



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Singapore's workers happy in their careers but would have made different education choices according to new international survey**

**SINGAPORE, July 30, 2008** - More than half of workers in Singapore say that if given the chance, they would have studied something totally different after leaving school, while one in three have doubts about their ultimate career choice, according to a new international workplace survey.

The survey, by global recruitment firm Kelly Services, found that many Singaporean wished they had studied harder and gone for further studies. An overwhelming 80% of people agreed with the proposition that 'post-school/professional education should be more practical and less theoretical'.

The global survey sought the views of 115,000 people in 33 countries including more than 2,000 in Singapore.

Mr Dharendra Shantilal, Senior Vice President, Asia Pacific, Kelly Services, said the findings show a high level of concern about career choice and direction. "Many people in the workforce are not convinced that their education properly prepared them for working life leading to regrets about the direction that their jobs have taken them".

Amongst the key findings of the survey:

- 78% of people wish that they had further their studies.
- 52% of people wish that they had studied something totally different.
- 11% say that they definitely chose the wrong career, while 29% are 'not sure'.
- 32% say that their school education did not prepare them well for working life.
- 19% say that their post-school education did not prepare them well for working life.

The findings throw light on how those in the workforce feel about the quality of their country's education system. Notwithstanding the number of people in Singapore who have some regrets about their education, Singapore's school system ranked 13<sup>th</sup> highest along with Switzerland of the 33 countries in the survey at 54%, just behind US.

The highest level of support for school education came from India with 69% saying it prepared them well for working life. It was followed by Puerto Rico (67%), Indonesia and Thailand (65%), Poland (63%), Spain (61%), Canada and Hungary (59%), Japan and Mexico (57%). The lowest rankings were for Sweden (26%), Norway (27%), Denmark (29%), Turkey (30%), Ukraine (37%), Russia and Italy (39%).

People across the globe were much more satisfied with their post-school education, with a global average of 65% saying it prepared them well for working life. Singapore ranked 15th with 65% agreeing that their post education prepared them for their careers.

“It is to be expected that many wish they had worked harder while at school, college or university,” Mr Shantilal said. “But what is more critical than the could-haves and would-haves is the drive to stay relevant in the marketplace by continually upgrading their skills and expanding their scope of experience. In an ever-changing workplace environment, and as employment patterns shift from lifetime employment to lifetime employability, companies too must invest in their people to stay competitive. Companies that invest in their people may find that it helps to create a working environment in which people are motivated to go the extra mile to help their organizations grow from strength to strength.”

In Singapore, 60% of respondents were happy with their career choice, while 11% said they had made the wrong choice and 29% were ‘not sure’. “Someone who discovers that they are in the wrong career is probably not as productive as they could be and may be missing out on a more fulfilling professional life. It’s also important that people don’t over react or set up false expectations in evaluating their study and career choices,” Mr Shantilal added.

“It is now the norm for most employees to have several career changes in the course of a working life, so it’s possible for someone who is dissatisfied with their career to do something positive about it”.

Both men and women cited ‘financial’ considerations as the major obstacle to changing careers, followed by ‘time’ and ‘family’.

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Kelly Services, Inc. (NASDAQ: KELYA, KELYB) is a world leader in human resources solutions headquartered in Troy, Michigan, offering temporary staffing services, outsourcing, vendor on-site and full-time placement. Kelly operates in 37 countries and territories. Kelly provides employment to more than 750,000 employees annually, with skills including office services, accounting, engineering, information technology, law, science, marketing, creative services, light industrial, education, and health care. Revenue in 2007 was \$5.7 billion. Visit [www.kellyservices.com](http://www.kellyservices.com).

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