Margarita Pavlova
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Transitions to Post– School Life

Responsiveness to Individual, Social and Economic Needs

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Springer

EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: ISSUES, CONCERNS AND PROSPECTS

Volume 41

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🦄 Springer

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Preface

The book series *Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects* is the product of a dynamic partnership linking the education authorities of all Asia-Pacific countries (via UNESCO's APEID and UNEVOC programmes), the region's educational research community (APERA) and one of the world's major international academic publishing houses (Springer). It seeks to encourage and support educational research and innovation by facilitating the sharing of ideas and evidence relating to key policy issues, challenges and problems facing educational authorities, institutions, teachers and students.

This book provides an invaluable contribution to our understanding of one of the most urgent challenges facing all education systems: how to prepare and support students in the transition from education (school, college or university) to adult life and work. Reading the book, one is constantly reminded that what happens during the transition process is affected not only by the length and quality of schooling and training provided but also by labour market conditions, the economic environment and demography.

The first part of the book explores different models, mechanisms and approaches to facilitating the school/college/university to work transition. It sheds light on the effectiveness of innovative approaches in policy and practice and covers issues of selectiveness and inclusiveness, integration of transversal competencies, the vocationalisation of secondary schooling, apprenticeships, approaches to bridging skill gaps and emerging models of student support. In reviewing the structural support mechanisms being put in place by governments and institutions at different stages in transition, it illuminates individual pathways in transition to adult life ranging from the children of refugees in Australia to Indian women in urban slums. As such, the book challenges policymakers and education providers to recognise the diversity of pathways, opportunities and obstacles at each stage in transition, reminding us that one size does not fit all.

Work is of central importance in every society. For the individual, it implies not only financial gain and social status but also economic and personal independence. When times are tough, there are few jobs available for new entrants to the labour

market, the available jobs for unskilled workers are generally poorly paid and insecure and support for entrepreneurial and self-employment ventures is vaporous. Times are tough for an ever-increasing number of young people regardless of their level of education. Many young people face a long wait for work, those with less education and limited skills being the most vulnerable. Discriminatory labour practices make entry to the workforce particularly difficult for young women, the disabled and marginalised groups.

The dramatic changes taking place in the world of work represent an enormous challenge for governments, education policymakers and institutions and young people throughout our region. Globalisation and automation have led to a massive shift from farm to industry in countries like China, India and Indonesia and from manufacturing to service industries in developed countries like Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Australia. By 2020, it has been predicted that there will be a potential shortage of 40 million high-skilled workers and 45 million medium-skilled workers and a potential surplus of 90 million low-skilled workers, predominantly young people with low levels of education (UNESCO-EFA, 2012). Official estimates put the number of unemployed young people across the Asia and Pacific region at 33 million, with youth unemployment rates ranging from over 20% to under 10%. However, the real magnitude of the youth unemployment problem is far more troubling than the official statistics suggest. For example, whereas the official youth (15–24 years) unemployment rate in Australia is 13.2%, more than 30% of young Australians are unemployed or seriously underemployed, and on average it takes them 4.7 years to obtain a full-time job (FYA, 2015). For the society as a whole, high youth unemployment not only hampers economic development and productivity but also creates a multitude of social and mental health problems ranging from youth suicide and crime to frustration that in several countries in the region has erupted into violence.

Education may not be a miracle cure for youth unemployment, but we must ensure that all young people have the knowledge, skills and inner resources needed to find a place in the world of work and to shoulder their responsibilities as adults. Citing the literature on skills development for the transition to work, the book examines the major issues associated with (i) preparation during school for the world of work (e.g. introduction of vocational content into the secondary curriculum, the need to support labour market development to stimulate the demand for skills), (ii) bridging school and work (e.g. different models that link school and work, different types of apprenticeship, work experience at school) and (iii) upgrading skills in the workplace (e.g. internships, in-house training by enterprises).

The book highlights the joint responsibility of the state and industry for enhancing individual employability and combining supply-side and demand-side policies. The chapters reviewing innovative models for youth and transverse skills development are particularly pertinent to the intertwined challenges of facilitating transitions to life beyond school and ensuring a closer match between graduates' skills and employers' skill demands. One of its strengths is that it provides an informed regional perspective on the discourse on twenty-first century skills while insisting

that the guidelines and tools for developing and assessing transversal skills should be relevant to different contexts.

What kind of education is needed to facilitate the transition from schooling to adult life in the twenty-first century? To address that question, UNESCO set up an International Commission on Education chaired by Jacques Delors. The report (UNESCO, 1996) argued that education must build the strong foundations needed to continue to learn throughout life. It saw narrow education as disempowering, insisting that education at all levels be based on four pillars: learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. At the 2011 International Symposium on Lifelong Learning at The Hong Kong Institute of Education, we elaborated on the implications of the concept of lifelong learning and the linkages between the four pillars for the re-engineering of existing systems of education and training:

> Adopting the principle of lifelong learning does demand a new vision, one that shifts the emphasis from education to learning; one that moves to a more seamless and user-friendly system; one that recognizes the diversity of ways in which knowledge and skill can be acquired in the information age outside of the formal system (Power & Maclean, 2013).

My latest book (Power, 2015) is part of this series. It develops the case for a broader and more integrated approach to learning throughout life, one that provides young people with the knowledge, skills and inner qualities they need to achieve what is important to them in their life and empowers them as they assume the responsibilities of adult life. It stresses the need to break down the walls between education and work and to build new types of partnerships. These are themes well articulated and developed both in the review chapters in the first part of the book and the more detailed elaboration of life planning, vocational and secondary education, applied learning and post-school support for both regular students and those with special needs in Hong Kong in the second.

Sadly, we must admit that for the most part, education, training and support systems are slow to change and are far from providing adequate preparation for the jobs and responsibilities of adult life today, let alone for the future, given that up to 70% of young people are entering jobs that will be lost or radically affected by automation over the next 10 to 15 years (FYA, 2015). As this book shows, painfully and over time, a new education-training-learning paradigm is emerging in the Asia-Pacific region: one increasingly centred on enabling young people to become lifelong learners and less on formal instruction in classrooms. The manner by which this change will come is by no means certain. It will not mean the end of formal schooling and vocational training, but its transformation. The red brick walls of the school house and ivory towers of academe may not change, but what goes on within them will need to be transformed in ways both subtle and profound, as the gates between school and community, between education, life and work, are forced open.

This book provides a significant and timely contribution to our understanding of how education and training systems in our region are responding to the challenges facing young people in transition to work and adult life. By illuminating the realities of the varied pathways to adult life in the Asia-Pacific region and assessing

the effectiveness of policies and innovations that are being put in place, the book is an invaluable resource for educational policymakers and practitioners alike. It is, in my view, a seminal work, one that needs to be studied, discussed and used to better inform policy and practice at all levels of formal and non-formal education and training

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Series Editors' Introduction

This book titled *Transitions to Post-School Life*, which is edited by Margarita Pavlova, John Chi-Kin Lee and Rupert Maclean, is the latest volume to be published in the long-standing Springer book series *Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects*. The first book in this Springer series was published in 2002, with this volume being the 41st volume published to date.

The book addresses growing concerns about the relevance of education systems in meeting the economic and social needs of individuals by examining different aspects of transitions from school to work or further studies and within informal settings.

This volume will be of particular interest to educators, policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders concerned about the effectiveness of system-wide and institutional-based approaches. It highlights important issues such as selectiveness and inclusiveness, integration of transversal competencies, vocationalisation of secondary schooling, approaches to career guidance and emerging models of student support.

The overall context of the book is Asia. The first part of the volume explores different models, mechanisms and approaches to policy and practice in Asia, while the second part looks at transitions to post-school life by Hong Kong students and provides an account of issues and challenges which governments and individual schools experience in terms of structural support for both mainstream and special needs students.

The book is unique in the field in that it assists with understanding different models at the systems and institutional levels, designed to facilitate transitions from school to post-school life in the context of Asia. In addition it addresses both formal and informal approaches, focuses on transitions to vocational and further education, clarifies the complexities of the relationships between intentions and the realities of post-school transitions and presents a detailed analysis of the Hong Kong context in terms of issues concerning school to life transitions.

The various topics examined in this Springer book series are wide ranging and varied in coverage, with an emphasis on cutting-edge developments, best practices

and education innovations for development. Topics examined include environmental education and education for sustainable development; the reform of primary, secondary and teacher education; innovative approaches to education assessment; alternative education; most effective ways to achieve quality and highly relevant education for all; active ageing through active learning; case studies of education and schooling systems in various countries in the region; cross-country and cross-cultural studies of education and schooling; and the sociology of teachers as an occupational group, to mention just a few. More information about this series is available at http://www.springer.com/series/6969

All volumes in the book series aim to meet the interests and priorities of a diverse education audience including researchers, policymakers and practitioners; tertiary students; teachers at all levels within education systems; and members of the public who are interested in better understanding cutting-edge developments in education and schooling in Asia-Pacific.

This book series has been devoted exclusively to examining various aspects of education and schooling in the Asia-Pacific region because this is a particularly challenging region which is renowned for its size, diversity and complexity, whether it be geographical, socio-economic, cultural, political or developmental. Education and schooling in countries throughout the region impact on every aspect of people's lives, including employment, labour force considerations, education and training, cultural orientation and attitudes and values. Asia and the Pacific is home to some 63% of the world's population of 7 billion. Countries with the largest populations (China, 1.4 billion; India, 1.3 billion) and the most rapidly growing megacities are to be found in the region, as are countries with relatively small populations (Bhutan, 755,000; the island of Niue, 1600).

Levels of economic and sociopolitical development vary widely, with some of the richest countries (such as Japan) and some of the poorest countries on earth (such as Bangladesh). Asia contains the largest number of poor of any region in the world, the incidence of those living below the poverty line remaining as high as 40 percent in some countries in Asia. At the same time, many countries in Asia are experiencing a period of great economic growth and social development. However, inclusive growth remains elusive, as does growth that is sustainable and does not destroy the quality of the environment. The growing prominence of Asian economies and corporations, together with globalisation and technological innovation, is leading to long-term changes in trade, business and labour markets, to the sociology of populations within (and between) countries. There is a rebalancing of power, centred on Asia and the Pacific region, with the Asian Development Bank in Manila declaring that the twenty-first century will be 'the Century of Asia-Pacific'.

This book series makes a unique contribution to knowledge sharing about education and schooling in Asia-Pacific.

Any readers of this or other volumes in the series who have an idea for writing (or editing) their own book on any aspect of education and/or schooling that is relevant to the region are enthusiastically encouraged to approach the series editors either directly or through Springer to explore the possibility of publishing their own

volume in the series, since we are always willing to assist perspective authors shape their manuscripts in ways that make them suitable for publication in this series.

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Contents

Chapter 1
Stepping into the World: Transitions to Post-school Life

Margarita Pavlova, John Chi-Kin Lee, and Rupert Maclean

Abstract Concerns about the relevance of educational systems to the economic and social needs of countries are growing internationally. Countries in Asia are confronted with the realities of economic development, technological change, urbanisation and demographic issues that require governments to design specific policies and strategies that enable them to invest in human capital and tackle these challenges. The considerable mismatch between the supply of skills and labour market demand is a common problem in the region, meaning that there are around 33 million unemployed young people across the Asia and Pacific. Therefore, the issue of transition from school to work is among the major concerns for the governments. This chapter serves as an introduction to issues associated with transitions and discussed in the book through the analysis of the experiences of different countries, such as innovative approaches in policy and practice, issues of selectiveness and inclusiveness, integration of transversal competencies, the vocationalisation of secondary schooling, approaches to bridging skill gaps and emerging models of student support.

Concerns about the relevance of educational systems to the economic and social needs of countries are growing internationally (OECD & CPRN 2005). Countries in Asia are confronted with the realities of economic development, technological change, urbanization and demographic issues that require governments to design specific policies and strategies that enable them to invest in human capital and tackle these challenges. The considerable mismatch between the supply of skills and labor market demand is a common problem in the region.

Youth unemployment increased by almost 5% between 2011 and 2013 to 11.3%, meaning that there are 33 million unemployed young people across the Asia and Pacific region. Young people are up to ten times more likely to be unemployed than

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adults. However, compared to the youth unemployment rate in OECD countries, the rate in this region is relatively low (UNESCAP 2015). Youth unemployment is particularly high in some countries, such as Indonesia (21.8%), Sri Lanka (19.1%) and Australia (13.1%). In China, India and the Republic of Korea, it is above 10% (The World Bank Database 2016). Youth unemployment is consistently higher than the average level of unemployment. For example, in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (henceforth referred to as Hong Kong), the youth unemployment rate for 15–19-year-olds in 2013 was around 17%, which is much greater than that of the overall population (Lau 2013). Therefore, the issue of transition from school to work is a major concern for these governments and is one of the main focuses of this book.

There is no integrated theory about the transition from school to work, and 'transition-system research often appears theoretically eclectic and fragmented' (Raffe 2008, p.278). A literature review on skills development for the transition to work (Adams 2007) identified three main stages when the development of these skills occurs and highlights the differences in issues associated with each stage: (1) preparation during school for the world of work (e.g. introduction of vocational content into the secondary curriculum; the need to support labor market development to stimulate the demand for skills), (2) bridging school and work (e.g. different models that link school and work, different types of apprenticeship, work experience at school), and (3) upgrading skills in the workplace (e.g. in-service training by enterprises). A critical reflection of these stages provides a framework for this book and can help to evaluate government interventions in supporting transitions and establishing effective trajectories for different target groups.

A terminological debate on the use of such terms as transitions, trajectories and pathways reveals nuances in the ways these terms are used. Transitions usually refer to (a) status change(s) over a longer period of time (e.g. Sakmann and Wingens 2001). Trajectory usually refers to destinations that are largely determined by social factors 'outside the control of individual social actors' (Evans and Furlong 1997). Sometimes trajectories relate to transitions determined by institutional arrangements. For example, a high investment in vocational skills could function as a structural support for particular trajectories for school to work transitions. Some authors prefer to use 'pathways' as an alternative term (e.g. Shanahan 2000).

Government interventions often occur at the system-wide or macro level. System-wide approaches are aimed at improving employment opportunities for young people and often combine education and skills policies, active labor market policies and social security mechanisms. These interventions often highlight the joint responsibility of the state and industry for enhancing individual employability and combine supply-side and demand-side policies. Youth employability is a result of multiple factors, including at the *external level*: access to education and the availability of training options, institutionalised structures that include a variety of possible trajectories, the development of opportunities and encouraging participation. Conditions that support employability at the *internal level* include the development of transversal and technical skills and the ability to take advantage of opportunities for learning and skills development, motivation, initiative and so on.

In many Asian countries, system-wide approaches also need to address challenges of scale. In India, for example, seven million people enter the labor market every year and require support in identifying their pathways to employment.

Research on transitions from school to work has moved beyond the input-output model. Researchers now argue that it is important to look at mediating features within the system that relate structural support to outcomes. The possibility of transforming these support structures in order to improve the effectiveness of transition requires a systematic approach. Different countries' contexts are closely connected to the structural and compositional features of the education and training system and are important mediators in predicting/explaining the effectiveness of measures. The fragmentation of approaches can have ineffectual results.

Problems regarding youth integration into the labor market have been fully acknowledged by governments, and they have identified an increased risk of exclusion for certain marginalized groups like migrants, young people from low socio-economic backgrounds and women. Therefore, there needs to be some differentiation between the support mechanisms that enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes so they are tailor-made for promoting labor as well as the social integration of these groups. Particular support provided by different stakeholders can ensure employability as well as the smooth transition from school to work.

In addition to the macro (system-wide) level, this process of transition can be considered from the mezzo (institution-wide) and micro (personal) levels. At each level input, process and output must be examined if we are to systematically understand the complexity of school to work transitions.

Changing the institutional delivery systems (new types of delivery in existing institutions or creating new kind of institutions), establishing new programs (e.g. to reach new learners), new modes of delivery (at workplaces, in remote areas and distance learning), changing admission policies and providing a variety of support are additional measures that governments and other stakeholders can adopt to improve effectiveness of transitions and develop new trajectories for young people. Tensions between personal agency and institutional structures could lead to ineffi-ciencies within formal arrangements; therefore, innovative, informal structures play a critical role in supporting particular life courses.

In the context of developing countries, *encouraging individual participation and success* is particularly important. Financial incentives for individuals, such as direct subsidies, loans and tuition rebates combined with incentives for employers, can trigger positive results. Governments and other stakeholders are currently focused on measures such as advertising and recruitment, particularly for those in the target groups, as well as support services that provide guidance and counseling.

An analysis of transitions at the micro level demonstrates that a transition is not simply a single event; it is a complex process where different forces come into play. Longitudinal studies of transitions at the micro level such as sequence analysis (Shanahan 2000) are helpful if we want to unpack the complexity of school to work transitions. Research into transitions that used sequence analysis to identify path-ways of youth in three countries (France, Spain and Germany) over 60 months after leaving school established eight ideal types of transitions (Brzinsky-Fay 2014, Fig. 1.1). These were present in all countries, but their proportions varied.

This analysis demonstrates the complexity of pathways from school to work at the personal level as well as their dependence on the country's context.
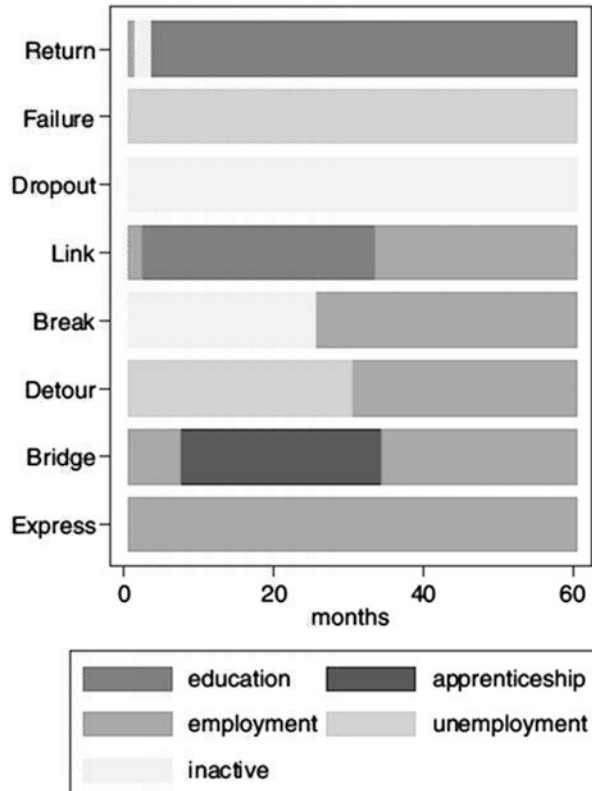
Transition from school to work is generally complex and rarely involves a single event. This is the reason researchers are particularly interested in sequence analysis of school leavers. The types of school to work transition depend on the status of the labor market in terms of employment, education, apprenticeship, unemployment and inactivity. Brzinsky-Fay (2011, p.36) identified eight distinct ideal types of transition that facilitate the understanding of what transition is, where it starts and where it ends.

The first three types do not lead to employment at the end of the fifth year after graduation from school. These are:

1. Return: School leavers go back to full-time education after a very short period of employment, inactivity or unemployment and stay there for at least 5 years. This can be described as a maintaining transition.
2. Failure: This transition type comprises school leavers who fail to be offered a job within the first 5 years despite their commitment to labor market participation. This is a type of exclusionary transition.
3. Dropout: The dropout transition generally involves long-term inactivity. The reasons behind this inactivity can be military service or childcare activities, for example. This transition type also belongs to exclusionary transition (Brzinsky-Fay 2011).

The other five types – link, break, detour, bridge and express – do lead to employment. Young people who fall under these types make the transition into stable employment within a 60-month period. However, the transition occurs at different times:

4. Link: School leavers return to the education system at the beginning of the 60-month period and gain employment towards the end.
5. Break: Inactivity in the break type is much shorter than the dropout type, and most school leavers successfully transition to employment.
6. Detour: After a considerable period of unemployment, these school leavers eventually find employment. For this type, unemployment can relate to the search/rest time between one job and another and can be accompanied by retraining or geographical mobility.
7. Bridge: Apprenticeship periods represent a large proportion of this transition type; they bridge the gap between school education and employment.
8. Express: This type refers to the fastest integration into employment for school leavers but does not take into the account the quality of that employment.

This micro-level analysis demonstrates that although governments and institutions have mechanisms in place to support transitions, there are many other complex economic and personal factors to consider which influence the results. For example, there is much psychosocial research in the broad field of transitions research that focuses on elements such as identity, status, roles and belonging (e.g. Ng and Feldman 2007: Ecclestone et al. 2010; Jindal-Snape 2010). There is also a body of research related to career counseling and vocational related behaviour that highlight the various factors that affect students' career aspirations (e.g. Cheng and Yuen 2012; Renn et al. 2014). The focus of this book, however, is on the institutional and policy contexts of selected countries that provide support for school to work transitions and the development of employability skills.

Concern about skills for employment and those needed to navigate new complex social and political realities is typically addressed through existing support systems at different levels. This situation is pivotal to the concerns addressed in this book. The basic issues to be addressed are based on the following principles for facilitating post-school transition: (a) development of employability and twenty-first-century transversal skills advocated in school curriculum reforms and TVET (UNESCO Bangkok 2015) beyond job-specific skills for young people so they are able to prepare for changing societies and economies and (b) addressing individual needs for those ranging from refugee children to children with special educational needs or disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, individuals with different aspirations, talents and needs should be empowered and enabled through policies, support systems and measures at different levels such as the country and school level in order to pursue their pathways. (c) As there are diverse environments and conditions within and across cities and places, a wide array of approaches ranging from business-school-government partnerships, apprenticeships and mentorships to informal learning could be adapted to match particular needs.

This book is part of the coeditors' contribution to Hong Kong's participation in an International Study of City Youth (ISCY) (http://iscy.org/) led by Stephen Lamb. Several countries are involved, including Australia, Canada, France, Norway, Spain

and the United States. The book, involving scholars from different locations, explores current issues, and the ways supporting systems have dealt with new economic and social demands to enhance transitions from school to work. The book explores different aspects of these transitions and consists of two main parts.

The first part explores different models, mechanisms and issues of school to work transition and focuses on the experiences of different countries, such as innovative approaches in policy and practice, issues of selectiveness and inclusiveness, integration of transversal competencies, the vocationalization of secondary schooling (e.g. Lee et al. 2016), approaches to bridging skill gaps and emerging models of student support.

The chapter by Santosh Mehrotra and Vinay Swarup Mehrotra provides a broad overview of the issues associated with skills development in India. It deals with system-wide approaches towards skills development. The Indian government's major challenge is to align the skilling efforts of different stakeholders with labor market needs. The chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of different initiatives in the country and addresses issues of skills standardization, their recognition, accessibility as well as innovative approaches and government schemes for skilling young people. It also highlights apprenticeship as an effective means of supporting young people in their transition to employment.

The importance of transversal/twenty-first-century skills in facilitating transitions to life beyond school and for ensuring a closer match between graduates and employers' demands is addressed in the chapter by Antony Tam and Barbara Trzmiel. This chapter provides a regional overview of how these skills are categorized and addressed at the policy and curriculum levels as well as in pedagogies in Asia and the Pacific. The authors argue that economic discourse dominates the integration of transversal skills in education and training. The chapter combines policy and institutional levels of analysis. In addition, it focuses on a specific area of assessment that is important for ensuring that the acquisition of transversal skills is included in the national curriculum. A lack of coherent approaches towards assessment could be a barrier to developing these particular skills and assisting young people in their transitions to work.

Apprenticeship has proven to be an effective way of linking the world of education, training and work. The chapter by Zhiqun Zhao discusses one particular means of creating a smooth transition from school to work for young people – a modern apprenticeship in China. Apprenticeships are viewed within the framework of school-enterprise cooperation and as an effective mechanism to limit the mismatch between labor market demands and graduate supply by the education and training system in China. The chapter analyses the history of apprenticeship in China and argues for the importance of establishing formal apprenticeships. The chapter suggests a number of measures that can be adopted to institutionalize modern apprenticeships. The complex but necessary requirements needed to coordinate measures at the macro, mesa and micro levels are outlined. In addition, the formalization of apprenticeship will better support vulnerable youth, such as new migrants to the cities.

Among the emerging models of student support during the last years of schooling is the development of individualized educational pathways (IEPs). The chapter by Margarita Pavlova and Tatiana Lomakina examines how these individual trajectories

can be conceptualized and what criteria ensure their effectiveness. This approach recognizes the autonomy of the individual within existing social and structural constraints and focuses on the institutional (mezzo) level. The IEPs help link the macro and micro levels and are influenced by school culture and the structural arrangements of institutions. In addition, school infrastructure, the community where a school is located, school cohesion and interpersonal relationships between students and teachers are important factors that influence the development and implementation of IEPs. While there are contextual factors that influence the process, this chapter puts forward a set of generic principles that can help to develop IEPs in schools.

Two chapters in the book identify successful approaches to transition for disadvantaged groups. One focuses on the support for particular trajectories for Indian women from an urban slum, and the other on support structures at school that facilitate university pathways for refugee children in Australia. These two chapters interrogate different types of institutional support that facilitate transitions in two very different settings – informal and formal.

Strategies that enable youth to live the life that they appreciate and want to be associated with are essential for supporting people who fail to travel 'standard' pathways from school to employment. The chapter by Supriya Pattanayak and PNSV Narasimham analyzes an example of a livelihood institution, the Urban Micro Business Centre (UMBC), as a facilitator for school dropouts (women who undertook 5 years of schooling or less) transition. The authors examine opportunities presented by this center and argue that it opens up new trajectories for marginalized women. The UMBC targets particular sets of constraints and learning that specify pathways for each individual. The chapter argues that in order to open new trajectories for transition, *an informal institutional mechanism* is required that can empower marginalized individuals by assisting them to make informed decisions in daily life by applying knowledge co-creation pedagogies. In addition, women's agency can be encouraged through the facilitation processes in many aspects of transitions, such as the giving of financial support for their businesses, assistance in procuring raw materials and packaging.

The authors call for a variety of informal institutional support models that should be customized to 'the local population and the demographic character of the respective neighborhood'. For India, these institutions can be set up under the government policy, *National Urban Livelihood Mission*. To support transitions for marginalized groups that have restricted access to schooling, it is important to recognize that options are limited to the challenge of 'choice-forming and choice constraining'. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that girls' dropout rates closely correspond to their social and economic roles in the informal community.

Programs aimed at disadvantaged youth need to integrate a set of components with which to address the many obstacles faced by young people. They can combine different skills development components, counseling and social inclusion. The chapter by Loshini Naidoo, Jane Wilkinson, Misty Adoniou and Kip Langat unpacks the complexities of transitions from school to university for students with a refugee background. The chapter identifies the crucial role of teachers, education policies and community and learning engagement programs in supporting these marginalized students in their transition to university. A number of successful programs such as the