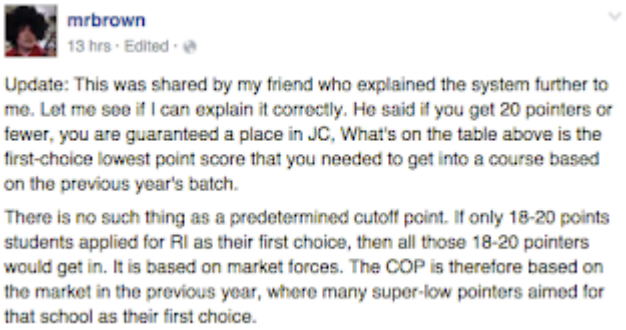
How Not Going To A â??Topâ?• JC Turned Me Into A Straight-A Scholar

Description



mrbrown
13 hrs · Edited ·

Update: This was shared by my friend who explained the system further to me. Let me see if I can explain it correctly. He said if you get 20 pointers or fewer, you are guaranteed a place in JC, What's on the table above is the first-choice lowest point score that you needed to get into a course based on the previous year's batch.

There is no such thing as a predetermined cutoff point. If only 18-20 points students applied for RI as their first choice, then all those 18-20 pointers would get in. It is based on market forces. The COP is therefore based on the market in the previous year, where many super-low pointers aimed for that school as their first choice.

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The Ministry of Education (MOE) recently released the cut-off points for junior colleges in Singapore, and things got quite exciting after blogger Mr Brown wrote about how stressful the system has become.

This line, in particular, made me laugh.

> *So if you are a 100% A1 O Level student who represented your school in an international Maths Olympiad for your Maths Club CCA, plus a school swimmer who won an ASEAN games medal, while being extremely gifted in Higher Chinese, and hail from an elite secondary school, you will have no problem.*
>
> *No pressure, kids and parents. No pressure at all.*

S/No	Junior College	Arts		Science/IB	
		Course Code	Net L1R5	Course Code	Net L1R5
1	Anderson JC	21A	9	21S	8
2	Anglo-Chinese JC	22A	7	22S	6
3	Anglo-Chinese School (Independent)	-	-	51I	5
4	Catholic JC	23A	10	23S	10
5	Hwa Chong Institution	24A	4	24S	3
6	Innova JC	37A	18	37S	20
7	Jurong JC	25A	15	25S	15
8	Meridian JC	36A	9	36S	10
9	Nanyang JC	26A	7	26S	7
10	National JC	27A	6	27S	5
11	Pioneer JC	35A	13	35S	13
12	Raffles Institution	28A	4	28S	3
13	Serangoon JC	29A	11	29S	11
14	St. Andrew's JC	30A	9	30S	9
15	St. Joseph's Institution	-	-	52I	6

Many were quick to criticize, citing PM Leeâ??s claim earlier this year that â??all schools are good schoolsâ?•.

While it is only common for parents to want their children to get into top JCs (or students to hope for the same), let me clarify that I concur with PM Lee, although it seems some Singaporeans with their tinted glasses may not quite see it the same way.

There is nothing to be ashamed of if you donâ??t qualify for a â??topâ?• junior college.

In fact, this could be your opportunity to shine.

In the last 7 years of teaching General Paper, I fondly remember my best and most-improved student. She was from Innova Junior College (the â??worstâ?• JC, if you gauge from the table above) and wasnâ??t scoring very well. During our tuition sessions together, she was extremely hardworking, and picked up on the skills I taught her quickly enough. Even though we only had less than half a year together, she surpassed all my expectations and proudly graduated with an â??Aâ?? for the subject.

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Iâ??ve taught students from other â??betterâ?• schools, including National JC and Nanyang, but none of them have given me better work than that girl did.

This goes to show that going to a â??topâ?• junior college doesnâ??t necessarily mean anything. There is also no guarantee that making it to a â??topâ?• junior college is a good reflection of your success. Iâ??m sure many remember the case of Ms. Wee Shu Min, the daughter of a PAP Minister who famously exclaimed, â??**Get out of my elite uncaring face**â??.



Teen blogger counselled for her 'elitist' remarks

By Ken Kwek

A TEENAGE blogger has found herself in the soup after comments she made in her online journal were criticised by many Internet users for being insensitive and elitist.

Raffles Junior College student Wee Shu Min, a daughter of MP Wee Siew Kim, sparked a heated debate on the Internet when she derided another blogger, Mr Derek Wee, for his views on the anxieties of Singapore workers.

Both Miss Wee's father and the principal of RJC told The Straits Times yesterday that she had been counselled for using insensitive language.

Miss Wee, a second-year student on RJC's Humanities Scholarship Programme, has since shut down her blog and apologised for her comments, though not directly to Mr Derek Wee.

Mr Wee, 35, a Singaporean who works for a multinational corporation, had written in his blog on Oct 12 that he was concerned about competition from foreign talent and the lack of job opportunities for older workers here.

He urged the Government to understand Singaporeans' plight.

Last Thursday, Miss Wee responded to him on her blog, calling him old and unmotivated and said he was overly reliant on the Government.

In dismissing his views, she wrote:

"Derek, Derek, Derek darling, how can you expect to have an iron rice bowl or a solid future if you cannot spell?

"There's no point in lambasting the Government for making our society one that is, I quote, 'far too survival of the fittest'... If uncertainty of success offends you so much, you will certainly be poor and miserable."

She concluded by telling Mr Wee to "get out of my elite uncaring face".

Her attack was criticised by hundreds of Internet users, who accused her of being elitist, naive and insensitive to the lives of Singaporeans from humbler backgrounds.

Though she has shut down her blog, her entry has been replicated on many websites and the issue is hotly debated.

Technorati, a website that tracks the activity of blogs, yesterday listed "Wee Shu Min" as its third most frequent search term.

Mr Wee Siew Kim said he stood by his daughter's "basic point", but added: "As a parent, I may not

In fact, not going to a â??topâ?• school was the key turning point in my life, and that was where I transformed into a straight-A scholar.

Donâ??t believe me? Hereâ??s my story.

Iâ??ve always been an average student. Looking back at my primary school report, I was frequently placed in the 50th to 60th percentile with the grades I was getting. And as most regular readers would know by now, Mathematics was my nemesis throughout my studying years.

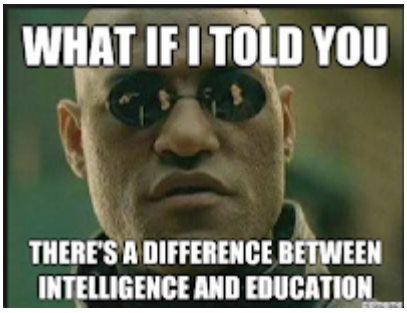
My PSLE score was 236 (with a glaring â??Bâ?? for Math that spoilt my results slip), landing me in a neighbourhood school. I was solely disappointed that I didnâ??t make it to one of the more prestigious â??topâ?• secondary schools I was aiming for, but you canâ??t say I didnâ??t deserve it.

At secondary school, I was once again an average student. It seemed as though no matter how hard I studied, I could never beat the scores of these smarter students. Their intellect and mine seemed to be at completely different levels; and it was almost impossible to cross that gap. I was always the one remaining seated while my friends beside me went up on stage to collect their awards â?? Edusave, Colours, etc. I wasâ?¦**average**.

But once I put my heart into studying, I started seeing vast improvements in my grades. Pretty soon, I jumped from 19th in class (out of 39) to 5th. At our â??Oâ?• level prelims, I placed among the top 10 in the entire cohort. My cousin had made it into Hwa Chong JC, and my other good friend was going to Raffles (well, he was in Raffles Institution to begin with), so those were the places I hoped to get into.

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Yet, I ended up graduating â??Oâ?• Levels with a mix of A1s, A2s and B3s, instead of the A1s and A2s I had scored in the prelims. My heart sank as I realized that thereâ??s no way I can ever beat those who are naturally gifted with a higher IQ.

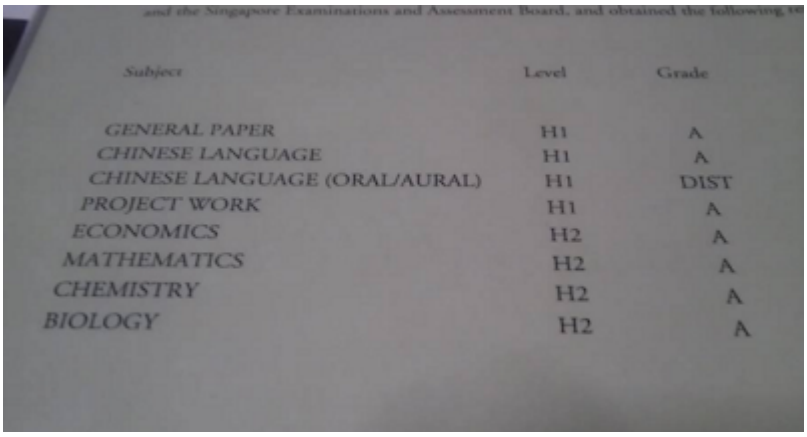


So I ended up in Anderson JC instead. That was when everything changed.

Back then, many perceived Anderson as a â??slightly averageâ?• junior college. But here, it was easier for me to stand out than in a â??topâ?• school like Raffles or Hwa Chong. I was obtaining much higher rankings than I would have in a â??topâ?• school, and that did wonders for my confidence. I was also given opportunities to take on leadership roles, something I probably wouldnâ??t have gotten in a â??topâ?• school, since everyone else will probably be much more qualified than me.

Without that boost, I doubt I would have gotten those straight â??Aâ??s.

Two years later, when the â??Aâ?• level results were released, I was among those standing in front of the whole school while the principal asked everyone else to applaud our excellent results. **I had graduated with 7 straight â??Aâ??s** in all the topics that I tested for (4 H2s and 3 H1s).



Subject	Level	Grade
GENERAL PAPER	H1	A
CHINESE LANGUAGE	H1	A
CHINESE LANGUAGE (ORAL/AURAL)	H1	DIST
PROJECT WORK	H1	A
ECONOMICS	H2	A
MATHEMATICS	H2	A
CHEMISTRY	H2	A
BIOLOGY	H2	A

Things only got better from there. While **the Public Service Commission (PSC) couldnâ??t even be bothered to reply my application for a scholarship (or at least grant me an interview)**, I had offers from quite a few others.



My guess is that PSC probably ditched my application form the moment it saw I was from Anderson JC, instead of the swanky Raffles / Hwa Chong / Anglo-Chinese / National JC.
Such is life.

In the end, I took up a bond-free scholarship with Nanyang Technological University, where there was no discrimination against junior collegesâ?? names. The course I applied for was also the best in Singapore (and perhaps even Asia). I got the opportunity to lead and become President of our scholarship camp in my second year, and even fronted a few promotional campaigns for the school, because of my unique story and background. Most importantly, I was one of the rarer few scholars who did NOT come from a â??topâ?• school â?? Raffles, Hwa Chong, Anglo-Chinese, or National.

A pretty cool modern Cinderella fairytale, donâ??t you think?



In fact, if I had gone to either Raffles or Hwa Chong, Iâ??m pretty sure thereâ??s no way Iâ??d become the person I am today. When you put a good student in a top school, their potential might just be overshadowed by all the brilliant students around them, the ones who are â??naturallyâ?• gifted. It becomes harder for them to shine.

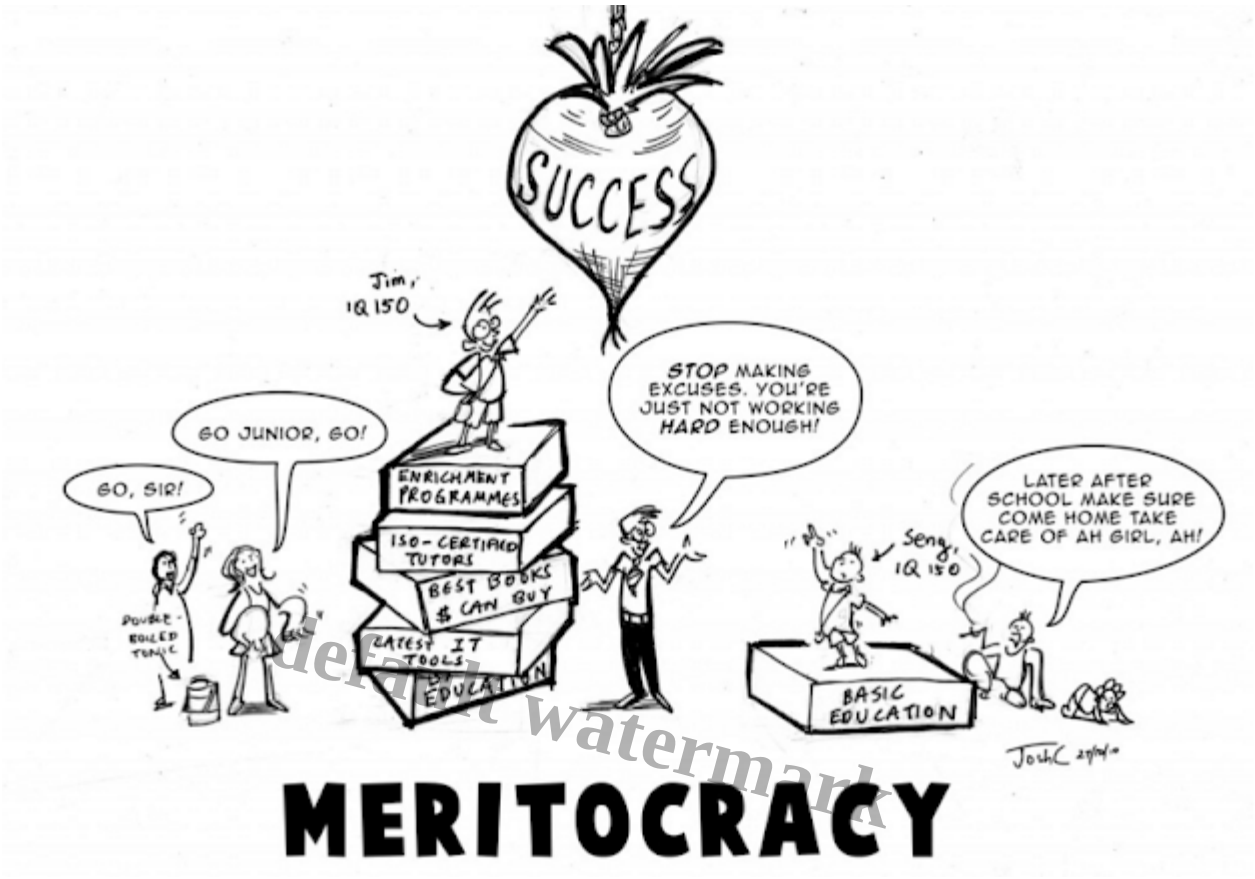
School rankings are important, but **we should not underestimate the power of class (or cohort) rankings either**. These can do magic (or intensive damage) to a studentâ??s ego, which can then affect their grades. If I had gone to Raffles, Iâ??m pretty sure I would have been among the bottom few in class, because the fact is, my IQ isnâ??t naturally that high. And if I was constantly placed last in class, I can assure you that I probably would have thought I was stupid and a terrible student compared to my peers.

Oh, and it might be worth mentioning that I had â??crashedâ?• some lectures in Raffles, Hwa Chong and National JC during the first three months (back then, you couldnâ??t tell because everyone was attending lectures in their secondary school uniforms, so I got away with it). **I didnâ??t think the quality of their teachers were any much better than the teachers I had** at Anderson; they seemed on par to me.

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So parents, there is no need to feel ashamed if your child didnâ??t get into a â??topâ?• school. Every student has the potential to shine regardless of which school they are in.

I hope one day Singaporeans will be able to look past the whole glory of school rankings and accept each school for what they are â?? every school IS a good school.



Source: http://www.theonlinecitizen.com/

Is it better to be a big fish in a small pond, or a small fish in a big pond?

Category

1. Family