

Understanding Governance

What is the purpose of the chapter?

How does Chapter 3 connect to other chapters?

1. The healthcare system in Singapore as a case study to demonstrate governance in action.

- Singapore's economic progress has made possible progress in our healthcare system and vice versa (contributions of system towards economy). Can explore the exporting of Singapore's healthcare service.

- Comparisons with British case study to show different approaches and measures of success.

- Relevance of healthcare sector as case study
- Impact of success in meeting needs of people on legitimacy of government. Healthcare as one of the most visible indicators of effective governance, issue that touches lives of people directly.
- Amount of resources allocated, long term planning involved.
- Healthcare policies are related to many policies in many other areas: economic development, urban planning, labor manpower, population planning etc.

- To demonstrate how policies evolve over time to meet changing needs. What are the key changes? What is the significance of these changes for understanding the role of governance?

- Singapore's healthcare system has been moving towards self-reliance: partly a result of increasing affluence, partly a result of belief in avoiding the trappings of a welfare-based system.

- Need to take into account growing realities in Singapore society: Differentiated healthcare (pay what you can afford) reflect increasing differences in socio-economic status

- Need to innovate: Community-based healthcare services can be seen as evidence of growing innovation in governance, and also an attempt to achieve a balance between self-reliant and welfare-based system.
 - Balancing act: Need to balance need of conserving resources and need of managing societal expectations.
 - Appreciation in context via comparison with Britain's system. How is the comparison done and what is the impact of the comparison?
 - Similarity in presentation lies in showing how have both systems evolved and met needs of people?
 - Difference in how self-reliance is positioned against a 'welfare'-based system. Importance of showing that difference is not that stark. Singapore's system is not entirely based on self-reliance nor is Britain's system entirely welfare-based.
 - Pros and cons of 'welfare system' need to be shown: welfare systems can work in some societies.
 - Long term causes and consequences of governmental decisions, e.g. the decision to adopt a welfare based system in Britain is partly the result of the country's long history of exposure to political ideologies that supported such a system; and once adopted, such a decision is difficult to reverse.
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What do I already know about the workings and how would I assess the quality of the healthcare system in Singapore?

What do my students already know/what are my students' existing perceptions?

1. What are my personal experiences and opinions about the healthcare system in Singapore? How will I assess the quality of the system?

2. How would I find out my students perceptions of the system?

- Key indicators to measure effectiveness of healthcare systems. The first is Access: Equitability, Affordability; the second is Quality: Facilities, Manpower, Research capabilities, Health education. Try to maintain a balance between the two, as the latter is often neglected because the improvements are less visible and tend to evoke less emotive responses from the public.

- Engage personal experiences and stories that students may have to share about their own or known encounters with health services.

What are the different ways through which to develop an appreciation of the topic?

1. What is my and the students' stake in the issue? Why does healthcare matter to me/them?

2. How is healthcare connected to other social issues?

- Engaging personal experiences and stories may be a useful avenue as students' families and friends may have rich encounters to share, which would help bring the learning alive.

- See connections with governance above. Healthcare policies are related to many policies in many other areas: economic development, urban planning, labor manpower, population planning etc.

- What other foreign case studies may be used to provide more insights?
- America: tussle between public and private healthcare, recent healthcare reforms.
- Vietnam/China: healthcare reform in developing countries with close links to Singapore.

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