: the New Southern Policy (NSP – SK) and New Southbound Policy (NSP – T), respectively. Both launched at a similar time, and the two policies are expected to diversify efforts and create a stronger coalition geographically, from east to south.

NSP – SK, with the leadership of Jae-in Moon, is planned to harmonize the relationship between the Korean and ASEAN communities, with a core focus on people, prosperity, and peace. NSP – T, under the leadership of Tsi Ing-wen, aims to strengthen cooperation between Taiwan and southern regional countries. It specifically involves 18 countries, advancing the following areas for cooperation and exchange: tourism, technology, agriculture, medicine, and education.

Policy analysis provides avenues leading to determining the impact and consequences of each crafted directive. It contributes to strengthening policy background through scrutiny, with the end goal of implementing effective, responsive policies. Attempting to analyze NSP – SK and NSP – T through the lens of education would signal efforts to determine how these could be strengthened to achieve different goals. It is imperative to note how each policy being studied asserts and advances education as advocacy and agenda, since this aspect is one of the Southeast Asian region's crucial concerns today.

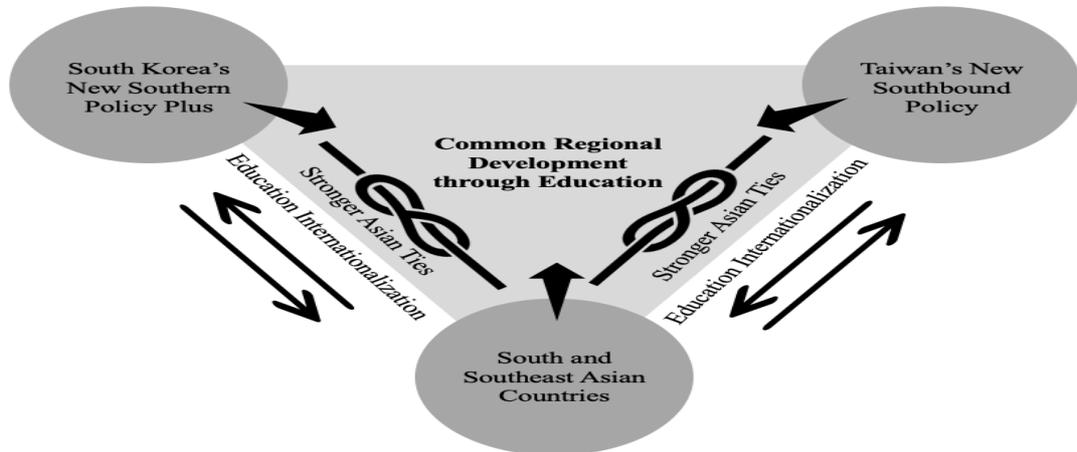
Both policies under study are currently being implemented with upgrades and revisions to meet present-day conditions. The research focuses on educational policy studies, especially in terms of regional cooperation and economic policies anchored to educational aspects. Results should be an addition to the limited literature on development cooperation policies highlighting education.

The present study aims to describe the NSP – SK and NSP – T in terms of education provision as an approach to regional cooperation. Common themes or aspects are identified, as education is considered as a crucial element for both policies. In addition, both policies are compared and contrasted in terms of provisions on education. The present study revolves around these core inquiries. Central to the analysis are different education-related concepts to formally determine education provisions as the point of analysis for content.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The present study's framework is derived from emerging themes of policy analysis. It presents an interplay among South Korea's New Southern Policy, Taiwan's Southbound Policy, and their target countries. Both policies aim to aid South and Southeast Asian countries in varied aspects; however, as shown above, this diagram highlights the educational facet. The diagram shows how education-related provisions in policies lead to continuous exchange of learning and innovation among nations. As these are implemented, both benefactor and beneficiary countries gain from one another.

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**Figure 1** South Korea and Taiwan's Policies towards the South, Leading to Common Regional Development through Education

In other words, policies have opened gateways for international exchange in development as citizens learn about new developments in the educational landscape. As a result, internationalized education begins while stronger Asian ties are promoted. As nations interact with unified development goals, they also establish interactive relationships promoting harmony and peace for the stakeholders. Through the strong foundation brought about by these policies, education becomes a prime instrument for achieving common regional development in South Korea and Taiwan as well as among South, and Southeast, Asian nations.

### Methodology

To achieve the goals of the study, policy document content analysis was used as an approach. The principal datasets were the NSP - SK and NSP - T. An advantage of using policy document analysis is its "systematic and reflexive" nature (Stoffelen, 2019). For studies on education, Cardno (2018) states, educational leaders should be able to scrutinize policies, especially those pertaining to organizational policy processes.

Using the "document as text" approach, perspectives and discourses were considered to possess a "force of their own" (Karppinen & Moe, 2012). This study follows the same idea, with NSP - SK and NSP - T examined by using education perspectives and discourses. Relevant datasets are readily available online. The English version of both policies were employed.

The first step in the data analysis process involved determining provisions in which education is identified as a provision. Since both NSP – SK and NSP – T are regional cooperation policies, other areas such as economics, society, and culture make up entire documents. To identify educational provisions, keywords such as education, students, teachers, academics, schools, and others as mentioned in the policies were examined. Once identified, each statement under these categories was extracted for the next analytical step.

The new data set containing education provisions for both policies was coded and themes subsequently generated. Both policies were compared and contrasted in terms of educational provisions with the aim of providing input for efforts leading to normative approaches on policy studies through arguing “what should be done” in the light of NSP – SK and NSP – T.

The policy analysis and planning approach was used, focusing on patterns and processes involved in policy scrutiny. While NSP – SK and NSP – T have been the subject of much research, studies contextualizing both policies in relation to education are still lacking, making the present study an exploratory and initial endeavor. Relative to the established approach, this study particularly involves the first two stages: problem verification and criteria establishment.

In relation to the first stage of policy analysis and planning, this paper dealt with educational provisions of NSP – SK and NSP – T. Content of policy documents was analyzed and determined which areas referred to education. After the problem was identified, evaluation criteria were devised to determine how education is present in both NSP documents. Finally, comparison and contrast analysis was offered.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***PEOPLE AND CULTURE FIRST***

The major aims of both the NSP – South Korea and NSP – Taiwan are about people. South Korean and Taiwanese citizens must be connected with ASEAN countries through exchanges to foster multilateral friendships and coprosperity. This is the core of the two policies. One of the sixteen NSP-SK policy tasks is to expand two-way cultural exchanges, especially promoting Korean awareness and understanding of ASEAN cultures. Similarly, the NSP-Taiwan aims to diversify and boost social and cultural ties between Taiwan and the New Southbound Policy partner countries.

Both policies highlight capacity building occurring as national cultures are prioritized. Before entering other areas of partnership, it is essential for cultures to be understood and appreciated for development to occur.

### ***HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH EDUCATION***

One of the 3 Ps of the New Southern Policy – South Korea is People - Building a people-centered community connects people to people and minds to minds. In particular, it aims to strengthen capacity building for students, teachers, and public officials from NSP target countries. It seeks to provide support to build human resource capacity by increasing the number of students invited to study in Korea on scholarships, expanding exchanges among public officials and experts, and enhancing technical and vocational education training programs. It adds that future contributions to strengthening capacity building for students, teachers, and public officials from NSP target countries will lead to increased student exchanges through scholarship programs and invitational programs for college students as well as public officials being offered more training opportunities. These measures can also be found in the NSP-Taiwan's People-to-People Exchanges. The New Southbound Policy is to be built on a foundation of cultivating talented people to deepen bilateral ties and enhance cultural exchanges among students, academics, and industry professionals. In fact, the Ministry of Education has approved plans for public and private universities to recruit students from those countries. Students from target countries can enroll in Taiwan's four-year universities or two-year colleges, and qualified candidates may apply for internships and scholarships. Taiwan's schools and technical colleges also offer for-credit courses for second-generation immigrants who wish to study Southeast Asian languages, and textbooks in languages from those countries are being compiled. Subsidies are available to help immigrant children explore their cultural roots by encouraging scholastic exchanges between Taiwan and the New Southbound Policy countries.

Two of the main aims of the New Southbound Policy are facilitating connections between people and developing talent in ASEAN and South Asian countries through academic and job training programs at Taiwanese colleges and universities. The government aims to attract more students from ASEAN countries and South Asia by expanding educational programs as well as the scale of scholarships. The number of students from these countries totaled 31,531 in 2016, an increase of almost 10 percent from 2015 (Luo, 2017). The goal is to have 20 percent annual growth and to attain

58,000 students by 2019. The government has established both funding and support programs for internships at companies and on-the-job training to attract more students from these countries.

### ***ACCULTURATION THROUGH EDUCATION AND SHARING FOR THE COMMON GOOD***

The image of a nation is founded on its cultural and linguistic roots. Cultural and linguistic heritage forms national identity as it embodies collective practices and language (Watton, 2020). In other words, it is what the people are as their nation participates in global ventures. Heritage is a country's pride and as a nation celebrates its roots, it flourishes. Through the South Korean people and government's effort, its culture thrives from food to fashion, drama, and music. This flourishing contributes to development of Korean education, underlining Korean language and studies along with technological and human resource building. This phenomenon is not isolated nationally; it has already reached across the globe, especially to Mainland China and Southeast Asia. This is well-known as the Korean wave or Hallyu (Kim, 2015). This cultural episode became a powerful instrument for international Koreanization, advancing acculturation to South Korea's farthest counterparts and its closest neighboring countries. With the advent of New Southern Policy Plus (NSP Plus), this is amplified and echoed beyond peninsular borders and a new Hallyu form has been initiated: K-education.

In realizing the NSP Plus's seven (7) initiatives about people, prosperity, and peace, the Republic of Korea (ROK) focused on sharing language and culture through education by aiming to contribute to common regional development of Southern countries. The second initiative is "sharing Korean-style education model and supporting the development of human resources" by 1) developing human capacity and sharing K-education; 2) expanding the base of Korean language use in tune with expansion exchanges; 3) contributing to development of future technological human resources capability; and 4) supporting capacity-building for advancement of public administration (Presidential Committee on New Southern Policy, 2021). Under this initiative, ROK aims to 1) provide aid for ASEAN countries' higher education institutions particularly to universities specializing in agriculture, engineering, and medicine; 2) help the progress of Korean as a second language in these countries; 3) deploy and educate Korean language teachers; and (4) establish King Sejong Institutes. Focusing on the first two means of the second initiative, it is implied that ROK cel-

celebrates education by highlighting language and culture, sharing these to the international community overtly as it fosters cultural influence to such countries. Whether intentionally or not, NSP Plus through K-education ignites South Korean heritage acculturation among Southern countries.

Under the NSP Plus, this kind of education is not limited to language learning and explicit cultural sharing. Culture is also comprised of implicit practices in different facets of societal life, for example as reflected through individual aspirations and governmental leadership. ROK is known for enthusiasm about technological advancement. Historically, it has developed into a technological and economic giant, starting in a primarily agricultural nation (Kim & Park, 2012). This advancement was achieved through public administration. The nation has arrived at noticeable progress economically and in its public administration system over the decades (Kim, 2012). Hence, ROK is ready to share its wisdom with Southern countries through collaborative training and proactive policymaking for the common good of the international community. Under the third and fourth aims of the second initiative, the nation declares its assistance to partner countries to help them attain unlimited technological advancement and public administration.

### ***EDUCATION THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION***

Education is still seen as the foremost solution for national predicaments. Beyond it, innovations are engineered to address problems from ideological to technological and economic facets of the nation (Organization for Economic and Cooperation Development [OECD], 2016). Furthermore, especially at the tertiary level, it is reinforced and intensified through international collaboration (OECD & World Bank, 2007; Altbach & Knight, 2007). Taiwan shares the same viewpoint, seeking to share the same national mantra with neighboring countries. In fact, under a New Southbound Policy (NSP), the goal is to promote education by establishing linkages with South and Southeast Asian countries, providing scholarship programs to local teachers and students for study in NSP target countries, and similar educational assistance to South and Southeast Asians for study in Taiwan (Glaser et al., 2018). With the Philippines, Taiwan shares an extant memorandum of understanding signed by both countries. Taiwanese universities engaged with the University of the Philippines, granting 100 teachers educational assistance to earn graduate degrees in Taiwan (Lim & Hou, 2016, as cited in Glaser et al., 2018).

This collaboration with South and Southeast Asian countries is an investment for Taiwan, potentially helpful if the nation needs support from them currently and in the future. As the NSP benefits nations, alliances are built. This helps Taiwan increase political power by supporting nations to which it has extended a helping hand. Whatever the apparent political motivation, several countries shall benefit from this policy implementation.

The benefits of this policy are wide ranging, encompassing not only intereducation within Taiwan but also among NSP target countries. Through the lens of education, Taiwan sees international collaboration as essential to continuing development of its own basic and higher academe. As Taiwan subsidizes teachers and students for study in target countries, they learn from local national mechanisms which might also be applicable to Taiwanese projects. In return, Taiwan shares its education in the hope of building closer ties and networks. Taiwan aims not just for individual progress, but also for NSP target country success. The mutual educational exchange through Taiwanese initiative leads to wider and diverse reservoirs of knowledge about contributing to shared development of the international community.

## **Conclusions**

Education as a new road towards development cooperation is concretely evident in the two policies. The NSP – SK and NSP – T place a premium on education's role in attaining the two policies' goals of diversifying efforts and creating a stronger coalition: geographically from the east to the south. With unified goals for development, interactive relationships are also mutually established with promotion of harmony and peace for participating nations. In this way, education becomes the prime instrument for achieving shared regional development in South Korea and Taiwan as well as among the South and Southeast Asian countries.

Comparing educational provisions of policies revealed that individual national culture must be understood and appreciated before any undertaking on development be achieved. Placing culture at the heart of this development policy constitutes an essential precondition to successful development program implementation. Human capacity building is primary for both policies. Thus, education is not only a means of exchange and cooperation, but more importantly for developing people. Education is identified as the best vehicle to help attain these goals for both policies, including training programs, scholarships for students, teachers and eventually public officials from ASEAN and South Asian countries.

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Education is geared towards acculturation and sharing the common good as a service to citizenry of respective countries as well as the region and international community. International developmental exchanges in education-related trainings and programs would benefit both partners progressively and through advances. Education-related policy provisions lead to continuous exchange of learning and innovation among nations. As these are implemented, benefactor and beneficiary countries gain from one another.

Inasmuch as this study is exploratory as an initial endeavor, follow-up research may be conducted to further evaluate policy relevance and significance, especially in education among participating ASEAN countries and beyond. In addition, how many goals have been achieved may be examined, leading to sustainability and further regional cooperation and collaboration, especially in the interest of educational and human development in the light of NSP – SK and NSP – T.

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