

THE ROLE OF LEE KUAN YEW AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SINGAPORE  
(1959 – 1990)

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บทคัดย่อและแฟ้มข้อมูลฉบับเต็มของวิทยานิพนธ์ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2554 ที่ให้บริการในคลังปัญญาจุฬาฯ (CUIR)  
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บทบาทของ ลี กวน ยู กับการพัฒนาของสิงคโปร์ (ค.ศ. 1959 – 1990)

นางสาวพลอยทิพย์ วณิชย์มณีบุษย์

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา)

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

ปีการศึกษา 2555

ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



พลอยทิพย์ วณิชย์มณีบุษย์ : บทบาทของ ลี กวน ยู กับการพัฒนาของสิงคโปร์ (ค.ศ.1959-1990) (THE ROLE OF LEE KUAN YEW AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SINGAPORE (1950 – 1990)) อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: รศ.ดร.วิทยา สุจริตชนารักษ์, อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ร่วม: รศ. แล คิลกวิทย์รัตน์, 94 หน้า.

ประเทศสิงคโปร์ได้รับการยกย่องจากนานาประเทศว่าเป็นประเทศที่พัฒนาแล้ว ประเทศมีศักยภาพทางด้านเศรษฐกิจและการเงิน ประชากรส่วนใหญ่ได้รับการศึกษาขั้นพื้นฐานและขั้นสูง โดยในปี ค.ศ. 2012 อัตราการรู้หนังสือของคนสิงคโปร์นั้นสูงถึงร้อยละ 96.4 อีกทั้งโครงสร้างพื้นฐานของประเทศนั้นยังมีความทันสมัยสามารถดึงดูดชาวต่างชาติและนักลงทุนเข้ามาในประเทศได้ การพัฒนาอย่างประสบความสำเร็จของสิงคโปร์นั้นเกิดขึ้นในเวลาเพียงไม่นานภายหลังจากการได้รับเอกราชในปี ค.ศ. 1965 ซึ่งในขณะนั้นประเทศสิงคโปร์ตกอยู่ในสภาวะขาดความมั่นคงทางการเมืองและเศรษฐกิจ และมีความจำเป็นอย่างยิ่งที่จะต้องฟื้นฟูประเทศในทุกภาคส่วน ไม่ว่าจะเป็นด้านสังคมหรือเศรษฐกิจเพื่อให้ประเทศอยู่รอด บุคคลที่ได้รับการยกย่องว่าเป็นผู้นำความเจริญมาให้กับสิงคโปร์คือ นายลี กวน ยู ผู้ซึ่งเป็นนายกรัฐมนตรีคนแรกของสิงคโปร์ และอยู่ในอำนาจมายาวนาน ถึง 31 ปี ตั้งแต่ปี ค.ศ. 1959 ถึง 1990 ในขณะที่นายลี กวน ยู บริหารประเทศนั้น สิงคโปร์มีเพียงแค่ประสบความสำเร็จทางด้านเศรษฐกิจเท่านั้น หากแต่ยังเป็นที่ยอมรับของนานาประเทศ การบริหารงานของรัฐบาลมีความเข้มแข็งและมีประสิทธิภาพ ประชากรส่วนใหญ่มีการศึกษา ส่งผลให้ประเทศสามารถก้าวไปอย่างรวดเร็ว งานวิจัยฉบับนี้จะกล่าวถึงการพัฒนาของสิงคโปร์ และบทบาทของลี กวน ยู ที่มีต่อการพัฒนานี้ และรวมไปถึงเหตุผลประการอื่นที่อาจจะมีความเกี่ยวข้องและส่งผลต่อการพัฒนาในปีค.ศ. 1959 ถึง 1990

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ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ร่วม.....

# # 5387653920 : SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

KEYWORDS : SINGAPORE/ LEE KUAN YEW/ HUMAN CAPITAL/ LEADER/  
DEVELOPMENT

PLOYTIP WANITMANIBOOT: THE DEVELOPMENT OF SINGAPORE  
AND LEE KUAN YEW. ADVISOR : ASSOC. PROF. WITHAYA  
SUCHARITHANARUGSE, Ph.D., CO-ADVISOR : ASSOC. PROF. LAE  
DILOKVIDHYARAT, 94 pp.

Singapore is regarded internationally as a developed country with good economic and financial conditions. Majority of Singaporean are well-educated (in 2012, the literacy rate of people in Singapore is 96.4 percent) and the country also comprise top-class infrastructures, attracting foreign investors to allocate businesses to Singapore. A successful development of Singapore occurred a few years after the independence in 1965. In the 1960s, the newly-born nation was under political and economic instability. Unavoidably, for surviving and the future of Singapore, the government was forced to improve every aspects of the country, including its society and economy. A person who was praised for the success of Singapore is Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister. During his 31 years in the office, from 1959 to 1990, Singapore not only achieved economic miracle but also had been recognized globally for a robust and proficient government administration. This thesis is meant to explore the development of Singapore, and the role of Lee Kuan Yew towards this development. In addition, other factors that might be relevant to the positive development are also investigated.

Field of Study : Southeast Asian Studies..... Student's Signature.....  
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEST	Basic Education for Skills Training
BMA	British Military Administration
CPF	Central Provident Fund
CPM	Communist Party of Malaya
EDB	Economic Development Board
GCE A-Level	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
GCE O-Level	General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDB	Housing Development Board
HRD	Human Recourse Development
IMD	International Institute for Management Development
MNCs	Multinational Cooperations
NES	New Education System
NTUC	National Trades Union Congress
NWC	National Wage Council
PAP	People's Action Party
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
R & D	Research & Development
SATU	Singapore Association of Trade Unions

SPP	Pro-British Progression Party
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
WISE	Worker Improvement through Secondary Education

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

On the day of declaring independent, Singapore faced with many challenges. The economic structure, which had always been tied up with Malaysia hinterland, was almost corrupted. Large number of people was under-educated and had low standard of living. In social aspect, there were continuously political tensions among Singaporeans. The economic condition in 1965, Singapore was not much different from Iraq, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia at the time (Lee K. Y., *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story: 1965-2000*, 2000). The natural resources that Singapore had were only deep harbor and the people. However, within less than one generation lifetime, Singapore had completely changed. It did not only survive, but also make the rest of the world eyed on this city-state. In 1983, Singapore's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was US\$ 26,000, exceeding Britain's GDP per capita of US\$19,700 (ibid.).

Singapore's government has been universally accepted as leader in promoting the competitive environment in which the industry and citizens are potential to grow vigorously (Goldstein & Pavida, 2008). Primarily, it aims at creating the admirable culture and attitude about the outstanding performance of the public services, courtesy, responsiveness, and context in which the government servants support and ascertain the innovations (Yew & Hian , 2007). The success of state endeavor has been declared by the IMD World Competitive Index which ranked Singapore's government as the most effective government in the world in the year 1965 – 2012.

In 2005, Singapore's per capita GDP raised to US\$32,867 (IMF, 2008). Seow (1994) observed, Singapore possesses the best international airport, becomes Asia's premier

refinery hub, the third largest in the world after Huston and Rotterdam, modern skyscrapers, very clean, without dirty or filth 3-lane venues, garden city and everything is magnificent. Telecommunications are regarded among the best in the world and its people are delightful with the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest income per capita in Asia after Japan (p. 6).

If mention about the positive development of Singapore, most people would think of and give a credit to, the so-called, father of Singapore, “Lee Kuan Yew”. His name is everywhere and in every single page of Singapore’s successful stories. He brought Singapore to become independent, crossed over all obstacles during the post-independent era, and he was always been praised as the great leader for this country. It is possibly not too exaggerated to say that the success of Singapore is his masterpiece. A lot of people give credit to Lee Kuan Yew for the city-state achievement. However, I am interested to find out and would like to challenge that, despite the man called Lee Kuan Yew, there could be other factors which together bring Singapore to success.

Singapore is an interesting country to study in term of its development for various reasons. Firstly, as described, the country has small land space with very limited natural resources. It means that Singapore could not rely on agriculture for development as other countries in the same region did. Secondly, during the 1960s, Singapore had unpleasant political and economical conditions. Many strikes and riots were going on, racial problems between the Malay and Chinese, and increasing number of unemployment. It reached the point when Singapore was the poorest country in Southeast Asia, and no neighbor would like to provide any assistance. Thirdly, Singapore is the only country in Southeast Asia which does not have native people (Malays) as majority. It has about three-quarter of Chinese-Singaporean. Perhaps it could be one cause of development. Lastly, many countries, even China, have tried to emulate the Singapore’s Model, but none of them were closed to the similar success.

Based on given reasons, this thesis will take a closer look at the role of Lee Kuan Yew toward the development of Singapore, and trying to examine to his influence on the success of this country. By investigating Singapore's founding leaders' administration and understand leadership components and management strategies adopted, we can further enhance the knowledge of this country. In addition, I will also scrutinize other circumstances and conditions which make Singapore different from other countries, and which also benefit the country development. The timeframe of my study focus on year 1959 until 1990, when Lee Kuan Yew was in office as the Prime Minister of Singapore

## **1.2 Objectives:**

1. To study Lee Kuan Yew's leadership role in the development of Singapore.
2. To examine other factors contributing to the development of Singapore.

## **1.3 Arguments/ hypothesis**

When talking about Singapore and its present pictures, a lot of people will think of a clean and modern city state, a financial hub of the region, highly educated population or corruption free. If we discuss further on what make the success of Singapore, many people will think of "Lee Kuan Yew". The man who has been named by many scholars as the father of Singapore. This is what inspire me to make a further research on the success of the city-state, and bring about this thesis.

My major arguments for this paper are that the success of Singapore is not due to Lee Kuan Yew alone. There must be a combination of other factors and circumstances which support and facilitate the success. In line with my arguments, my hypotheses for this paper are following:



- First, Singapore has potential for success. Lee Kuan Yew was able to bring about success of Singapore during his leadership although he is not the only key person.
- Second, there are other factors contributing to the development of Singapore.
- Third, the major component which causes positive development of the country is human resource development (HRD).

#### **1.4 Methodology**

This research is mainly based on secondary data. I will gather published studies, documents from reliable sources, articles from different related journals as well as explore other existing literatures. I will study works done in Singapore and in other countries, and make an analysis on the collected documentaries and selected those which are relevant to my thesis, so that I can make sure that there will be no overwhelming materials which may have no relevance, more importantly, the main concept still be in focus. In addition, more or less, I hope my research will be able to fill in the gap of knowledge among existed study about Singapore.

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This paper focused on leadership elements and management strategies regarding to the newly-independent Republic of Singapore as dominant factors contributing to development success of the city state, along with other possible factors which may not occur very often or may not happen to other places. In addition, it added to the body of prior knowledge on nation building and leadership. Data obtained from the research study should be helpful in identifying the leadership elements and management strategies that benefit researchers who engage in the work of implementing national development.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTS**

Before going in depth research for this thesis, I am going to look at studies which had already been done by different scholars in relating to the areas which will be covered. There are two main parts to this chapter, literature reviews and concepts reviews. In the first part, it will be a review on existing works which are relating to Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, and the government. Later part of this chapter is about concepts and theoretical frameworks on leadership and human capita.

#### **2.1 Literature reviews**

In this part, I am going to review some works done by various scholars in relating to Singapore in order to have some ideas on how this city-state has been in their eyes. By reading through these works, I am going to review in two aspects, (i) about the government, and (ii) Singapore's Success.

##### 2.1.1 About the government

After Singapore was forced to leave the Federation of Malaysia, and became independent in August 1965, Lee Kuan Yew felt that Singaporeans lacked the 'in-built reflexes' of loyalty and patriotism (Lee K. Y., 1966, p. 3). According to Jason Tan (1997), the education system was seen as a key means of promoting social cohesion, therefore the programmes, such as singing the national anthem and two languages policy (English + mother tongue), were implemented as necessary.

Singapore's doubts whether the small island republic would survive as an independent nation were put to rest as it flourished under the leadership of Lee Kuan Yew and the People's Action Party (PAP) (Henderson, 2012). M. Shamsul Haque

(2004) wrote that during the transition of state formation, PAP has taken the form of a one-party-dominant system (rather than the western model of liberal democracy with occasional changes in the ruling party), which allegedly provided a stable political context to pursue pragmatic economic concerns instead of generating ideological contestation (Chua, 1997; Lee, 2001; Vasil, 2000). Wang and Tang (1981) wrote about the government under Lee Kuan yew as, ‘a strong, wise and far-sighted government will lead ... public participation is viewed basically as a process of mass education’ (p. 241). Planning is therefore, a top-down process with goals set by the leaders of the political hierarchy and the state bureaucracy ensures that these are carried out (Grice & Drakakis-Smith, 1985).

According to David W. Chang (1968), Lee Kuan Yew seemed to understand clearly the necessary prerequisites for modern nation-state identity through cultural, political and economic transformation. He could therefore provide the charisma and realism needed to generate to political input essential for building a small modern socialist state that is sufficiently united to maximize the control of its own destiny so far as external regional circumstances permit. David further mentioned that the largest slice of the government’s budget went to education, and it was in the educational field that Singapore may make its greatest contribution, as a model, to other countries in Southeast Asia and to the overseas Chinese residing there. Similarly, Haque (2004) mentioned about Singapore government attention on human capital, Since the quality of human resources is critical for a country that has hardly any other assets, the government invested heavily in education and training, especially in the area of science and technology.

The PAP, under the leading of Lee Kuan Yew, was in the office since 1959, and he was the Prime Minister ever since until 1990. By running the country for a long time, unavoidably, his power and the democracy had been questioned. Chua (2006) wrote, ‘Since 1968, when the long-ruling regime gained absolute parliamentary power for the first time, the single-party regime has been able to continuously modify the rules of general elections to its political advantage and to stay in power. Consequently, the economic modernization has been spectacularly

successful but political modernization, in terms of democratization, has been arrested.”

Haque (2004) referred to some scholars, such as Gan (2003), Ibrahim (2003), Bell (1997) and Low (2000) who pointed out the problem of Singapore, for example, opportunities for free public expression and discussion on policy issues are often constrained by existing rules and regulations as well as parliamentary democracy in Singapore is basically a form of “soft authoritarian” or “semi-authoritarian” democracy. Another scholars, Grice and Drakakis-Smith (1985) wrote that the PAP regard their development philosophy as very pragmatic, others regard it as dictatorial, even fascist (Gook, 1981).

### 2.1.2 Singapore’s Success

Some scholars who view the success of the city-state as a model which other countries may be able to follow. I selected two pieces of literature to review in this section in order to illustrate in which way Singapore is known to succeed.

The first writing is written by David Chang (1968). He explained about Singapore’s significant success in three ways which other countries might be able to follow.

1. The success of Singapore’s multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious experience may have a contribution to make to all multi-racial societies especially those of Southeast Asia.
2. Singapore’s successful evolution into a non-Chinese society may reassure other countries in the region which have a large Chinese minority, and thus solve the confusing and dual nationality dilemma for some thirteen million overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.
3. The success of political integration and acculturation in a multi-racial environment may be a guide to many multi-racial cities in India, Indonesia and even the United States.

The author talked about several characteristics enjoyed by the new state of Singapore (during early independent period) which may not apply to other multi-racial countries, city-states and primate cities. First, Singapore was carefully guided by the British until 1959, and it still relies on the British and several commonwealth countries for external security. Second, because of the geographic inseparability of Singapore from Malaysia, the latter may ultimately make all the resources of the Kuala Lumpur government available to protect Singapore from external threat. Third, geographic location and commercial-transport facilities always bring to Singapore an added strategic-military significance in a power-vacuum region which has historically never been free from external interference. Lastly, Singapore was already a well-governed city before acquiring independent status on August 9, 1965.

Another work is done by Ron Matthews and Nellie Zhang Yan (2007), who believed that Singapore could overcome economic and military challenges for several reasons as seen below, but mainly due to the leader and the government.

First, from a political perspective, there was strong, stable and decisive leadership under Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew who held his post from 1959 to 1990. The resulting political unity encouraged long-term planning, especially in the field of economic advancement. Investment into human capital was particularly emphasised, supporting the unending search for sustainable competitive advantage. In this regard, Singapore was fortunate to be located at an international trading crossroads. Shipping, insurance, banking, related services and tourism are all prospered due to Singapore's beneficial geographical position. Success was also partially due to the government's deliberate strategy of enhancing technological development through the adoption of an open and welcoming approach to foreign investment.

Second, the government's management of the economy has proved both enlightened and visionary. The central economic authorities adopted an interventionist strategy, with government playing a paternal role: coaxing, guiding and supporting business to take a proactive approach in identifying and investing in the economic growth poles of the global economy.

Third, less tangible, contextual consideration accounting for Singapore's developmental success is rooted in the social and cultural fabric of its people. Observers with an understanding of Singapore will attest to the commitment and hardworking values of its citizens.

## **2.2 Concepts Reviews**

In this second part, I am looking at two main frameworks, leadership and human capital. It is crucial to look at leadership theories as this thesis is looking at the role of Lee Kuan Yew who was the important leader of Singaporean during 1959 to 1990. I am also proving that human resource or human capital is an important factor that drives Singapore to success. By looking at empirical studies on human capital as part of nation development is also important. However, for this thesis, I am not going to base my study and analysis on any particular theories below.

### 2.2.1 Leadership Theories

#### (a) Historical Overview of Leadership

Bass and Stodgill's leadership research outlined the concept and sources of leadership to the beginning of mankind and civilizations (Bass, 1990). Several scholars addressed that leadership has been of universality among humans and even in wild species. Leadership forms human potential while human develops and works out leadership (Arnold, 2001; Bass, 1990).

Arnold's examination of leadership traits and leadership competencies dated back to early civilizations like the Romans, Chinese, Greeks, and Egyptians, investigated the leadership globally, culturally, and historically. As Burns (1978) and other leadership researchers marked, "leadership is one of the most apparent, yet still least understood phenomenon on the planet" (p. 4).

Northouse (2004) points out that over the past five decades, there are up to 65 classification proposed to identify the dimensions of leadership” (p. 2). Leadership occurs with an individual who is powerful to direct the follower or a group of followers who accept such individual’s leadership. Often, leadership refers to process, meaning that –just not dominant characteristics rested in a leader, but it is also referring to a leader and follower relationship” (Northouse, 2004, p. 3). The leader and followers form a group to achieve the common goal. Leadership as a process, we all are exposed to the opportunity to become a leader” (Nagy, 2008, p. 33)

Kanter (1993) postulatesed that early management theory primarily concentrates on the military models which these models are designed with no affective considerations, but based on command-and-control management strategy where power and authority has been exerted over followers to achieve the assignments.

As research moved forward, management and managers research have been evolved into leadership and leader research. In focusing on leadership and leaders, researchers are interested to examine the effective leadership. Historically, leadership has been viewed as authority and influence. The individuals have been identified as leaders when they are potential to motivate the followers to change in any particular way (Palus & Drath, 1995).

Hamlin (2005) has categorized the leadership research into four main approaches; including (i) situational, (ii) trait, (iii) contingency, and (iv) new leadership. In situational theory, the leaders decide and make a choice of the best course of action for their followers based on the circumstances (Blanchard & Hersey, 1996). Trait theory relies on the concept that an effective leader’s competency can be identified and duplicated (Gehring, 2007). Contingency leadership theory stresses the environment to determine which leadership style suits the situation mostly (Fiedler, 1996). Transactional and transformational theories are categorized into new leadership theory (Hamlin, 2005).

### (b) Situational Theory

Hersey-Blanchard proposed the situational leadership model in the 1980s; and it has been commonly used over decades. Theoretically, it's based on the orientation, and social and emotional rapport supported by leader given a situation" (Nagy, 2008, p. 34).

In situational theory, while young people need for task behavior, the leaders need to adjust their leadership style that may reflect a high-involvement behavior (Blanchard & Hersey, 1996). The degree of follower's maturity may rise over the time, and when it happens, the leader could provide the less informal structure and socio-emotional accompaniment to the followers.

The observatory studies have further enhanced Hersey-Blanchard model development. Primarily, it is contributed by observation and comments of users and could be viewed as vague and fuzzy ideas in direction and implementation (Bass, 1990, p. 464). A superiority of empirical evidence demonstrates the support of the situational theory integrating both task and relationship.

### (c) Trait theory

In trait theory, leaders possess the particular existing physical, social, and personal traits. Many studies investigate the influential leaders to catch up the syllabus of great leader's personalities and traits. Originally, in respect of the trait theory, leaders' characteristics has been investigated, not leadership style (Gehring, 2007).

When the leader's characteristics and personality traits were identified, the leaders would be matched for particular leadership positions. Work condition and follower's characteristics would be used for evaluating leadership position requirement. Gehring (2007) noted that leaders could effectively influence and control the subordinators when the leader is enabled exactly.



#### (d) Contingency Theory

In respect of contingency theory, manager has been characterized of either task-oriented or relations-oriented. Consistent with Hersey and Blanchard's situational model, the leader in Fiedler's contingency model provides followers with both direction and social and affection support properly in a given situation (as cited in Mitchell, Biglan, Oncken, & Fiedler, 1970). One leadership style could apply to overall leadership situations.

Different leadership styles are required for the different management situations. The individual solution was contingent upon situational factors (Mitchell *et al.*, 1970). In the light of contingency theory, one leadership style has not surrounding on all sides. Fiedler said, should all environments be dynamic, static leadership style does not work.

Leader-member relations require the understanding of task structure and authority. As to Fieldler's contingency model, manager appraisal is to determine whether he is relationship-motivated or task-motivated (Mitchell *et al.*, 1970). To understand how the leader is motivated is to understand the leader's situational control, employee support, and employee loyalty in the leader and member relationship.

#### (e) New Leadership

Hamlin (2005) stated that transactional and transformational theories focus on the ideology of new leadership. Burns (1978) has firstly introduced the transformational leadership theory. In the light of the transformational leaders, employee relationship and motivation is a focus to achieve the specific performance objectives. The leader is committed to improve the good interaction that boosts the workers' performance, leading to a success of the organizational. The application of the charisma behavior and role modeling, transformational leaders orchestrate individuals or groups into achieving successful performances. Transformational

leaders have to organize their employees through inspiration and by means of persuasion (Neuhauser, 2007). The leaders are careful to contemplate individual employee's affection need to make sure that their subordinates' need is satisfied. Transformational leaders stress how the interaction pushes the followers to attain and accomplish the common goals.

In present study, according to Bass, transactional leadership theory was identified as follow; ~~the~~ transactional leadership theory rests on the assumption of exchange process or conditioned reward" (Nagy, 2008, p. 36). In respect of transactional leadership theory, the employee's obligation, expectancy, and assignment are definitely described by the leader. Reward is granted to employees who are obedient and complete their assignment tasks. Reward is a positive reinforcement for acceptably desired behaviors (Neuhauser, 2007).

### 2.2.2 Human capital theory

The most famous scholar who denoted as the first person who came up with human capital concept is Adam Smith (1776), in the *Wealth of Nation*. He defined human capital as,

*"... of the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society. The acquisition of such talents, by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a capital fixed and realized, as it were, in his person. Those talents, as they make a part of his fortune, so do they likewise that of the society to which he belongs. The improved dexterity of a workman may be considered in the same light as a machine or instrument of trade which facilitates and abridges labor, and which, though it costs a certain expense, repays that expense with a profit." (Smith, 1776)*

The idea of human as a capital of development became intensely investigated after the end of World War II. Many scholars came to realize the important of people and made a further study from what Adam Smith proposed. Theodore Schultz (1961), a famous economist in the 1960s, looked at education in a form of investment in human capital.

*“Economists have long known that people are important part of the wealth of nations. Measured by what labor contributes to output, the productive capacity of human beings is now vastly larger than all other forms of wealth taken together. What economists have not stressed is the simple truth that people invest in themselves and that these investments are very large. Although economists are seldom timid in entering on abstract analysis and are often proud of being impractical, they have not been bold in coming to terms with this form of investment”.*

The idea of education as a form of investment became the missing piece in the jigsaw of the puzzle of the sources of economic growth that were not accounted for by increases in land, labour (man-hour) and physical capital (Little, 2002). Most people thought that skills of human are source of capital, or so-called human capital. Yet, these skills are product of learning and education. At the end of the day, these human skills are contributing toward the whole economy productivity, while they are rewarded for their contributing. Although human capital is not a wholly new concept, Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964) were among the first economists who looked at cost and benefits of education in economic terminology and calculating the rates of return for the United States.

Supporting Shultz idea, Woodhall (2001; 1997) see education as an investment in human capital, which proponents of the theory have considered as equally or even more worthwhile than of physical capital.

*“... it implies that it is possible to measure that returns to investment in education, and to apply cost benefit analysis to decisions about*

*education expenditure, in the same ways as rates of return are used to analyse the profitability of investment conventional physical capital”(cited in Little, 2002).*

Another scholar who positive with this concept is Coleman (1997),

*“Probably the most important and most original development in the economics of education in the past 30 years has been the idea that the concept of physical capital as embodies in tools, machines and other productive equipment can be extended to include human capital as well. Just as physical capital is created by changes in materials to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways.”*

Being the world is mostly capital-driven and money still an important everyday factor, investing must be worthwhile, even for human capital. According to Babalola (2003), investment made in human capital should take into account of three things:

1. The new generation must be given the appropriate parts of the knowledge which has already been accumulated by previous generations.
2. The new generation should be taught how existing knowledge should be used to develop new products, to introduce new processes and production methods and social services.
3. People must be encouraged to develop entirely new ideas, products, processes, and methods through creative approaches.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SINGAPORE**

Singapore government sees human resource as the most fundamental element in the nation-building, –education and training are at the heart of the nation’s wider economic plans” (Ashton *et al.*, 1999; Ng, 2006). Through education, the government created national identity and a sense of Singaporeans during the country’s transition to independent era.

The emphasis on valuable people of Singapore can be seen from people in administration level.

*“Our population, our workers and their skill, the standard of our education – all these will make our society a success!,” (Lee Kuan Yew speech on October 1965)*

*“Our human resources are also limited; therefore, for us, the way forwards is to exploit the virtues that we have. Both in actual size and in actual numbers of population, we may be the smallest nation in Asia but there is one there for which we need not be apologetic – the quality of our people. But quality alone without training and disciplines which are relevant will have no significance for our future well-being,” (Lee Kuan Yew speech on July 1966)*

*“Singapore’s national wealth lies in our human resources, and our human potentials must therefore be developed to the fullest possible extent. An education and enlightened population is our guarantee for a prosperous future,” (Ong Pang Boon, Former Minister of Education, said in 1966)*

In this chapter, I am going to look at the economic development of Singapore as well as government policies on education and training during 1970s and 1980s.

### **3.1 Industrialisation for nation-survival (pre-independent – 1970s)**

#### 3.1.1 Background situations and conditions

Singapore was found by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles in 1819 and became part of the Straits Settlement, together with Penang and Melaka in 1826. Later, in 1867, the Straits Settlement was promoted as a Crown Colony<sup>1</sup>. With Singapore's strategic location and natural deep harbour, the British administration developed it to be an entrepot of the region. The British colony also located its political and military bases here. Until 1942, the Japanese attacked the Malay Peninsular and conquered Malaya and Singapore. After the end of World War II, the British returned and administrated Singapore as a separate unit of Crown colony. The other two Straits Settlement of Penang and Melaka were to become part of the Malayan Union comprising the Federated Malay States of Selangor, Negri Sembilan, Perak and Pahang and the Unfederated Malay states of Trengganu, Kelantan, Kedah, Perlis and Johore (National Education Project, 1998). The British Military Administration (BMA)<sup>2</sup> was set up to rebuild the Singapore and maintain law and order. However, there were many difficulties as people faced many problems in post-war Singapore such as overcrowded living condition, poor sanitation, lack of health services and unemployment, however, the most serious problems were the shortage of food and lack of housing (Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> Crown colony was ruled by a governor appointed by the Monarch. Under the crown colony administration, the governor ruled with the assistance of executive and legislative councils. The Executive Council included the governor, the senior military official in the Straits Settlements, and six other senior officials. The Legislative Council included the members of the Executive Council, the chief justice, and four nonofficial members nominated by the governor. (Barbara Leitch Lepoer, ed., 1989)

<sup>2</sup> British Military Administration (BMA) was imposed on territories in the Southeast Asian theater under the military responsibility of the South-East Asia Command (SEAC). BMA's chief priorities were to disarm and remove Japanese troops from the reoccupied territories and, at the same time, to liberate and relieve the hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian internees in camps scattered throughout Southeast Asia. See also, Ooi Keat Gin (2004), British Military Administration in Southeast Asia, Southeast Asia: A Historical Encyclopedia, from Angkor Wat to Timor.

The system of education in the first four decades of the twentieth century continued to be characterised by 'the absence of a single, clearly enunciated, guiding policy' (Wilson, 1978, p. 29). There were parallel systems of schooling: Malay schools established and supported by the Government; English schools founded by the Government and missionary bodies and supported by the Government; the Chinese and Tamil schools established and maintained by the Chinese and Indian communities respectively (Peng, 1997). By that time, Chinese was already out number other races and the Chinese schools were left very much to themselves. With the Chinese Revolution in 1911, in Mainland China, Chinese schools in Singapore were used by Kuamintang to create the Chinese nationalism among oversea-Chinese. They were taught to become anti-colonial. Coincide with the British colonial government neglected actions toward Chinese-educated, and limited job opportunity to only those with English proficiency, causing unhappiness to the Chinese which later became a major political issue in those days.

The Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) which had highly influences, gone underground and infiltrated unions and Chinese schools and Chinese social and cultural organization, exploiting anti-colonial feeling and social and economic grievances in the post-war era (Peng, 1997). As a consequent, in 1940s and 1950s, the political tensions became overheated within the industrial sector, pupils, and ethnicities. For instant, in 1947 alone, there were 300 strikes, many of them led by the CPM-controlled Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions, leading to 492,708 man-days lost (Nathan, 2011, p. 19). In addition, within 1955, there were nearly 300 strikes and 946,000 man-days lost, with devastating effect on the economy (ibid., p.21).

In May 1959, People's Action Party (PAP) won the General Election with 43 out of the 51 seats and formed Singapore first government. Nonetheless, within the PAP members, they were divided into two sides, moderates and pro-communists. The alliance between the two broke in July 1961, and pro-communist members formed a new political party, Barisan Socialis, and became the main competitor of PAP. On the trade union front, non-communists in the Singapore Trade Union Congress fragmented with the pro-communists to form the National Trades Union Congress

(NTUC), caused a terminated of the Singapore Trade Union Congress. On the other hand, the pro-communist trade unionists also formed a new group, called the Singapore Association of Trade Unions (SATU).

Meanwhile, the government of Singapore under a leading of Lee Kuan Yew worked on merger with Malaysia. Singapore became part of the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963, together with Sarawak and North Borneo. Thought, it was a short merger. Singapore divorced from Malaysia and declared independent on 9 August 1965. The challenges that Singapore had before its independent were (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2012):

1. Small country with no natural resources.
2. Small population of 1.6 million in 1960, but growing rapidly.
3. Highly dependent on entrepot trade and the provision of services to British military bases here.
4. Small manufacturing base.
5. Little industrial know-how and domestic capital.

Addition challenges that Singapore faced right after an independent from Malaysia were (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2011):

1. Separation from Malaysia caused the import-substitution strategy to be aborted.
2. Confrontation with Indonesia threatened our traditional role as a major trading post for the region.
3. Planned withdrawal of British bases, which employed around 40,000 workers, within 5 years.
4. High unemployment rate, estimated at about 10 %.

According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore, the government's development strategy for the 1960s to 1970s was to industrialise through an export-oriented strategy, by attracting foreign investors to Singapore to develop the manufacturing and financial sectors, also, improving labour climate and investment



environment by enacting the Employment Act to lay down standards of employment to help resolve industrial disputes. In addition, the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and National Wage Council (NWC) also helped to promote better labour-management relations. The government also invested in key infrastructure, including the establishment of the Jurong Town Corporation. In addition, the government nationalised companies in areas where the private sector lacked capital or expertise, like Singapore Airlines, Neptune Orient Lines, Development Bank of Singapore and Sembawang Shipyard.

### 3.1.2 Government policies on education and training (1960s – 1970s)

The first prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, set out two goals during this ‘surviving’ period; first, build a modern economy, second, create a sense of Singaporean national identity. He recruited the best and brightest people into his early government and sought to promote economic growth and job creation (OECD, 2010, p. 160).

The government focus on survival period were mainly on education and training. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported that the government expanded basic education as quickly as possible; schools were rebuilt rapidly; teachers were recruited on a large scale. The schools that had been established by different ethnic groups were merged into a single Singaporean education system. A bilingual policy was introduced so that all children would learn both their own language and English. (ibid., p.161) According to Peng Boo Tan, during this period, primary school enrolment rose from 284,702 in 1960 to 371,970 in 1968, and secondary school enrolment also increased from 59,244 in 1960 to 150,641 in 1968. Large number of teachers were recruited and trained in service to meet the dramatic increase in school enrolment, thus the number of teachers rose from 10,590 to 17,184 in 1965. (Peng, 1997, p. 5)

For consistency, the government introduced a new education system and structure for schools in all languages – 6 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 2 years for pre-university. A common syllabus and teacher training were conducted in 4 languages – English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil. In addition, common national examinations were introduced, including the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), the School Certificate Examination (GCE –O” Level) and Higher School Certificate Examination (GCE –A” Level)<sup>3</sup>.

To support demand from industrial sectors, and with the recommendation of the 1961 Chan Chieu Kiat Commission<sup>4</sup> of Inquiry into Vocational and Technical Education, there were three additional types of schools in secondary levels which were vocational, technical and commercial schools, and vocational institutes.

The government also paid attention to training programmes which created labour pool that fitted in the right industries. Several ministries and their division played major role in human resource development training. For instant, the Economic Development Board (EDB) came up with a technical training programme in March 1968 to train skills like turning and fitting, sheet metalwork, plumbing as well as radio maintenance and repair, in order to prepare upon the closure of British military bases. Also, more than 1,700 welders were trained for an increasing in ship repairing following the closure of the Suez Canal, the establishment of the fabrication of oil drilling rigs and its assorted equipment industry to meet the needs of the burgeoning off-shore oil exploration in Southeast Asia and the expansion of the oil refining industry significantly increased the demand for welders (Peng, 1997). In addition,

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<sup>3</sup> GCE –O” and –A” Level are the national examinations that conduct annually. The Ministry of Education, Singapore, together with the University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) are ones who issuing the Singapore-Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) in both ‘ordinary’ and ‘advance’ levels.

<sup>4</sup> The commission led by Chan Chieu Kiat, appointed by the Head of State in 1961, to enquire into the facilities and form of instruction in all vocational, trade and technical institutions in Singapore, both governmental and non-governmental, and to recommend a comprehensive scheme to be adopted by the Ministry of Education so that vocational and technical education can be co-ordinated and systematised as to fit in with the proposed industrialisation plans of the Government of Singapore (Singapore Government, 1961)

EDB also collaborated with other countries, such as France, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United Nation Development Programmes, as well as MNCs, to set up more training centres.

### 3.1.3 Economic achievement in 1970s

The government's industrialization strategy proved to be effective and yielded good result. The real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased at 9.4 percent per annum from 1970 to 1979. Manufacturing industry replaced entrepot sector, brought the highest income for Singapore, its share of GDP rising from 20 per cent in 1970 to 27 per cent in 1979.

The unemployment rate dropped dramatically. Singapore reached full-employment in the early 1970s, and had labour shortage in some industries. A significant report by Dutch economic advisor Dr Albert Winsemius estimated that every year between 1970 and 1975, Singapore would be short of 500 engineers and 1,000 technical workers (Lee, *et al.*, 2008). The shortage for management personnel and technicians was equally worrisome, the former by about 200 a year over the next three years and the latter by as many as 1,500 to 2,000 each year over the next two years (Goh K. S., 1972; Goh & Gopinathan, 2006).

## **3.2 Economic Restructuring (1980s)**

With great achievement from the first phase, the government arose with new goal. It would like to move Singapore from a third-league, labour-intensive economy to as second-league, capital and skill-intensive country (OECD, 2010), with higher value added and used of high technology.

### 3.2.1 Government policies on education and training

Earlier, the government rapidly expanded number of schools in Singapore. The problems found at the end of 1970s were lack of quality and high student drop-out rate. A high-level reviewing committee, led by Dr Goh Keng Swee<sup>5</sup> (the then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education) and his team of systems engineers, reviewed the education system and totally overhauled it (Goh & Gopinathan, 2006). It was also known as “Goh Report”, Report on the Ministry of Education, in February 1979. The report identified the following as the major problems (Peng, 1997):

1. High education wastage. The attrition rate was 29% for primary schools and 36% for secondary schools.
2. Low literacy and ineffective bilingualism. A considerable percentage of students in schools did not meet the minimum literacy skills, with the situation more server in the English stream. Furthermore less than 40% of each cohort population were able to attain the minimum competency level in two languages
3. Other problems included the great variation in the academic performance of schools, the low morale of teachers and the ineffective leadership of the Ministry of Education.

The introduction of the "New Education System" (NES), which used streaming to give appropriate education to students with very varied abilities and family backgrounds, so as to reduce "educational wastage", low literacy and non-attainment of effective bilingualism (National Library, Singapore, 2009). Streaming (tracking) based on academic ability was introduced, starting in elementary schools, with the goal of “enabling all students to reach their potential while recognizing that all students do not grow academically at the same pace,” said Ho Peng, Director

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<sup>5</sup> Dr Goh Keng Swee was a Deputy Prime Minister of Lee Kuan Yew, from 1 March 1973 to 3 December 1984. He also tenured as Minister of Finance (5 June 1959 – 8 August 1965, 17 August 1967 – 10 August 1970), Minister of the Interior and Defense (9 August 1965 – 16 August 1967), Minister of Defense (11 August 1970 – 11 February 1979), and Minister of Education (12 February 1979 – 31 May 1980, 1 June 1981 – 3 December 1984).

General of Education, Ministry of Education, Singapore (cited in OECD, 2010). The main changes were made for high-school level, altogether there were three academic pathways in the system<sup>6</sup>:

1. Academic high schools – also known as ‘pre-university’, preparing students for colleges. Student would be leading up to a GCE ‘A’ Level examination, and able to apply to the national universities. This was served for upper-stream students.
2. Polytechnic high schools – providing diploma courses, focusing on advance occupational and technical training. After graduate, students with good grades could pursue in tertiary education.
3. Technical institutes – later called Institute of Technical Education (ITE), providing skill certificate that focused on occupational and technical training. This was served for lower-stream students.

At the end of 1980s, the result of streaming system, introduced by Dr Goh Keng Swee was gratified. By 1986, only 6% of students were leaving school with fewer than 10 years of education (ibid.)

For training programmes for existing workforce, the government continued to upgrade their education and skills. The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) was also responsible for labor force training. It introduced classes to improve the literacy and numeracy of poorly educated workers, including (Peng, 1997):

1. The Basic Education For Skills Training (BEST) programme, launched in 1983, to improve the English Language and Mathematics competency of workers who had less than or equal to Primary Six level.
2. The Worker Improvement Through Secondary Education (WISE) programme, launched in 1987, continuing of BEST programme. It raised the competency

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<sup>6</sup> Please refer to Appendix D for Singapore Education System.

in English Language and Mathematic skills for workers to be equivalent with Secondary Four.

In addition, there were more training programmes introduced, conducted by NTUC as well as other government divisions, aimed to provide an improvement or new skills to labours, so they would be more competitive. These government agencies were also hand-in-hand with MNCs in providing quality training programmes for Singapore labour force. Some new skills that were being educated were computer, communication, problem solving, and services mind, etc.

Government also paid more focus on research and development (R&D) projects to support its economic reconstruction. The Ministry of Science and Technology was responsible to promote science and technology in the academic and economy. Knowledge liked information technology, biotechnology, robotics and artificial intelligence, microelectronics, laser technology and optics and communications technology (Peng, 1997), were introduced to an industrial sector as well as within the tertiary education. Many specialized institutes were established for further R&D activities, for example the Institute of Systems Science, the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, the Industrial Collaboration Centre of the National University of Singapore's Science Faculty, the Innovation Centre of the National University of Singapore's Engineering Faculty (ibid.).

### 3.2.2 Economic achievement in 1980s

Economic growth averaged 7.7% per annum during this period (MTI, 2012). The manufacturing remained the largest country income generating sector. According to Peng Boo Tan (1997), existing labour intensive industries like the consumer electronics and furniture industries upgraded and/or relocated parts of their operations to neighbouring countries; new industries like petrochemicals, biotechnology, aerospace and information technology were set up. The financial industry also

expanded rapidly during this period. More than 300,000 new jobs were created and diversified in manufacturing as well as commerce, finance and business services.

## **CHAPTER IV**

# **LEE KUAN YEW: THE FIRST LEADER OF SINGAPORE**

In this chapter of the thesis, I am focusing on Lee Kuan Yew, who people gave credits for bringing Singapore through the stage of survival to success. Many people have questioned about the survival of this city-state on the day that it was divorced from the Federation of Malaysia. Denis Warner wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (10 August 1965), “An independent Singapore was not regarded as viable three years ago. Nothing in the current situation suggests that it is more viable today,” (cited in Lee K. Y., 2000) They have later changed their view after Lee Kuan Yew was the one who rule this newly independent state. Lee Kuan Yew has been appraised for his ability to convert Singapore from a shipping port with no natural resources into one of the most prosperous, safest and most orderly organized nation in the world. The fabulous outcomes made other countries would like to learn from Singapore. For instant, China and Hong Kong’s leader would like to imitate Lee Kuan Yew model for Singapore success, as well as the United Kingdom Former Prime Minister also interested and sent a research team to study Singapore retirement and saving scheme. In order to gain a better knowledge and understanding on Lee Kuan Yew, I am going to divide this part into two sections. The first part is about the man’s background, personality and leadership style which contribute to the success of himself and the city-state. For later section, it is based on his views on Singapore and what he and his first generation of PAP have been through.

### **4.1 Lee Kuan Yew**

Lee Kuan Yew’s accomplishment announces itself and manifests his exemplary ability as a leader and politician. By investigating his background, ethics



and morals, environmental factors as well as occupation, we have better vision on how he became an outstanding leader.

#### 4.1.1 Lee's Background<sup>7</sup>

Lee Kuan Yew was born in Singapore, on 16 September 1923. He was very much influenced by the British culture as his family members were mostly British educated, from his grandfather to himself. Lee has an English name called, Harry, but he stopped people from calling him with an English name ever since he entered political career. Throughout his life, he has always been studied in the British system, and speaks English as his mother tongue. He studied in Raffles Institution for his secondary level, and went to United Kingdom to study law from University of Cambridge. He graduated with a rare Double Starred (double First Class Honours). After returning to Singapore, he worked in law firm and became a legal advisor to the trade and student unions. (Lee K. Y., 2000)

Lee's first experience with politics in Singapore was his role as election agent for Laycock<sup>8</sup> under the banner of the pro-British Progression Party (SPP) in the 1951 legislative council elections (ibid.). Later in 1954, together with his friends, who also studied in UK, and several other English-educated, joining with the pro-communist trade-unionists forming a political party, People's Action Party (PAP)<sup>9</sup>. In the general election held on 30 May 1959, the PAP won a majority vote with 43 of the 51 seats in the Legislative Assembly, and Lee Kuan Yew became the first prime minister of Singapore.

To end the colonial rule and knowing that Singapore's economy relies very much on the hinterland of Malaysia, Lee Kuan Yew decided that Singapore must join the

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<sup>7</sup> Please refer to Appendix E for a summary table to the life journey of Lee Kuan Yew.

<sup>8</sup> Laycock was a law firm, founded by Christopher John Laycock, who was a British lawyer. It was one of Singapore's earliest law firms.

<sup>9</sup> Please refer to Appendix F

Federation of Malaysia. While he was working with the Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman on being part of the federation, in Singapore, he also promoted a campaign “independence through merger”<sup>10</sup>. On the 16 September 1963, Singapore became part of Malaysia. However, the union between Singapore and the Federation only last for 18 months. Reasons behind a divorcement were due to a political tension between PAP and the central government, which were dominated by United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and Communist Party of Malaya (CPM), as well as between the Malays and Chinese. The major event of breakage was the 1964 race riots in Singapore where 23 people were killed and hundreds of Chinese and Malay were injured. The problems went beyond solving with bilateral conciliation. The Tunku decided to expel Singapore, and Lee Kuan Yew was forced to sign the separation agreement.

*“Never had I expected that in 1965, at 42, I would be in charge of an independent Singapore, responsible for the lives of its two million people. From 1959, when I was 35, I was prime minister of a self-governing state of Singapore. We joined the Federation of Malaysia in September 1963. There were fundamental disagreements over policies between Singapore and the federal government. All of a sudden, on 9 August 1965, we were out on our own as an independent nation. We had been asked to leave Malaysia and go our own way with no signposts to our next destination”. (Lee K. Y., 2000, p. 19)*

On 9 August 1965, Singapore was officially became an independent State, with Lee Kuan Yew as a prime minister. He brought the newly independent city-state through survival phase and have a successful development in only few decades.

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<sup>10</sup> It means that Singapore would declare independent from the British Colonial and have a fully self-governing. After it was no longer under the British rule, Singapore would merge with the Federation of Malaysia.

#### 4.1.2 Lee Kuan Yew and his leadership

The concept of servant leader was proposed by Robert K. Greenleaf (1970), in *The Servant as Leader*. He defined servant leadership as:

*“The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.” “The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?”*

Supporting idea from Larry Spears (1996), Executive Director of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, he defined servant leadership as:

*“...A new kind of leadership model – a model which puts serving others as the number one priority. Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decision-making.”*

According to Greenleaf, there are ten characteristics of those who are called servant leader. They are (i) listening, (ii) empathy, (iii) healing, (iv) awareness, (v) persuasion, (vi) conceptualization, (vii) foresight, (viii) stewardship, (ix) commitment to the growth of people, and (x) building community.

Lee Kuan Yew can be described as a servant leader. He is an altruist concerning of developing his people's welfare and well-being, health and education standard of Singaporean. He never gave up on his role even when he ran into difficulty and high-pressure moment. This can be seen adequately in 1964-1965 when Singapore was under pressure to leave Federation or to succumb to the central government.

*“we have to look after our citizen – this is our first responsibility. It is important to have jobs, houses, clinics, hospitals, community centres, schools, for the children – a decent life,” Lee’s speech on 24 February 1966.*

I am going to link between the servant leader characteristics in theory with the actual leader of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew.

- (i) Listening – Even though, any major decisions were made by him, Lee Kuan Yew has always listened to his team members who were specialized in those particular fields. He believed in having smart people would yield good productivity. He encouraged these people to work with his government and listened to their advices. This could be seen when Singapore followed advice from Dr Albert Winsemius, the United Nation development economist, to adopt export-led industrialization. He also listen to Chan Chieu Kiat and his commission recommendation to build vocational institutions to support demand of labour during its industrialisation in the end of 1960s to 1970s.
- (ii) Empathy – Lee understand the nature of Singapore that have Chinese as a majority. When he established PAP, he cooperated with the pro-communist who had very high influence on Singapore Chinese at the time, and won general election in 1959. When he became the first prime minister, he did actually worked for the interest of people of Singapore, and tried to

understand them better by learn to speak Hokkien<sup>11</sup> to the Chinese. He visited communities, listened to ordinary people for their problems as well as those civil servants and trade unionists. As a consequent, PAP under a leading of Lee Kuan Yew able to gain trust and believe of Singaporeans. In later national election, even when there were no longer pro-communist member in the party, PAP was able to gain majority votes in every election.

- (iii) Healing – another aspect that could be digested from PAP domination in Singapore politic is Singapore citizen has a confidence in their government and believe that it was able to bring a better living for them. At the end of the day, Singaporean still have right to choose who they wanted to govern the country and work for them. The government, especially under the management of Lee Kuan Yew, proved to the world that it was able to transport Singapore through survival phase to the only first world country in Southeast Asia.
- (iv) Awareness – being aware of Singapore limitations and changes of circumstances overtime, he and his government consistently delivered policies and campaigns, and made quick alteration in responding to any changing factors. For example, he recognized Singapore housing problems. He set up Housing and Development Board (HDB) to take care of problems even before Singapore became independent. After separating from Malaysia, Lee Kuan Yew looked at housing problems even more serious as Singapore faced a housing shortage at the time. Most land piece in Singapore are own and manage by government through HDB. It built high-rise flats to accommodate Singaporean without racial or income inequality. In addition, the problem of corruption was seen as a threat to the development, and no one would enjoy this problem. He aware that corruption was a serious issue in the neighboring countries, so he

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<sup>11</sup> Hokkien is a Chinese dialect from Southern part of China. It was the most wildly used among Chinese-speaker in Singapore.

eliminated corruption problem to a high extend by setting example to the civil servants. As a result, foreigners were secured for their investment and the government of Singapore was trusted globally.

*“...the efficiency of the administration in Singapore has, in fact, improved since the state left Malaysia. For instance, at present, the telephone and telegraph services are more efficient than before. When the minister himself is not efficient enough, what can you expect from his administrative officer? When officers notice ministers looking for pleasure, they too will certainly make the best of their time enjoying life. If the senior administrative officer’s main concern is to enjoy life, the clerks under him will be open to corruption. If the clerks get to this stage, what do you think will happen with the more junior officers? The messengers, for example, will start stealing stamps from the office. Don’t you think it will be the end when this happens? Our police force in Singapore is, generally speaking kind and carries itself well. If you commit an offence, the policeman writes down your name and identity number and then grants you a hearing in open court. In some countries, this is not the case. If you violate the traffic law, you need only hand out \$2 and everything is settled. This is known to any man in the street. For small offences, \$2 is sufficient. For more serious offences, \$20 will do.” Lee’s interview to the Chinese Press Recorded on 13 September 1965*

- (v) Persuasion – When Singapore just became an independent state, problems that the whole nation faced were lack of unity, poverty, security and domination power of Chinese. Lee Kuan Yew made his people realized that in order to survive, everyone needed to work hard today for the better of the next generation, and prosperity of Singapore.

*“Our responsibility is to use our experience and knowledge to enable our next generation to have a better future.” Lee’s speech on 6 March 1968*

When Singapore left Malasia, Lee Kuan yew did not have any army or police under his command. This was a big threat for newly-independent city-state security. He made Singaporean feel that this was responsibility of everyone, not just the government. He asked every young Singaporean man to volunteer for national services, and despite any racial group. He made it clear in his speech to the members of Chinese Chamber of Commerce that even the Chinese was wealthier and had more influential than other racial, they must be treated equally for the security of Singapore.

*“The volunteers may serve in the infantry, artillery, signals or engineering corps. In this way, I hope that we will be able to have a well-trained, reliable and loyal volunteer corps of 10,000 in three to four years’ time. By “reliable”, I mean those who are loyal to us and not to “others” so if anything should happen we would feel safe and secure.*

*On the other hand, if we do not have loyal citizens to rely on, we would be finished if anything untoward should happen. This is something which everyone should think deeply about.” Lee’s speech on 14 November 1965*

- (vi) Conceptualization – Lee Kuan Yew was well-planned person, and did not get distracted easily. He knew what need to be done, at what time. He only focused on what was feasible to achieve, not over-exaggerated. Although he put all his effort to develop Singapore, it was impossible for him to focus on everything at one time. However, he always prioritized national security, the economy and social issues on his top list for his government.
- (vii) Foresight – Even though, Lee Kuan Yew was focusing on what were feasible, it did not mean that he does not look into the future of Singapore.

At the time when he was the prime minister, he would make a speech on New Year and the National Day on what he aimed to achieve within a year and what he would like to see Singapore in a few year time. The result of his well-planning is that many international institutions awarded Singapore on top ranks in both economic and social fields.

- (viii) Stewardship – In order to achieve his foresight vision, Lee Kuan Yew made a well earlier preparation. Any limitations that would stop or slow-down the plan, he would make an early adjustments. This can be seen on how he selected his successor and the new team. It was known that Lee believed in performance based achievements. Only those who had proved to have ability should be promoted. Thus, after the promotion, there should not be any questions on that person. Gok Chok tong, the seconde prime minister of Singapore had been working in the Lee’s government for long-time. He had proof to Lee from his achievements and trust from party member, only that he was able to be Lee’s successor. In addition, at the time Lee Hsing Loong, the son of Lee Kuan Yew and the third prime minister, has already been working in the PAP and government too. However, the father Lee did not find his son was a suitable candidate yet.
- (ix) Growth – Lee Kuan Yew paid attention to economic as well as social aspect of Singapore. It was true that he would like to achieve great success in economy for Singapore, he also aimed to increase living standard of Singaporean too. This could be seen from education and training policies imposed in different phrases. When youth have good education and labour had good skills, they were more competitive and made better productivity. As a consequent, the result was reflected in the economic indicators that the country achieve economic success.
- (x) Building Community – Lee Kuan yew had tried to build multi-racial Singaporean and sense of togetherness within a nation. He emphasized on ‘Confucianism’ ideology that gave important on family as a core value and it is the most basic, yet important, community of the society. From the family unit, it got expanding out to the community in national level. The



sense of community value also can be seen in Singapore government departments. For example, one of the main roles for HDB is “focusing on the community”,

*“... the building of cohesive communities within its towns. Living environments are provided with community spaces for residents to mingle and interact. Public housing policies and schemes are formulated not only to meet changing needs and aspirations, but they also support national objectives such as maintaining racial harmony and stronger family ties, and focus on the needs of elderly and those who may be in financial difficulty. In addition, with its network of HDB Branches, HDB ensures that it is well integrated in the daily lives of the community it serves.” (Housing & Development Board, 2012)*

Indeed, Lee Kuan Yew paid attention to the living of Singaporean even before he became the Prime Minister. This can be seen from his speech given during the 1955 Legislative Assembly Election,

*“Education. There should be free and compulsory education for all children till the age of 16 and a comprehensive scholarship scheme for higher education.*

*Malayanisation of the public services. The public services must be Malayanised completely within the next four years. No new expatriate should be recruited on the Permanent Establishment.*

*Economic control. The government of the people should have full control of its trade and the dollar it earns and the management and disposal of sterling balances and national savings. Measures like control of rubber must go.*

*Housing. We must create a housing authority for slum clearance and subsidise housing by interest-free government loans instead of the*

*present interest-bearing loans from the government to the Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT)*<sup>12</sup>.” Lee’s speech on 21 March 1955

#### **4.2 Development of Singapore in view of Lee Kuan Yew’s leadership**

The road to the Independence of Singapore was not a smooth journey, more importantly, became independence was not an ideal impression for the leaders from the People’s Action Party (PAP) during the fiftieth and early sixtieth. Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister of Singapore, is an important person to investigate the process toward the success of Singapore.

By reading *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew*, it gave a vibrant picture of the status of Singapore prior to 9 August, the Independence Day. He dedicated whole book, talking about his early life, his passage in politics as well as the fortune of the city island. Singapore in the 1950’s and 60’s was in unpleasant economic al and political conditions, especially for the later one. Lee described in his book that Singapore was in the grip of a strike fest – in the nine months between 7 April and December 1955, there were 260 stoppages (Lee K. Y., 1998, p. 210). In another turbulence of 1956, the riots left 13 dead, 123 injured, 70 cars burnt or battered, two schools razed, and two police stations damaged (ibid., p. 249). The conflicts were everywhere. In this book, he also referred to many disordered between races, especially the Malay and Chinese, countered power between English-educated and Chinese-educated, and more important, threated from communism.

Lee Kuan Yew paid very high attention to human capital and education since the beginning. However, because Singapore has always been multiracial, language became very crucial element, and also created problems as well as a gap in the society. –One unavoidable problem in a multiracial, multilingual society’s how to

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<sup>12</sup> Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT): established under the Singapore Improvement Ordinance in 1927 to provide housing for the people of Singapore. Its functions were taken over by the Housing and Development Board (HDB) when it was established in 1960.

organize a functioning legislature and government without creating a Tower of Babel. Every old-established community has one main language, and those who migrate into it have to learn that language, whether it be English in the United States and Canada, or French in Quebec. But when Stamford Raffles founded Singapore in 1819, he demarcated in his first town plan different areas in which the different races and even different Chinese dialect groups would live separately. The British then brought in large number of Chinese, Indians and Malays, all speaking their own tongues, and left them to their own devices.” (ibid., p. 219) For Singapore’s politics, the same problem had led to a difficulty, especially during rallies. Lee Kuan Yew did make the point in the same book that,

*“Some of our candidates might be natural open-air orators, but no one could make a speech at an election rally and move the whole audience to laugh, or sigh, or cry or be angry together. Whatever language he used and however good he was, only one section of the crowd could understand him at any one time, so he had to reach the others through gestures, facial expressions and his tone of voice.” (ibid., p. 300)*

Being part of the Malay Archipelago, surrounding by big Muslim nations, the PAP, leading by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, was aware of this threat. The first generation PAP leaders foresaw a reasonable solution for Singapore’s survival, which was to join the Malayan Federation. Lee Kuan Yew explained the need of merger in one of his broadcast, in 1961,

*“Everyone knows the reasons why the Federation is important to Singapore. It is the hinterland which produces the rubber and tin that keep our shop-window economy going. It is the base that made Singapore the capital city. Without this economic base, Singapore would not survive. Without merger, without a reunification of our two governments and an integration of our two economies, our economic position will slowly and steadily get worse. Your livelihood will get worse. Instead of there being one unified economic development for*

*Malaya, there will be two. The Federation, instead of cooperating with Singapore, will compete against Singapore for industrial capital and industrial expansion. In this competition both will suffer.” (p. 397)*

Upon the process of merger, Lee Kuan Yew and his government presented an agreement to the Legislative Assembly. In one section, it was written that, “Singapore will have autonomy in education and labour policies and generally a larger measure of reserve state powers compared to other states in the Federation” (ibid., p. 406). It shows that, even though, Singapore was going to be part of the Federation, they were concern about the education and human capital and aware of the characteristic of Singapore. So, the policies related to quality of the people should not be implemented in the same way for the whole Malaya.

In 1950’s and 60’s, the literacy rate of Singapore was considered very low. Small group of people was able to go to school. Ever since, the PAP was in office, the leader emphasized on an important of education and began to build more schools. From 1959 to the end of 1965, the Ministry of Education was allocated a total of \$654 million – then a huge sum; 72 new schools were built, with 1,700 classrooms and 125,000 places....by 1965 there were 473,000 primary and secondary school students—25 per cent of population (Lee K. Y., 2011, p. 54).

The Malayan Federation did not work out as Lee Kuan Yew had expected, and had come to the separation on August 1965. In one part of his interview for the book, *Conversations with Lee Kuan Yew*, he did talk about his most stressful period as:

*“... working towards separation from Malaysia and knowing I’m going to abandon, at that time, five or six million non-Malay who had trusted us and joined the movement, and it’s not an easy thing to do because once we leave, the leadership is gone, the numbers, the demographic balance will be different and they [the Chinese we left behind] were captive. On the other hand, the Tanku [of Malaysia] told me, if you stay on [with us], there will be bloodshed [in the country]; I cannot*

*stop it, I am too old and too weak [he told me]. Maybe he was too old, or maybe he was just wanting to get rid of me!" (Plate, 2010)*

The independence might be what many nations were seeking for, however, this might not be the case for this city-state. The independence destroyed hopes in all aspects of Singapore, including the economic development. F J George (1992) described Singapore that on an area of 571.6 km sq, this newly independent nation's two-odd million people had to battle it out for economic and social survival: with little or no natural resources to fall back on, in a region beset with economic perils, military dictatorships and less prosperous peoples, and surrounded by an Israeli-Arab-world type of Malay archipelago, envious, jealous and potentially hostile.

Singapore had no choice, but to do anything for survival. Lee Kuan Yew wrote in his another book, *From Third World To First: The Singapore Story: 1965-2000*, describing Singapore after the separation and what he and his government did to bring the success of this country. In the early of this book, he explained that, we had to make extraordinary efforts to become a tightly knit, rugged and adaptable people who could do things better and cheaper than our neighbours, because they wanted to bypass us and render obsolete our role as the entrepot and middleman for the trade of the region (2000, p. 24). The government realized that the most valuable asset that Singapore had is their people. Lee Kuan Yew described his people as hardworking, thrifty, eager to learn. He believed that a fair and even-handed policy would get them to live peacefully together, especially if hardships like unemployment were shared equally and not carried mainly by to minority groups (ibid., p. 24).

The main problem of Singapore is the size and no hinterland. Lee Kuan Yew and his government had to turn the country into different angle. He wrote in *My Lifelong Challenge: Singapore's Bilingual journey* as, ~~trade~~ "trade and industry were our only hope but to attract investors here to set up their manufacturing plants, our people had to speak a language they could understand" (2011, p. 59). Fortunately, the government had lay basis for Singapore at the beginning in 1959 when the PAP came into power. The government continued with their bilingualism policy in school ever

since. The people of Singapore, all races, were able to communicate in English. Not only it became a common language linking people together, it also eased foreigners to invest in Singapore. Not only focusing on economic development, but Lee Kuan Yew also wanted to have high-quality Singaporean. He preserved what was good in the Chinese schools: the discipline, self-confidence and moral and social values they instilled in their students, based on Chinese traditions, values and culture (2000, p. 178). Lee Kuan Yew believed that the better human resource he had, the better and more effective they work, and the better the results.

# **CHAPTER V**

## **OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SINGAPORE DEVELOPMENT**

Singapore is known for being a developed country with good economic and financial status, along with top-class infrastructures to attract foreign investment. A successful development of Singapore has become clearly seen by the world in only few decades time after its independence from Malaysia in 1965. The journey to success of Singapore was challenging as it did not have natural resources to rely on, and a sudden force to be independence did cause a big damage to the whole economic structure. After the independent, Singapore was able to overcome obstacles and achieved successful development. Just in few decades, the city-state is able to proudly stand on the world leading stage. This chapter is looking at those factors that Singapore has which may be reasons contributing to the country's successful story. They also create unique characteristics which others are not able to duplicate.

### **5.1 Influence of the Strength of Chinese migrant**

The first factor is the influences of the overseas Chinese in Singapore. Not only Chinese has been the major population since mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, they also create unique characteristics for the people of Singapore, in term of cultural, beliefs and lifestyle. I would like to spend time exploring the Chinese strengths which later transfer to the Singaporeans, not only Singaporean Chinese. These features were also injected to Lee Kuan Yew and his government members, through one generation to another. However, by giving focus on Chinese, it does not mean that other racial groups, like Malays and Indian, did not contribute to Singapore success. A scholar like Sheh Seow Wah (2001), suggested that there are some elements which were beneficial to nation development such as

1. Components of Chinese Family Enterprises
2. People Management
3. Leadership Style
4. Business Orientation and Strategy

#### 5.1.1 Components of Chinese family enterprises

The Chinese family business enterprises for overseas Chinese have similar management to other ethnic groups, as family is the most basic core unit of society according to both sociological perspective and the Confucianist society. Also, business enterprise is seen as an economic entity in an economic angle. Besides active as a social being, the Chinese entrepreneur needs to apply a more pragmatic approach in ensuring the survival and success of the family enterprise (Sheh S. W., 2001). Hence, the overseas Chinese family business management style in Singapore is seen to have paternalistic, yet pragmatic characteristics.

At the time contradictions occurred, whether within the family or the business, the Chinese entrepreneur have to be dexterous in business matters but remain firm and serious with the family subjects. A meticulously compiling of the Chinese cultural values are the key to balance out between business principles and family matters. In accordance to Limlingan (1980) and Redding (1982), they suggested that the influence of Chinese cultural values on managerial practices is so significant that it has created the distinguishing characteristics of the Chinese managerial system. As the Chinese cultural values have gradually injected, it created a unique characteristics for overseas Chinese and Singaporean Chinese over other ethnic groups. Sheh (2001) pointed out these distinctions of Chinese organisations, including highly centralized decision-making, low structuring of activities, paternalistic style of leadership, strong emphasis on collectivism and group behavior, and strong family management and ownership.



### 5.1.2 People management

Under the teachings of Confucius, humanism refers to courtesy, magnanimity, good faith, diligence, and kindness (De Bary, Chan, & Bunton, 1960). In workplace, they strongly value the downplaying of self and upgrading of relationships. Collective human relationship (Mun, 1986) in the Chinese enterprise, with a high sense of cohesiveness within the hierarchy, is commonly observed in the Chinese enterprise (Redding S. , 1982). Silin (1976) suggested that those subordinate should keep public expression of alternatives or overt self-interest to the lowest level. In the Chinese enterprise, the ambulant of relationship management are cordial relationships and high tolerance among colleague members.

Scholars, liked Lockett (1988) and Sheh (1995) suggested that Chinese management concentrates more relationship or people-oriented than performance-oriented as well as seniority and good behaviours such as reliability and trustworthiness are more important in promotion than good performance. In larger Chinese enterprises, nevertheless, the promotion based on the objective performance criteria and a comprehensive performance appraisal system is still practiced.

### 5.1.3 Leadership style

Sheh (2001, 1995) suggested that most of the Chinese businesses are family-oriented with strong emphasis on hierarchical order, there is a natural tendency to mix family matters with business matters, and commonly observed that the “organizational” hierarchy resembles that of the “family hierarchy”. Hence, the paternalistic style of leadership is very common in Chinese enterprises. Supported by the concentration of familism and hierarchical order, the paternalistic leader exhibited as a model by the moral values and obligations demonstration. As a consequence, the Chinese organisational leaders play a role as guardians as well as providers of the subordinate welfare.

Normally, Chinese entrepreneurs will have vision ahead for their businesses, whereby not ignoring the past and present. Being a futurist, the Chinese leader is good at identifying and exploiting business opportunities (Sheh S. , 2001). In fact, in the mind of the Chinese entrepreneur, he sees the business like an empire that his children will eventually inherited (Redding S. , 1982). As a consequence, normally the Chinese entrepreneur would re-invest and expand his businesses.

For the cultural perspective in Singapore, family welfare is strongly emphasized by the Chinese. According to Myers (1989), a continuous struggling to increase the wealth of family and to praise their ancestors, led the Chinese leader to work hard and frugally live for the family. The leader is willing to work long hours and yet remain enthusiastic and dynamic (Thong, 1987, and Sheh, 1995) in order to accumulate wealth as a symbol of family glory, power, self-esteem and status within the Chinese community. As a result, this strong sense of success has evolved into high entrepreneurial spirit that leads to noteworthy economic success for many Chinese family enterprises, and also among the present Chinese leaders, the ‘\_high achiever’ characteristic could still be seen.

#### 5.1.4 Business orientation and strategy

Most oversea Chinese are known to be perseverance, patience and diligent. Persistence enables the Chinese leader to exercise extreme endurance, particularly at the inception of the business as well as during difficult periods (Sheh S. , 2001). As Thong (1987) stated that the Chinese leaders are noticed for their extended working hours characterized by their personal values of patience and endurance.

Sheh (2001) explained that during the starting of business, the family members practically work without pay for years just to ensure the survival and long-term success of the family business. In addition, the emphasis on family and to protect the ‘\_good name’ of the family business, have made the Chinese work diligently and live frugally for the family.

Similarly to some countries, the overseas Chinese in Singapore, paid high concentration to ‘\_face’ (self-image) and good name of family and business. Sheh (2001) observed that in the Chinese business that in order to protect the good name of the business and family, the Chinese will not easily wind up the family business even if it has been proven to be non-profit making. The Chinese leaders would try their hardest to protect the good name and reputation of family business.

By leaving homeland searching for better fortune, overseas Chinese have to do anything for survival with a hope that they would have a better living and go back home. The overseas Chinese who later became citizens of that country have their own characteristics, practices and beliefs bequeathed to their decedent. This is also the case for overseas Chinese in Singapore, who later became Singaporean Chinese. As seen from above, the immigrant Chinese did have their own way of family and business management. It might be similar to other ethnicity, however because Singapore has Chinese as major population, some of these characteristics have been passed through generation. This is clearly seen especially during the post-independent survival period in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

The overseas Chinese characteristic of enthusiastic, thrifty, diligence, patient and eager to learn had still remained in the 1960s to 1980s Singaporeans. This might be because they and their families have been through a tough living during the pre-independent period. At the time the government needed to make sure the survival of newly independent Singapore, whereby people is the most important asset for this island state, the government made sure that their people had jobs and worked to their maximum capability to reach highest productivity. Although, the education levels for Singaporeans at the time might be inappreciable, the Chinese value in Singaporeans had made a miracle happen.

The leader of Singapore at the time, Lee Kuan Yew, was also influenced by these Chinese identities. He definitely had paternalistic and pragmatic in his leadership style, and believed in hardworking would result in better life. As a leader, he had very high trust for his team member as well as Singaporean as a whole. By

working effectively together, Singaporeans would drive Singapore toward prosperity. He also had a Chinese business leader character of looking for opportunity in the future, however never forget to have a close attention on the present situation. Lee Kuan Yew was also afraid of losing ‘\_face’. This could clearly be seen during the late 1960s that no matter what, Singapore must survive! It could not fall back to a fishing village. More importantly, he did not only stop at the survival of Singapore, but he made Singapore positioning ahead of their neighbours. Hence, with the Chinese characteristics within Singaporeans and the leader, it is much easier for the government to pursue a successful development when the citizen is willing to learn, to change, and to work.

## 5.2. Legacy of entrepôt<sup>13</sup>

Singapore was under the British colonial rule since early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It had become a major port-city under the British East India Company in order to serve trading between the East and West. Julian Davidson, author on *One for the Road*, wrote, “Raffles realized Singapore could become the centre for regional trade, and tap into the vast production base of the East Indies. Birds’ nests from Borneo and camphor and resins from the jungle were used for lacquer, gold dust from Bali, and then of course, there’s the main thoroughfare – the East/West trade route between China and India” (cited in *The History of Singapore: Lion City, Asian Tiger*).

The main reason which enabled Singapore to become a port-city is the strategic location. In the days of sailing ships, Singapore’s sheltered position astride the sea lanes between the South China Sea and the India Ocean and its naturally deep harbour make Singapore a natural port of call (National Education Project, 1998, p.

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<sup>13</sup> Entrepôt defined as trading centers specialize in matching buyers and sellers in different markets. Goods for re-export cannot be subject to substantial manufacturing operations, but this does not exclude simple processing, such as sorting or packaging, or service activities, such as marketing or transport. (Feenstra & Hanson, 2000)

21). The trading in Singapore became even more significant after the Suez Canal opened in 1869. It allowed ships sailed directly from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, and move further southward to the Malacca Straits to Singapore, before moving further to China and other parts of East Asia. Undoubtedly, Singapore was the most suitable location to develop into a hub of the region. Previously the colony had served primarily as a port of call for ships bound for China; now it became the first port of call for any Western ship operating in the region (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 48). Lim Chong Yar, professor of economics at Nanyang Technological University, noted,

*“If ships were to come from London and distribute various products, it would be more economical [for them] to come to a centre, and from that centre, break [the goods] into smaller parcel and distribute them to various part of Southeast Asia. This is the concept of the hub”.*



Figure 1 Map of the colonial empires in Southeast Asia and the major marine trade route in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

With advantages of location over Penang, especially on the deep harbour, the second British Resident, John Crawfurd, made Singapore a free port, to attract people from all races, creeds and political colours to interact and make money (National Education Project, 1998, p. 17). The island attracted entrepreneurs to expand their business here as they would not be subjected to taxation, import and export activities were tax-free. With its free-trade credential in place, Singapore was poised to reap the advantage of the first wave of globalization (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 21). Thus, Singapore had a foundation of being a middleperson in international trading ever since. In *Singapore: Journey into Nationhood*, it described Singapore at the time as,

*Singapore is on its way to building up its position as the middleman between east and west, between manufacturers with goods to sell and buyers with cash or produce to trade... The most important source of income for Singapore is the entrepot trade – redistribution of goods manufactured or produced elsewhere funneling through Singapore and out again to other destinations. In the case of some goods, there is repacking or reprocessing. The tin and rubber industries in Malaya help Singapore to grow and develop into an important port.*

Referring to *The History of Singapore: Lion City, Asian Tiger*, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, founder of the British colony of Singapore, wrote letter describing the early successes of the colony to the Duke of Somerset,

*“My settlement of Singapore continues to prosper. By the returns of shipping and native vessels arrived since it has been in our possession, the following results appear: the total tonnage arrived in two years and a half has been upwards of 161,000 tons, and the estimated value of imports and exports 8,000,000 (Spanish) dollars or £2,000,000.”*

In another letter, to his cousin, Reverend Dr Thomas Raffles, he expressed his satisfaction at the development of Singapore four years after he established the colony

*“the progress of my new settlement is in every way most satisfactory. Every day brings us new settlers, and Singapore has already become a great emporium. Houses and warehouses are springing up in every direction, and the inland forests are fast giving way before the industrious cultivator.”*

By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Singapore had become a valuable outpost for the British Empire; its port the seventh busiest in the world (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 72). This benefit is a key to unlock Singapore economy after it was abandoned by Malaysia in 1965. Lim Chong Yah, director of the Economic Growth Centre at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, noted, “One of these foundations that has never changed since Raffles set it in motion was free trade. This principle was upheld by the British government and the independent Singapore government throughout.” Lee Kuan Yew gave an interview to Discovery Channel, “That was what made Singapore get off the ground. From a barely inhabited island, infertile, of no consequence to the world, he [Raffles] made it an important hub, and that we must keep up because otherwise, we would sink back to a fishing village.”

After independence, the government oversaw an advantage on the city-state that was built since the colonial era, and re-promoted it to attract foreign investment. The Singapore’s government made a tax-free arena, created friendly business atmosphere, and welcomed multinational enterprises to come. Philip Yeo, chairman of the Economic Development Board from 1986 to 2001, said,

*“I used to tell my colleagues that we are in the hospitality business ... Singapore gave investors complete freedom to run their operations, and allowed 100 per cent foreign ownership, while other countries restricted foreigners to minority shares of domestic assets. In addition, government policy towards domestic as well as foreign companies, was characterized by a laissez faire approach that provided companies with maximum freedom within an efficiently regulated marketplace”.*

In only few decade, not only Singapore was able to catch up with its economy before joining the Federation of Malaysia, it has successfully developed a sky-high economic prosperity that many countries would like to take as a model.

### **5.3. Weak and weakened opposition**

Singapore is among countries with very high political stability in the world. The government does not frequently change as in many democratic countries. Indeed, the government comes from the same political party, PAP, continually administrated Singapore ever since it gained self-governing status from the British in 1959. With high certainty in political climate, it attracted outsiders to invest or settle down in this city-state. On the other hand, the government of Singapore has frequently been critiqued on democracy as PAP has always received a majority votes from Singaporeans and there is almost none opposition activities and movements after the independence from Federation of Malaysia on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1965.

In this section, I am going to explore the politic of Singapore, especially on who had opposed view point to Lee Kuan Yew during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The main obstacle for the PAP's government is the pro-communists, and later the Barisan Socialis. In addition, it is also significant to observe on reasons for the inconsequential position of opposition parties of Singapore.

#### 5.3.1 Victory over the pro-communists of PAP (the Barisan Socialis)

The People's Action Party (PAP) is a political party formed in 1954 by a group of committed Singaporeans to fight for the country's independence from the British and to improve the well being of the people (Party Constitution, 2013). In order to gain Singapore's majority population votes, the party was set up by the alliance of two groups, moderates and pro-communists. The moderates were compiled of Lee Kuan Yew, a lawyer, Toh Chin Chey, a University of Malaya lecturer, K.M. Byrne



and Goh Keng Swee, both civil servants, and S. Rajaratnam, a journalist. The pro-communist group consisted mostly of trade unionist, the most prominent of whom are Lim Chin Siong, Fong Swee Suan, Samad Ismail, C.V. Devan Nair, and Chan Chiaw Thor (National Education Project, 1998, p. 60). The Southeast Asian historian, Tan Tai Yong, commented that the joining of the two was a strange mix, but the two groups had similar goals.

*“In a way, it (the PAP) was the coming together of two disparate groups of people: an English-educated group of moderates and a Chinese-educated group of militants, both having the same objectives, of wanting to achieve self-government and eventual political independence for Singapore.” (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 124)*

The PAP's goal was to achieve merger with Malaya, but the pro-communists wanted a united Singapore-Malaya under the communist banner (Party Milestones, 2013). Even though, the two groups might have different actual goal, they needed each other in the beginning. Without the support of the left-wing group, the moderates who are English-educated cannot attract the mostly Chinese-speaking voters; without the moderates, however, a PAP led by pro-communists would not be acceptable to the British nor would it be allowed to take part in politics. In fact, they ran the serious risk of being detained for subversive activities (National Education Project, 1998, p. 60).

Because the two groups had different goal behind, soon the party was having a serious internal conflict. The pro-communist did not support Lee Kuan Yew's campaign for the independence with merger, which meant after Singapore gained an independent status from the British, it would join the Federation of Malaya. The left-wing saw this idea as not real independence, Singapore would still be under control of others and could not have a fully command power. In addition, by joining the Federation of Malaya, the status of Chinese who are the majority of Singapore would be threatened. The pro-communists did not want merger if it meant they came under the anti-communist Federation (National Education Project, 1998, p. 62).

The problem came to its peak during the by-election in Anson district, in 1961. Instead of supporting candidate from PAP, Mahmud Awang, the pro-communists chose backing the opposition's candidate from Workers' Party, David Marshall. With their support, Marshall won the election by 546 votes or 6.6<sup>14</sup> per cent of the vote. Lee was upset with the defeat and his pro-communists party members. On 20 July 1961, Lee introduced a motion of confidence on the government under his leadership in the Legislative Assembly. He made the PAP assemblymen who were loyal to him stand and be counted, thus exposing the PAP assembly men who oppose him (National Education Project, 1998, p. 64). The result was 27 out of 51 vote to pass the motion of confidence, 8 were against, and 16 abstain of which 13 were from PAP. All of them were discharged from the PAP and the government. Lim Chin Siong led a mass breakaway from the PAP and set up the left-wing Barisan Sosialis party, which was actively opposed to the merger (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 137).

At the time, Lee Kuan Yew and PAP already had increased supports from people in Singapore. Lee was more confident on the merger with the Federation and took this opportunity to do the National Referendum on merger which Singaporeans had opportunity to choose their state's direction with merger. There were 3 options of selection. The Barisan Sosialis proposed cast of blank votes as a way to protest against merger. However, the PAP government had earlier ruled that blank votes would be counted as Alternative A (Singapore Elections, 2004). As it turned out, there was no necessity for this as the votes for the government's negotiated position were in the majority (National Education Project, 1998, p. 68). Table 1 below displays the conditions of each alternative as well as their results.

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<sup>14</sup> The figures are extracted from report of the Election Department Singapore (ELD) on 1961 Legislative Assembly By-Election Results.




RESULTS	
ALTERNATIVE	CONDITIONS
 A	"I support merger giving Singapore autonomy in labour, education and other agreed matters as set out in Command Paper No. 33 of 1961, with Singapore citizens automatically becoming citizens of Malaysia."
<b>397,626 (71.1%)</b>	
 B	"I support complete and unconditional merger for Singapore as a state on an equal basis with the other eleven states in accordance with the Constitutional documents of the Federation of Malaya."
<b>9,422 (1.7%)</b>	
 C	"I support Singapore entering Malaysia on terms no less favourable than those given to the Borneo territories."
<b>7,911 (1.4%)</b>	
Blank votes	None of the above (reject merger)
<b>144,077 (25.8%)</b>	

Table3 A result of the National Referendum in 1962

Source – Singapore Elections

A trivial of Barisan Socialis could be clearly seen during the general election on 21 September 1963, where the party assigned candidates to compete with PAP for the first time. It failed to gain majority votes and only succeeded to gain 13 seats while PAP got 37 of the total 51 seats available. When Singapore has become independent, the Constitution Amendments Bill and the Singapore Independence Bill were passed on 22 December 1965, all the Barisan Sosialis MPs boycotted parliament (Chia, Barisan Sosialis, 2008). Later, a majority of party MPs resigned. According to Chia, the reason of their leaving was "neither national independence nor parliamentary democracy existed in Singapore."

Barisan Socialis did try to reform its power by calling for strike from trade unions on which it used to have major influence. Yet, it did not turn out as the party hoped, only 3 agreed for action, while other 26 trade unions declined. The strike was unsuccessfully formed as a consequence. Barisan Socialis had another attempt by coming back to the battle field again on the 1972 general election. However, it proved that the opposition party, Barisan Socialis, had depleted. However, it was by then a

spent force and failed to win any seats in this and subsequent elections (Chia, Barisan Sosialis, 2008). At the end, the party was dissolved in 1988.

A conflict with the pro-communists ever since PAP until Barisan Socialist did also create a new image and some source of benefit to the PAP and Lee Kuan Yew. From its political battles with the pro-communists, it has developed an open and direct style that is in sharp contrast to the more indirect approach of the Federation's political parties, where differences are worked out behind the scenes rather than in full public view (National Education Project, 1998, p. 75). The victory of PAP over Barisan Socialist had resulted in an increasing popularity of the Lee Kuan Yew and his government, while the opposition voice became insignificant in Singapore. It meant that the government was able to have solely management of the country. Without political interruption, the government actions, laws and policies could be exercised smoothly. In addition, it also attracted inflow of foreign money as multinational companies were willing to place their manufacturing in Singapore. As a consequence, Singapore government was able to have successful economic development within two decades.

### 5.3.2 PAP as a dominant party

The People's Action Party (PAP) won the general election for the first time in 1959 and became the government of Singapore. From then on, the PAP has been a dominant party and continuously outplayed next and later general elections. The man who was a leader and a prime minister of Singapore from the party's first victory is Lee Kuan Yew. He stepped down for his successor (Goh Chok Tong) in 1990. Even after the step down of Lee Kuan Yew, PAP still getting popular vote in every elections and it seem that there is no way for the opposition to be an alternative government.

The Table 2 showed that since Singapore gained independence in 1965, the first general election on April 1968, the PAP had continuously owned a majority votes

with over 60 per cent of total tickets. In the first four general elections (in 1968, 1972, 1976, and 1980) PAP won all parliament seats, only starting from December 1984 general election, the non-PAP candidates got to step in the parliament. However, the number of oppositions was simply insignificant and did not have much effect.

Even though, there is incessant voice criticizing the government and democracy of Singapore, it does not interrupt its standpoint. There are several opposition parties coming in and out of Singapore battle field since pre-independent. However, Raj Vasil (2004) pointed out that large number of Singaporean believe that the opposition, because it is weak and incompetent and let often by irresponsible opportunists who lack the skills to successfully manage a modern government, does not deserve to be treated as an alternative government. He further wrote that, none of them have ever come anywhere near having a leadership, organization, policies or programmes that could enable Singaporeans to seriously consider them as a credible alternative. As the time goes by, the opposition deliberately desists from challenging the position of the PAP as the ruling party and refuses to present itself as an alternative government (Vasil R. , 2004, p. 84).

According to Vasil's analysis, reasons of impossibility for the opposition to overcome PAP are following:

- a) The changing nature of Singapore's electorate as well as their distinctively pragmatic political culture;
- b) The PAP governments' credibility as the producer of an economic miracle;
- c) The extremely effective and incorruptible governance offered by the PAP for over four decades;
- d) The ability displayed by the PAP governments in dealing successfully with the periodic changes in the country's economic circumstances and fortunes;
- e) The high quality of PAP leadership and the exceptional technocratic-managerial skills possessed by them; and

- f) The strict prohibition on attempts by political parties to exploit race and religion for purposes of attracting population support.

One reason for a difficulty of the opposition is the Singapore's government imposed repressive policies and restrictions on political party, the media and the people of Singapore. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that Singapore has regular parliamentary elections and the government does not manipulate or control the process (Vasil R. , 2004, p. 87). At the end of the day, the Singaporeans still have to right to choose who would they want to govern the country on behalf of them. From 1959 to present, PAP has delivered impressive economic success and prosperity to the city-state. If thinking about it, it might not be reasonable for well-educated Singaporeans to stand against the government who brought high living standard and quality education system for them. As Kishore Mahbubani, former Singapore UN Ambassador, said,

*“They’ve (Singaporeans) experienced the most dramatic increase in standard of living that any people have experienced probably ever since the beginning of man. And then you ask these people: why aren’t you revolting? Why aren’t you going out in the streets? But why should they?” (cited in Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 206)*

The leaders and government of Singapore have always been confident about their restricted rules and law, because they believed that this is what it brings Singapore so far with rapid and success development. We might be able to conclude that with a very stable political climate and almost insignificant of the opposition are possible factor that contribute to Singapore's development.

*“We are not going to give up that easily, to anybody who would challenge our rule. So we therefore take opposition seriously. When you lose one seat, there is great consternation.” – Goh Chok Tong, prime minister, 1990-2004 (cited in Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 200)*

*“There are groups who think that we should not have libel actions and that opposition politicians should be given a free run, but we who look after Singapore believe that we should uphold and protect the reputation of minister. ... We believe in keeping up a reputation that is unchallengeable, and if you challenge that reputation and you can't prove in court the truth of what you have said, you pay damages.” – Lee said during a state visit to London in 1997 (cited in Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 200)*

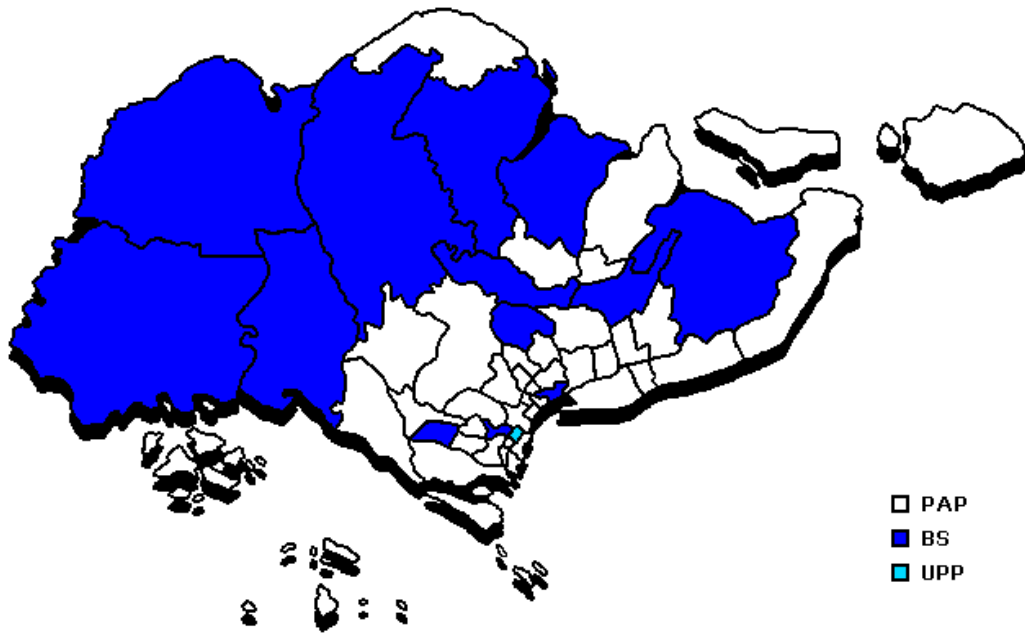


Figure 2 The result of Legislative Assembly General Election in 1963<sup>15</sup>



Figure 3 The result of Parliamentary General Election in 1972

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<sup>15</sup> PAP stands for People's Action Party; BS stands for Barisan Socialist; UPP stands for Union People's Party



No.	Election Date	Total number of parliament seats	Number of party with candidates	Number of independent candidate	Party with highest votes	Number of parliament seats won	% of the total vote
1	April 1968	58	2	5	PAP	58	86.72
2	September 1972	65	6	2	PAP	65	70.43
3	December 1976	69	7	2	PAP	69	74.09
4	December 1980	75	8	-	PAP	75	77.66
5	December 1984	79	9	3	PAP	77	64.83
6	September 1988	81	8	4	PAP	80	63.17
7	August 1991	81	7	7	PAP	77	60.97
8	January 1997	83	6	-	PAP	81	64.98
9	November 2001	84	5	2	PAP	82	75.29
10	May 2006	84	4	-	PAP	82	66.6

Table 4 The Result of General Election since the independent 1965

Source: Corrine (2013)

#### 5.4 Other factors

There are possibly other minor reasons which could be contributed to the modern successful development of Singapore. The following are my other investigation.

a) Size – Singapore is the smallest and the only city-state in Southeast Asia. Consequently, number of population is relatively low. After separation from Malaysia, the territory of Singapore became even more explicit. The government of Singapore only had to set up a development plan on limited area and only for Singaporean. The management of a smaller land area should be more effective than a larger one. This might be able to answer why many countries tried to implement Singapore's model, but did not achieve equally enormous result.

b) Town plan – “Singapore was already a well-governed city before acquiring independent status on August 9, 1965” (Chang, 1968, p. 762). As mentioned earlier, Singapore was under the British colonial rule since 1819. There were many foundations that were built for Singapore. One of them is the ‘Town Plan’. The first town plan was drawn during Raffles' administration in 1822, called ‘The Jackson Plan’. The main purpose for this plan was revealed a strict regularity in the layout of the streets and incorporated provisions for the separation of indigenous and European inhabitants along racial and social lines (Teo, 1992, p. 165). Each ethnic group was free to operate themselves in given restricted areas. There is no force to assimilate or learn indigenous language. The benefits of this early town plan are:

- a. Singapore is very organized and well structured. There were already buildings and roads built in the early time.
- b. There is very few racial conflicts among Singaporeans. Different racial groups learnt to live with each other and communicated, which helped Singapore to successfully become a multi-racial and multi-lingual nation after its independence.



Figure 4 The Jackson Plan, town plan for Singapore during the British colonial.

c) Unstable politics in Asia – in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Asian countries were inevitably coming in to the war. Many countries were having their internal conflicts, resulting in a movement of people and investment. There were 2 major events which cause a moving in of people and businesses to Singapore after its independence and may contribute to the success of the city-state.

- (i) China – the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution (1965-1968) in China created climate of uncertainty that scared many international investor away from Hong Kong and Taiwan (Discovery Channel, 2010, p. 167). It was coincidentally the timing when Singapore just left Malaysia. The government more than welcome the foreign company to setup their factory and office in Singapore. Those companies also had to look for an alternative production and trading base in Asia. Hence, Singapore was where most of them move to. As a consequent, with foreign re-location and investment,

Singapore was able to develop its economy rapidly and be among the highest growth rate in world.

- (ii) Vietnam – an instability and continuously involved in wars in Vietnam caused a high demand of goods and services. The internal production was inadequate. More importantly, countries surrounding Vietnam also facing insecurity. As a result, Singapore's economy was fueled with demand for goods and services to be immediately produced and exported.

d) Trust of Political Independence – Singapore had continuously been under the umbrella of larger power, given to be the British Colonial (since 1819) or the Malaya (from 1963 – 1965), until it gained the 'Political Independence' status on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 1965. Even though, Singapore did have many emergency problems on the day of independent, there are also advantages that the city state possibly gained. Some scholars, like Chua Beng Huat (1996), viewed the benefits which contributed to subsequent economic growth in three aspects:

- (i) The elimination of all the problems attached to rural-urban migration – the size of the population was now predictable which eased a better management.
- (ii) The obligation to reform its economic development strategy – without considering and relying on the hinterland of Malaysia, led to a switch from an import-substitution economy to an export-oriented industrialization strategy. It is this export-oriented economy that accounted and continues to account for the rapid growth of Singapore until the present day (Rodan, 1989)
- (iii) Singapore became autonomous – everyone in Singapore is more or less having equal status. There is no elite class or military class that would have more influential over one and another. This can be clearly described by two important elements:
  - a. An absence of Class formation – the decision on investment and development projects were made solely by the

government. An industrial capital was either funded by foreign capital or the state itself.

- b. A selection of the political leadership – the leadership emerged without any traditional claims to the right to rule; the leaders belonged neither to a (Malay) nobility, nor a revolutionary army, nor the ascending capitalist class (Chua B. H., SINGAPORE: Management of a City-State in Southeast Asia, 1996, p. 209). The performance and ability are key judgments.

Singapore had many unique characteristics which other countries would never be able to duplicate. Singapore had majority people be Chinese instead of locals. Therefore, the typical lifestyle and mindset inherited from one generation to another, building in Singaporeans. The city-state was under British Colonial since 1819 and became the major port. People from all over the world, Europe or Asia, came to Singapore for trading. It made this city-state become the entrepot. Undoubtedly, Singapore already had trading and middleman foundation ever since. So at the time Singapore forced to walk independently, it utilized the advantages and able to over crossed difficulties.

Happened to leave the Federation of Malaya on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1965 did create many sudden problems and headache for Lee Kuan Yew and PAP government. However, there were still some benefits. The government was able to find out the suitable policies that only meant to develop Singapore, and not rely on any particular group. Government was able to have a fully control over definite territory. Another very crucial factor is there was almost no opposition activity. The government was able to run and control Singapore smoothly without worrying on any alternative government. Hence, with all factors mention, together with effective management, they are reasons behind Singapore success and prosperity that the world acknowledged.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

This thesis aimed to study the extent of Lee Kuan Yew's role, of his leadership in the development of Singapore and to examine other factors which may contribute toward the development of Singapore. There were three main sections in this thesis that explain the economic success as well as government's policies, the role of Lee Kuan Yew and development of Singapore, and other factors.

In chapter 3, Economic Development of Singapore, explored the government policies mainly related to human capital, and their outcome in terms of economic development. We could see that the government of Singapore paid very high attention on its most valuable resource, people. The government dedicated large portions of its annual budget to restructure the education system and increase the quality of labour. The government came up with many plans and projects after its separation from Malaysia. This was because it would like to create a new quality level for Singapore, attract foreign investment with the main aim, 'survival'. Not only it was able to overcome the tough period, the government under Lee Kuan Yew was able to drive the economy of Singapore sky-high within only a few decades.

In chapter 4, Lee Kuan Yew: the first leader of Singapore, took a close look at the idea of Singapore's forever leader on how he viewed Singapore over the period of time when he served as the Prime Minister. I also made a brief summary on Lee Kuan Yew's background. In addition, to gain more understanding on Lee Kuan Yew's leadership and his characteristics, I made an analysis based on Greenleaf's servant leadership framework which pointed out the characteristics that one should have in order to be a good leader. I chose this framework as the main theme to process this chapter because according to Greenleaf and other scholars, these most of these leadership features came naturally in the one who is a natural leader. In addition, servant leadership style could be a good standard to analyse a nation leader as the main

concept of this theory is leader must think of others before oneself which this is what people are looking for in the good national leader. From the study, I showed that Lee Kuan Yew had all ten features to be described as a good servant leader and what contribution that he had made for Singapore. This may be a reason for his recognition as the father of Singapore.

In chapter 5, Other Factors Contributing to Singapore Development, this is where I tried to investigate other things that are reasons behind Singapore successful development. However, it did not mean that I did not believe that Lee Kuan Yew was behind Singapore enormous achievement. Throughout researching, I found that Singapore had many unique characteristics which other countries would never be able to duplicate. Singapore's majority people are Chinese instead of locals. Therefore, the Chinese lifestyle and mindset were becoming part of Singaporeans through offspring. The city-state was under British Colonial rule since 1819 and became the major port. People from all over the world, Europe or Asia, came to Singapore for trading. It made this city-state the entrepot. Undoubtedly, Singapore already had trading and middleman foundation ever since. So at the time Singapore was forced to walk independently, it utilized the advantages and able to over cross difficulties.

Leaving the Federation of Malaysia on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1965 did create many sudden problems and headache for Lee Kuan Yew and PAP government. However, there were still some benefits. The government was able to find out the suitable policies that only meant to develop Singapore, and not rely on any particular group. The government was able to have a fully control over a definite territory. Another very crucial factor is that there was almost no opposition activity. The government was able to run and control Singapore smoothly without worrying on any alternative government.

## 6.1 Analysis

The development of Singapore is noticeable by the world. More impressively, it was able to dig itself out of under developed swamp and shining with world top ranking. My major arguments for this thesis are the success of Singapore is not due to Lee Kuan Yew alone. There must be a combination of other factors and circumstances which support and facilitate the success.

From the research, it is clearly shown that the Singapore modern development was only occur after the city-state become independent. Be them economic condition, living standard or education, all of them have been improved to a supreme level after the government of Lee Kuan Yew was in office. This also means that the people who rule country at the time should be acknowledged for this achievement.

My first hypothesis for this thesis is –Singapore has potential for success. Lee Kuan Yew was able to bring about success of Singapore during his leadership although he is not the only key person”. Up to a high degree, I prove this hypothesis. In chapter 3, I looked at government policies focused only on education and training subject. It shows that the government under Lee Kuan Yew emphasized on improving knowledge and skills of the people, especially during the survival period. Although, I did not make an in-depth review on how foreigner had contributed to the economy, we can see that the government did not hesitate the entering of multinational companies. It even cooperated with them to provide trainings for Singaporean labour force. As a result, a flow of new knowhow and being more competitive did make a large contribution to the economic development. As we can see from economic indicators at the end of each period, the GDP per capita increased sharply as well as a great improvement of unemployment rate. Therefore, the government management under Lee Kuan Yew did prove this hypothesis positively. On the other hand, as can be seen in chapter 5, Singapore was praised with good foundations. The city-state had potential to develop on its own. Yet, good tools might be useless if the person did not know how to use. Lee Kuan Yew is a real Singaporean. He was born and has been live here, so he absorbed and knew well the strength, weakness and limitations of



Singapore. Singapore might not be able to move that quick if the leader at the time was not him.

As for my second hypothesis, ~~there~~ are other factors contributing to the development of Singapore”, I had dedicated chapter 5 proving this hypothesis. I made a study on factors including the influence of the strength of Chinese migrants, legacy of entrepot, and an insignificant of opposition politic. They showed that Singapore had some pros factors which may be helpful to its development. Although they might not be key factors that solely caused a development, together they created a characteristic for Singapore. It made Singapore unique from other places. When having the government with well understanding of these factors, the policies or campaigns that imposed would contributed a decent result, and caused low capital wastages. Hence, these factors are valuable and eased the positive development of Singapore.

Lastly, my third hypothesis is ~~the~~ major component which causes positive development of the country is human resource development (HRD)”. I am very positive of this hypothesis. It is a common knowledge that Singapore is an island state with very limited natural resources and no hinterland. However, it has an advantage over others with its geographical location which lies on the major ancient and modern trade route, and this was the main reason that the British Colonial rulers turned Singapore into entrepot as well as attracted large number to foreigners in this port-city. The island attracted people from different continents to trade and find better fortune here. Since the colonial era, Singapore was continuously an immigrant city with the biggest incomer wave from China. It was these foreign people who brought development to Singapore. The importance of human resource became even more significant when Singapore was divorced from the Federation of Malaysia. It could no longer rely on exporting natural resource from Malaysia. Lee Kuan Yew and his government were well aware of this limitation. As seen in the chapter 3 of this thesis, they spent time and money to generate policies to increase productivity and quality of living for Singapore, such as education, industrialization, and housing policies. As a

consequence of good human resource, the whole country productivity was raised, resulting in prosperity of the whole nation.

## **6.2 Suggestions**

This thesis would be useful for those who are in the national development field. More importantly, it will be advantageous for those interested in Singapore, its leadership, and development. With a time and material concern, this thesis is narrowed down to only certain areas. It is definitely some information that could be expanded and filled in.

If only focusing on Singapore, there are still many topics that can be further researched on. The governments of Singapore, not only in Lee Kuan Yew's era, had built up many developmental projects to increase the productivity and competitiveness of the small newly-independent state. Most of them have more or less been connected with human capital aspect, since it is the most valuable resource for Singapore. I will suggest a further research on other aspect of human capital development of Singapore, such as housing programme – HDB, pension fund – CPF, civil servants, and trade union – NTUC.

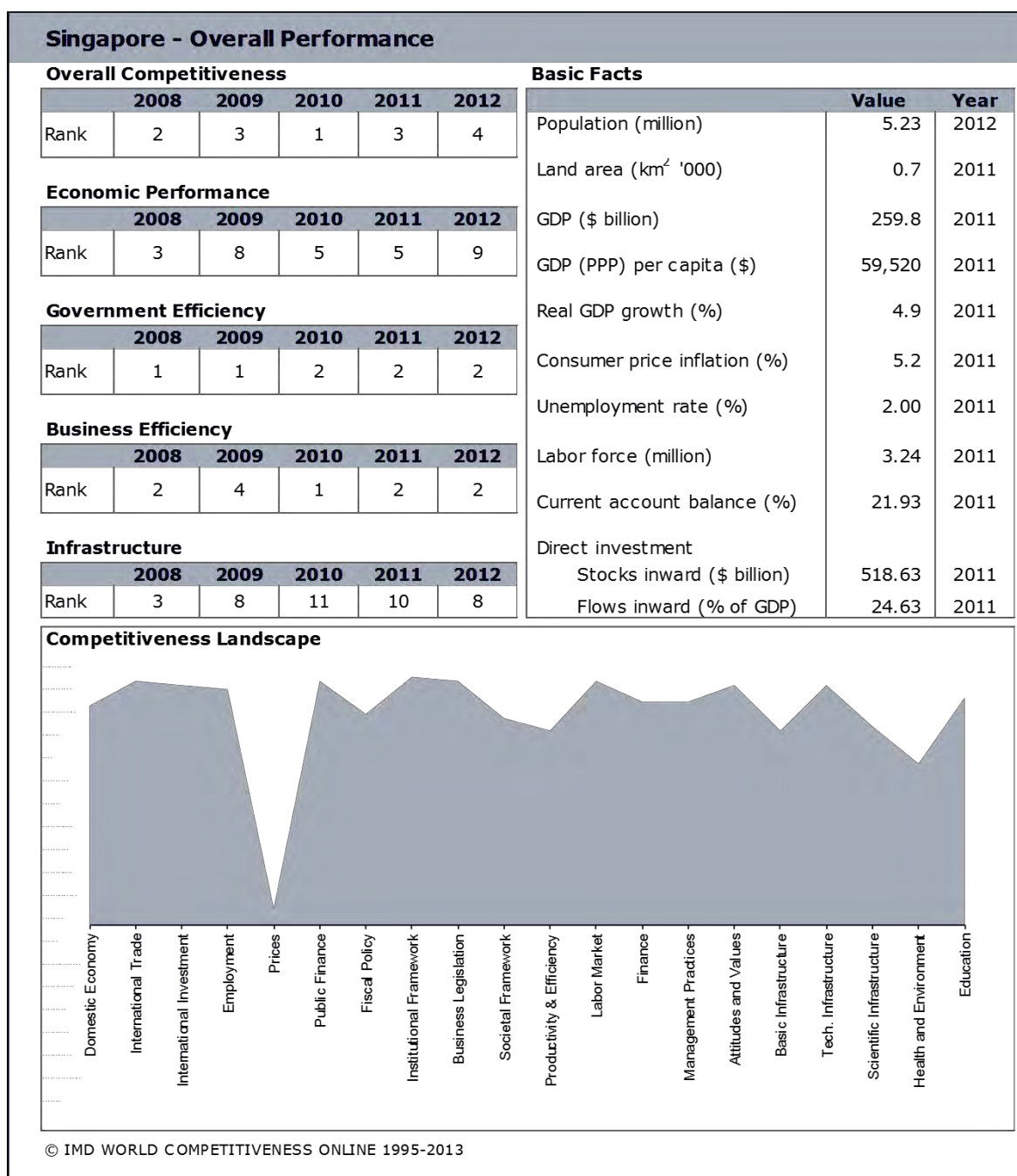
I will also recommend further research on other person contribution for Singapore development, especially Lee Kuan Yew's team member in his cabinet, or so-called the first generation of PAP. The reason for further study is most studies would only mention the name, Lee Kuan Yew, along with picturing the prosperity of Singapore. However, he must also have a good team that helped the Lee government to operate smoothly and effectively, and these people also worth for in-depth studies.

The factors that I listed in Chapter 5 should be further expanded. More researches can be done on those other factors that contribute toward successful development. There could possibly be many other reasons that people are overlooked. With time and resource limitation, I could only fit those mentioning factors into this thesis.

## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX A

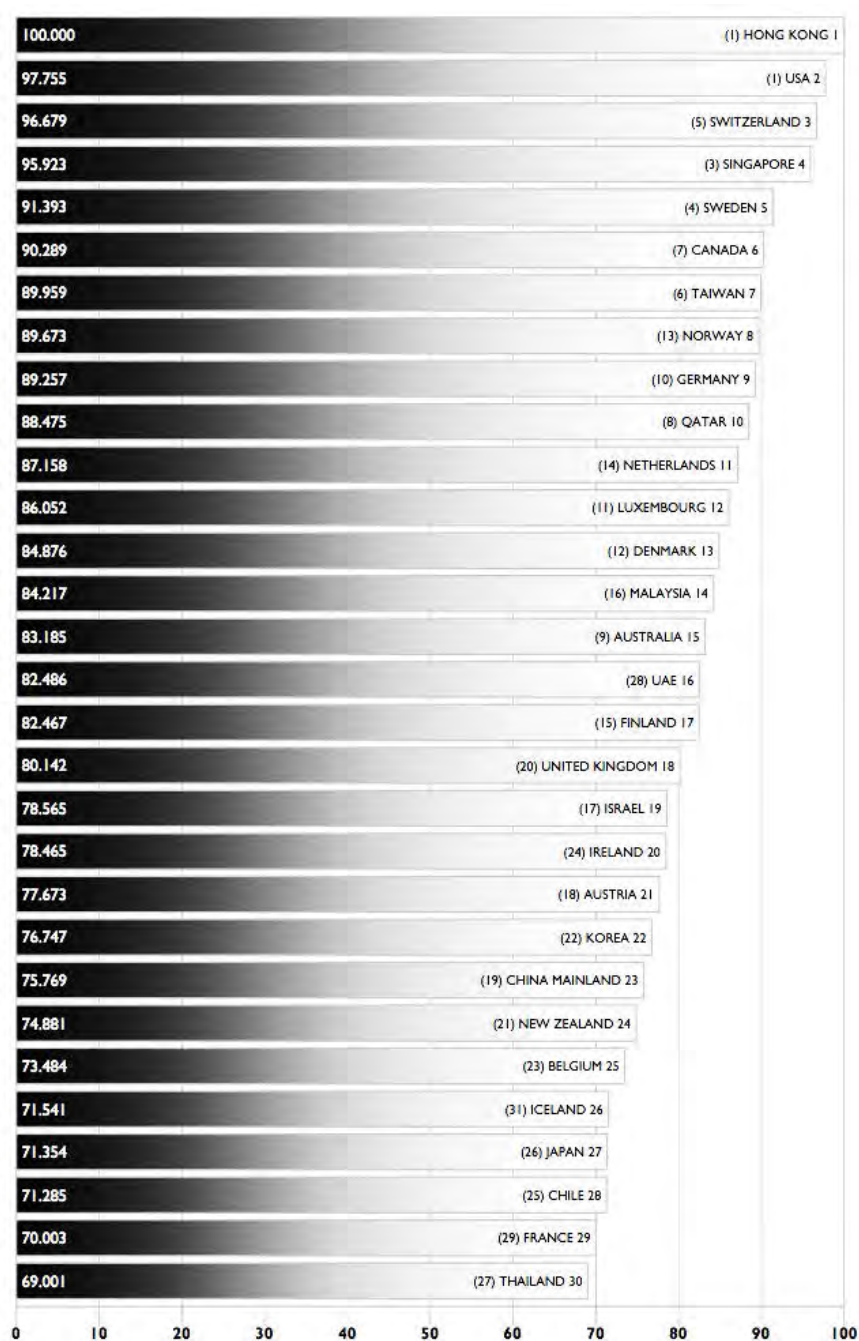
The overall performance of Singapore from year 2008 to 2012.



Source: IMD – World Competitiveness

## APPENDIX B

The top 30 countries for world competitiveness in 2012



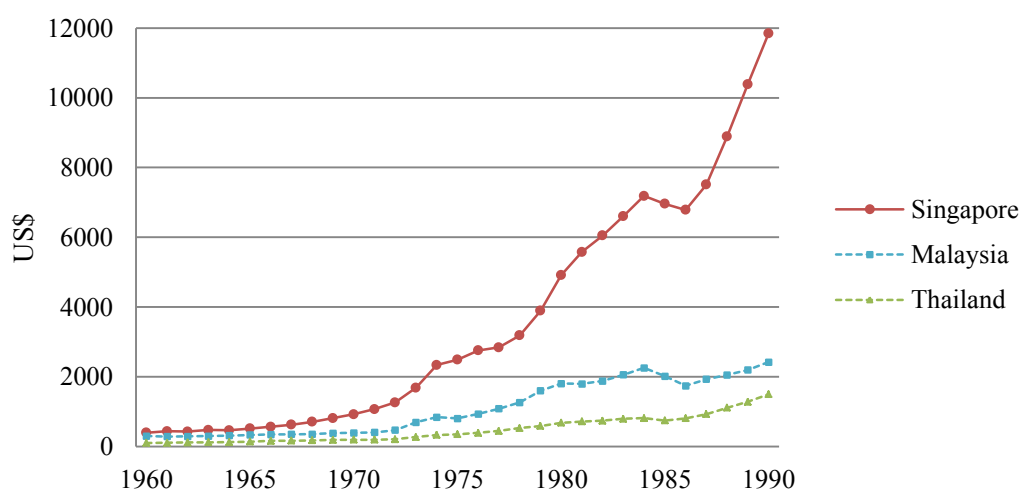
Source: IMD – World Competitiveness

## APPENDIX C

### Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita 1960 – 1990

Year	Singapore	Malaysia	Thailand
1960	394.6	299.1	101.1
1961	437.9	287.4	107.8
1962	429.5	292.1	114.0
1963	472.2	301.0	118.4
1964	464.4	312.2	126.1
1965	516.3	333.1	138.0
1966	566.7	344.7	161.1
1967	625.6	347.7	166.9
1968	708.3	353.4	174.7
1969	812.1	380.7	186.8
1970	925.1	392.0	192.0
1971	1070.8	403.7	194.1
1972	1263.9	468.0	209.1
1973	1684.3	694.1	269.5
1974	2339.4	839.8	331.6
1975	2488.3	803.3	351.0
1976	2756.7	932.8	390.9
1977	2842.5	1084.0	444.6
1978	3187.0	1262.8	527.7
1979	3891.8	1599.8	588.7
1980	4913.4	1802.8	681.4
1981	5579.2	1795.9	719.1
1982	6051.0	1876.4	740.3
1983	6605.2	2055.7	794.8
1984	7185.6	2254.5	814.0
1985	6960.5	2015.6	743.4
1986	6783.5	1741.2	808.0
1987	7511.7	1926.8	929.5
1988	8890.4	2050.7	1113.7
1989	10383.8	2194.2	1283.7
1990	11845.4	2417.8	1495.4

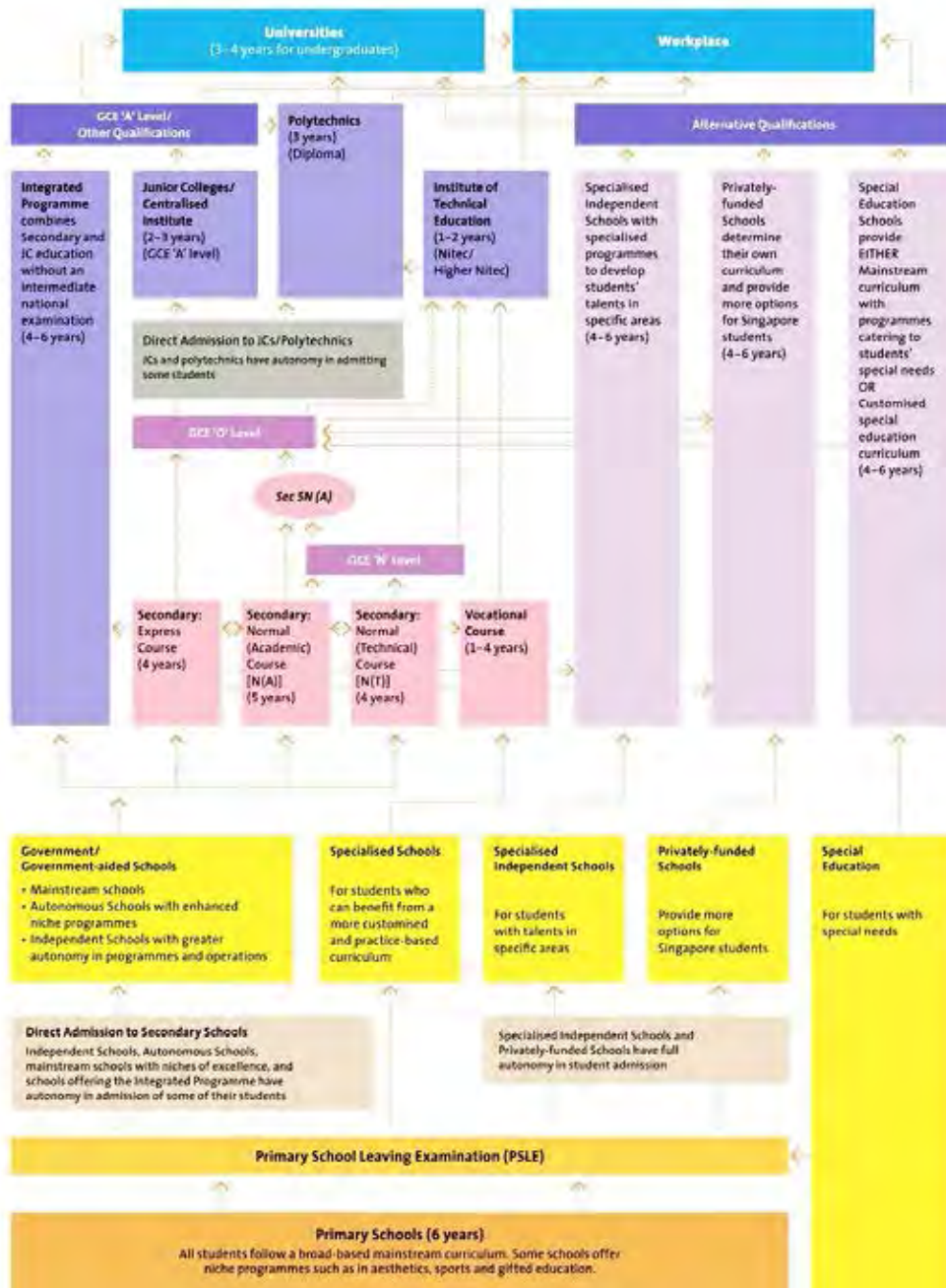
GDP per capita (1960 - 1990)



Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF)

## APPENDIX D

### The education system in Singapore



Source: Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore

## APPENDIX E

### A Political Journey of Lee Kuan Yew and Singapore

16 September 1923	Harry Lee Kuan Yew is born in Singapore.
1936-39, 1940-42	Studies at Raffles Institution and Raffles College.
15 February 1942	Singapore captured and occupied by the Japanese.
September 1945	British return to Singapore.
1946-50	Studies at Cambridge and London.
December 1947	Secretly marries Kwa Geok Choo in Britain.
June 1948	State of Emergency declared in Malaya and Singapore.
August 1950	Returns to Singapore.
September 1950	Marries Kwa again in Singapore.
1952	Birth of first child, son Hsien Loong.
1950-59	Practises law, active as legal adviser to several trade unions.
November 1954	Founding of People's Action Party (PAP).



1955	Birth of second child, daughter Wei Ling.
April 1955	Elected to the Legislative Assembly under new Rendel Constitution. PAP wins three seats. Lee becomes leader of the opposition.
October 1956	Arrest and detention of left-wing United Front leaders.
1957	Birth of third child, son Hsien Yang.
31 August 1957	Federation of Malaya becomes independent.
December 1957	PAP wins 13 seats in City Council election.
30 May 1959	PAP wins 43 out of 51 seats in general election under the new constitution.
4 June 1959	United Front leaders released from detention.
5 June 1959	Sworn in as prime minister of the self-governing state of Singapore at age 35.
February 1960	Establishes Housing and Development Board with Lim Kim San as chairman. Begins massive public housing programme.
July 1960	Forms People's Association to mobilise grassroots support to counter communists.
August 1961	Thirteen left-wing PAP assemblymen break away to form Barisan Sosialis.

September 1961	Lee gives series of radio talks designed to expose communist conspiracy and urges support for merger with Malaya.
September 1962	Singaporeans vote for merger with Malaya in a referendum.
February 1963	Operation Coldstore detains left-wing activists and their supporters.
31 August 1963	Singapore declares independence, ahead of formation of Malaysia.
16 September 1963	Malaysia formed, comprising Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah.
21 September 1963	PAP wins general election in Singapore.
March 1964	Difficulties with federal government increase.
April 1964	The Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) established as a statutory board.
21 July 1964	Communal riots in Singapore on Prophet Mohammed's Birthday.
September 1964	Second outbreak of communal violence.
January – February 1965	Unsuccessful discussion between Lee and the Tunku Abdul Rahman regarding "rearrangements" within Malaysia.

July 1965	The Tunku decides Singapore must leave Malaysia.
9 August 1965	Singapore's separation from Malaysia.
September 1965	Five-year Mass Family Planning programme introduced to reduce birth rate.
Early 1967	Lee first moots idea of Transforming Singapore into a tropical garden city.
March 1967	National Service Bill for all male citizens passed.
April 1968	General election boycotted by Barisan Socialis. Seven contested seats won by PAP with 84 per cent of votes cast.
August 1968	Employment Act and Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act introduced.
May 1969	Race riot in Singapore following bloody race riots in Kuala Lumpur after Malaysian general elections.
September 1972	General election. PAP wins all contested seats, with 69 per cent of votes cast.
1972	Two-child family policy promoted.
December 1976	General election. PAP wins all contested seats, with 72 per cent of votes cast. Goh Chok Tong enters parliament.

December 1980	JB Jeyaretnam, secretary general of Workers' Party, wins by-election, breaking PAP's 13-year monopoly in parliament.
1983	Lee raises issue of unmarried graduate women. Encourages educated women to marry and have more children.
December 1984	General elections. PAP loses seat to Chiam See Tong, then-secretary-general of the Singapore Democratic Party. Jeyaretnam retains his seat with an increased majority. PAP's share of the vote declines to 64 per cent. Some attribute PAP's reduced majority to Lee's unpopular Graduate mother Scheme offering incentives to graduate women to marry and have children.  Hsien Loong, Lee's elder son, enters parliament at age 32.
January 1985	New cabinet. Lee withdraws from daily administration, but remains a dominant influence.
1987	Deputy Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announces end of two-child policy. Incentives to encourage return to three-or four-child families.
May 1987	Internal Security Act invoked to arrest a group of alleged Marxist conspirators.

September 1988	<p>General election. Last election with Lee as prime minister.</p> <p>PAP wins election, with 63 per cent of the vote. Chiam retains his seat. Jeyaretnam is prevented from standing because of court ruling against him.</p> <p>Lee the last remaining member of PAP old guard in parliament.</p>
November 1990	<p>Lee steps down as prime minister in favour of Goh.</p> <p>Goh appoints Lee to cabinet position of senior minister and Lee Hsien Loong as one of two deputy prime ministers.</p>
August 1991	<p>General election. Goh's first election as prime minister. PAP wins with 61 per cent of the vote, losing four seats to the opposition.</p>
November 1992	<p>Lee resigns as secretary general of PAP.</p>
January 1997	<p>General election. PAP wins with 64 per cent of the vote, recapturing two of the four seats lost in 1991.</p>
August 2004	<p>Lee Hsien Loong succeeds Goh as prime minister. Lee appointed to new cabinet position of minister mentor, while Goh is given the position of senior minister.</p>

Source: The History of Singapore: Lion City, Asian Tiger p.115-122

## APPENDIX F

The first cabinet member of Singapore



Mr Lee Kuan Yew  
Prime Minister



Mr Ong Pang Boon  
Minister of Home Affairs



Dr Toh Chin Chye  
Deputy Prime Minister



Mr Lim Kim San  
Minister of National  
Development



Dr Goh Keng Swee  
Minister of Finance



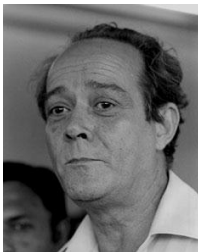
Mr Jek Yeun Thong  
Minister of Labour



Mr S. Rajaratnam  
Minister of Foreign  
Affairs



Mr. Yong Nyuk Lin  
Minister of Health



Mr E. W. Barker  
Minister of Law



Mr Othman Wok  
Minister of Social Affairs

Source: Photos from google.com

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Miss Ploytip Wanitmaniboot has grown up in Bangkok, Thailand. She completed a Bachelor of Science in Economic and Finance in 2010 awarded by The University of London (International Programme). After graduated she continued her study for a Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies in Chulalongkorn University and completed the programme in 2013.