

Getting To Know Our Students

Dr Gog Soon Joo, EdD (Dual Award) graduate



Dr Gog

is currently working as a Group Director of Training Partners Group and Chief Research Officer with Singapore Workforce Development Agency. She is also a Doctor in Education (EdD) (Dual award) graduate of Natural Sciences and Science Education (NSSE) Academic Group.

What are you currently working as?

My current portfolio at the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) is Group Director of Training Partners Group and Chief Research Officer.

Prior to joining the programme, I had three years of experience in workforce development and I felt that I needed to expand my knowledge in order to contribute to the strategic focal of continuing education and training (CET) in Singapore. The practitioner-researcher based higher degree seemed to be the path for me since my ultimate aim is to hone my professional practice.

What attracted you to a higher degree programme at NIE?

In 2006, I learnt from Professor Lee Sing Kong that NIE will be partnering the Institute of Education (IOE), UK in launching the Doctor in Education (EdD) in Singapore. Other than the fact that the degree will be awarded by two prestigious institutes of education, the programme allows me to complete my coursework in Singapore, which was ideal given that I had to juggle both work and family. Furthermore, NIE's academic team has long established research in Singapore's education and political economy arena. For example, Professor Gopinathan and Professor Jason Tan, whose works are relevant to my work in WDA.

How would you describe your interactions with NIE faculty members?

At the initial phase of our learning journey, my coursemates and I had to re-acquaint ourselves with critical thinking, reading and writing. The academic members were most patient and nurturing throughout the journey. I was most fortunate to be assigned Associate Professor Lee Yew Jin as my supervisor. I would not be able to complete my EdD journey without his guidance.

Could you share with us more on the research that you did? Did the research yield the desired outcome that you hoped for?

My EdD thesis focused on the critical review of the Singapore's continuing education and training system. The research journey was the best learning experience I have ever had. I was exposed to interdisciplinary theories which include education, sociology, political economy and praxeological analysis. The learning journey has developed my critical thinking and analytical capability which I deem as fundamental competencies for the 21st century.

What was the best part of being a student at NIE?

My coursemates who became my best friends; my professors whom I'm still in touch with and of course, the library, especially the online resources which provided access to a wide range of literature.

Has the programme been beneficial to you in bringing forth changes in your organisation?

I think the EdD programme, together with the research culture that NIE adopts, provides us research students with a brilliant platform to enter the world of academia, which I hope to do one day. It must also be said, however, that the more I conduct my research, the more it appears that a lot of the richness in education research has not quite found its way into practice, and this comes across to me as an opportunity to embark on an entrepreneurial endeavour of bringing our ideas out into the world.