International data are often used in academic and policy studies. In this course, participants will learn how to access and analyze data from standard international databases published by the World Bank, OECD, and other sources. These data include economic time series (GDP, trade, investment, etc.), demographic estimates (population, dependency ratio, etc.), educational test results, and other development indicators. Participants will gain hands-on experience in querying databases online, transforming data in Excel, and analyzing data in SPSS. Technical issues surrounding data comparability across countries (e.g., the use of market versus purchasing power parity exchange rates) will be explained. Participants will have the opportunity to compare Singapore's performance with that of peer countries on key metrics of their own choice.

Course Outline

- The logic of international comparisons
- The international data infrastructure
- World Bank, OECD, and other IGO sources
- Academic and NGO databases
- Government databases (focus on China)
- How to convert raw data into usable indicators
- Vertical and horizontal database structures
- Scatterplots and basic statistical comparisons
- How to use data (appropriately!) in policy formation

Who Should Attend

This module is designed for policy analysts, strategy consultants, and journalists who regularly make international comparisons; postgraduate students engaging in comparative economic, political, and social research; professionals who work in international development.

Prerequisites

A basic knowledge of geography, familiarity with Microsoft Excel, and general comfort working with numbers; no formal mathematics or statistics training required

Enquiries

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