

Elementary Education System of Pakistan and Israel: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Educators develop their profession through the application and implementation of educational procedures elsewhere. This paper focuses on a comparison of Israel and Pakistani Elementary Educational system. This comparison is significant because both are ideological states sharing their common era of independence but Israel is more ahead of Pakistan in the field of education with its high literacy rate as compare to Pakistan. For the comparison, this study adopts document analysis as the methodology for this study. George Bereday's comparative method is used for the comparison. Themes were identified and generated from comparison. Elementary education was the focus of the study. The findings revealed that the literacy rate and budget allocation is higher in Israel than Pakistan which is 8.7% of GDP. In Israeli's schools the medium of instruction at elementary level is their national language. Their student teacher ratio is also low as compared to Pakistan that's why the Israel's teachers provide more individual attention to their students. Israel exposes technology to their students in their classes even at early childhood level and also provides basic universal primary education to all children. It is recommended for Pakistan that Medium of instruction should be in the national language, budget allocation in education sector should be increased and use of technology need to adopt in the Elementary Educational system in Pakistan.

Keywords: Elementary Education System, Comparative Study.

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Introduction

In the global world, education system of a country is connected with other countries' education systems. Keeping in view the requirement of quality education and success stories in a global world, it is imperious to compare Pakistan's education system with other developing and developed nations (Surya & Bhaskara, 2004). The know-how of different countries' educational systems allows policy makers, implementers and specialists to learn about education throughout the light of competitiveness and performance. Teachers must be mindful that the educational systems of several other countries have goals, pedagogy and teaching activities (Hans, 2009).

Comparative study of education in the globalized world explores best practices and experiences in education, and it is necessary to learn from an international, comparative perspective about the core principles, frameworks and practices of education. It helps to make indigenous education system more effective and efficient (Sharma, 2007). Comparative education studies allow the participants to understand better the education system beyond his/her country. Comparative education refers to making decisions on two similar areas, subjects and factors requiring an evaluation that strategically analyses the material (Adeyinka, 1994).

The State of Israel came into existence in 1948, just after one year of independence of Pakistan having population of 8.884 million as compared to 212.2 million of Pakistan with the vast majority of Jewish population. It is situated in the west of Asia in a part of the world widely known as the Middle East. Israel is an immigrant country of residents from more than 80 countries. This has contributed to number of racial and cultural groups and religious views of diverse range. Around 76% of the community is Jewish, 20% are Muslim, and the remainders are Druze, Christians and other classes. Arabic are mainly Muslims. (Blass, 2011). The Islamic republic of Pakistan was established in 1947 with the ideological basis of Two Nation Theory of Muslim identity with Muslims majority. Pakistan is located in North East of Asia (Brass, 1974).

The present study focuses on the comparison of Elementary education in Pakistan and Israel to find the similarities and differences between policies, objectives, budget allocation, literacy rate, drop-out rate, enrollment rate, teaching approach, medium of instruction, and curriculum. The objectives of the study defined were to:

- Find the differences and similarities of policies, objectives and budget allocation of Elementary Education System in Pakistan and Israel.
- Compare the differences and similarities of teaching approaches, medium of instruction, and curriculum of Elementary Education System in Pakistan and Israel.
- Show the differences and similarities of drop-out rate, enrollment rate and literacy rate Elementary Education System in Pakistan and Israel.

Elementary education is considered basic and compulsory in many of the countries of the world. It provides bases for secondary and higher secondary education. It also contributes in enhancing literacy rate. Israel is less populated area as compared to Pakistan and became an independent nation after Pakistan came into existence and also considered more advanced country with better education system, higher literacy and quality of education rate.

The succeeding research questions were structured for this study:

- What are the differences and similarities of policies, objectives and budget allocation among Pakistan and Israel?
- What are the differences and similarities of teaching approaches, medium of instruction, and curriculum in Pakistan and Israel?
- What are the differences and similarities of drop-out rate, enrollment rate and literacy rate of Pakistan and Israel?

Research Methodology

The current study adopts a comparative approach that is a method for researching the issue by the collection of data from a variety of sources. Comparative analysis means a process by which two or more education systems, processes, theories or policies are contrasted with each other to determine the relative powers, advantages or importance of one item over the others (Bereday, 1984). Objectives, budget allocation, drop-out rate, enrollment rate, teaching methods, medium of instruction, and curriculum of elementary education were selected for the comparison of Pakistan and Israel education system.

In this study, George Bereday's Comparative Method is used to compare the education system. He regarded comparative education as the political geography of schools whose role was to look for insights that could be learned from gaps in educational implementation in various societies (Bereday, 1975).

Description and Data collection

Interpretation

The review of various facts focuses with the point factors such as policies, objectives, budget allocation, literacy rate, drop-out rate, enrollment rate, teaching approaches, medium of instruction and curriculum was made to explain the elementary education system of Pakistan and Israel.

Juxtaposition

At this stage comparison of facts and findings regarding units of comparison was made to classify data and process the data.

Comparison

A final fusion of Pakistan and Israel data was used at this final stage to evaluate it to extract implementation plan.

Findings and Conclusions

Based on the information sought from document analysis with the following findings and conclusions are made.

Policy on Elementary Education System

For all children between the ages of 3 and 15 years in Israel at grade 10 included, mandatory education is required. The whole country provides free schooling from the age of 5. The State shall provide the free obligatory legal education (Compulsory Education Law, 1949).

The Government of Pakistan intended to provide free and mandatory basic education and planned separate pre-primary and primary school stages, for 3 to 6 and 6 to 11 years children (National Education Conference: 1947). It was proposed that education in both government and private schools would be free and universal up to Class X for all children throughout the country. The loss of tuition suffered by private schools would be sufficiently supported. The government wanted to make compulsory primary education up to class V by 1979 to boys and by 1984 for girls, and to send boys class VIII up to primary education by 1982 and girls by 1987. (Education Policy: 1972-80), by 2015 (Education policy, 2009).

Both of the countries are focusing on free and universal primary education. Pakistan is still struggling to achieve the goal of universal primary education.

Objectives

In Jewish culture, education and research as a lifetime responsibility have been extremely significant (Roso, 2013). The goal of the primary education system is to provide all people in society with a high standard of education focusing on developing cognitive skills, physical abilities, life skills of learners and to promote democratic values (Govt. of Pakistan, 1998).

Pakistan's education aims at the expansion of basic education, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and to remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory education (National Education Conference: 1947).

This comparison reveals that Israel has its focus on developing lifelong skills and democratic values among their students while Pakistan is struggling to increase the literacy rate of the country.

Structure of Elementary Education

The elementary education of Israel consists of three levels: pre-primary, primary, lower secondary. Pre-schooling includes one compulsory year of kindergarten with age 3-6 years. Sub-tertiary schooling consists of 6 years of basic school, 1-6 grades before 12 years of age, and 3 years of secondary education, 7-9 grades until age 12-15 years (Bekerman & Nader, 2003).

The elementary education of Pakistan consists of three levels: early childhood, primary and middle. Early childhood classes known as Katchi, include one year of age 3-4 years. Primary education comprises Grades 1-5 until the age of 5-9 years. Education at the middle stage lasts from 6-8 years age of 10-12 years (Nazar & Chaudhry, 2017).

Both of the countries have three stages of elementary education. They have the difference in nomenclature. In Israel, one year of pre-schooling is termed as preprimary while in Pakistan, it is termed as Katchi. The primary education in Pakistan consists of 5 years and in Israel, it comprises of 6 years duration. In both countries, the middle and lower secondary duration is 3 years. The total years of elementary education in Israel are 9 and 8 are in Pakistan.

School type

Primary and lower secondary education in Israel is imparted in four different school types: Public, Secular, Orthodox and Arab schools. Public schools are funded and offer basic curricula through the Ministry of Education. The state education curriculum is provided by secular schools in Hebrew set by the Education Ministry. The Orthodox Schools, with greater emphasis on religion and Jewish culture in tandem with the national curriculum, deliver state-religious Hebrew education. In conjunction with a greater emphasis on Arab history, culture, and values, the Arab Schools offer state curricula in Arabic language (Morewood & Stephens, 2009).

Provision of Elementary education in Pakistan is responsibility of three school types: public, private schools and Islamic madrasas (Ahmed, 2009). Public schools are English and Urdu medium and responsible for provision of state curriculum financed by the Ministry of education. Private schools are run by private entrepreneurs and have their own curriculum to teach. Islamic Madrasas are run by variety of Islamic organizations in the country having focus on Islamic education.

There is a variety of schools responsible for elementary education both in Israel and Pakistan. All types of schools in Israel impart state curriculum with changes in medium of instruction while in Pakistan these schools introduce different curriculum to teach.

National Curricula

The curriculum of primary education in Israel includes mathematics, science, literacy, history, geography, social studies, religious studies, and physical education (Morewood & Stephens, 2009).

Primary education curriculum in Pakistan includes reading and writing English and Urdu, arithmetic, general science, social studies, Islamic education, and physical education (Hussain, 2001).

Israel's lower Secondary School contains general topics including Hebrew, English, Arabic, French, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Social Sciences, Religion and Psychics (Morewood & Stephens, 2009).

The curriculum of Middle level in Pakistan includes the compulsory subjects of Urdu, mathematics, social studies, sciences, English and Islamic studies. Non-Muslims have choice to study ethics rather than Islamic Studies (Hussain, 2001).

In both countries majority of the subjects at elementary level are same. At primary level, Israel focuses more on history and geography while Pakistan is struggling to improve reading and writing abilities among students. At lower secondary level, Israel focuses on languages, history and geography than Pakistan.

Teaching Approach

In Israel, student-centered approach is adopted in schools (Volansky, 2010), while in Pakistan, teacher-centered approach is in practice (Khan, Nazneen, Ahmad, & Khalid, 2016).

The student-centric approach has shown that Israeli students are motivated to learn, maintain greater awareness, greater comprehension, and take more optimistic views about the subject being taught.

Use of Technology

In Israel the use of technology like touch screens, tablets, I-pads, multimedia and projectors is important component for learning at elementary level (Mioduser, 2001). While in Pakistan the major A.V aids used in public schools are the chalk board and white board.

Medium of instruction

In Israel the medium of instruction is their national language, Hebrew and Arabic. In Pakistan the medium of instruction is English while in two of the provinces have regional language.

In Israel, English is not used as medium of instruction while in Pakistan English is used as medium of instruction. Israel taught English as a second language and focus on its national languages for medium of instruction while Pakistan put more emphasis on teaching of English and also uses it as a medium of instruction.

Student-teacher ratio

In Israel, the amount of pupils per teacher in elementary schools is considerably lower, especially in Junior High Schools in Hebrew and Primary Schools in Arabic. Student-teacher ratio is 17students per teacher (UNESCO, 2014).

The student-teacher ratio in Pakistan's rural primary schools is 39 students per teacher and in urban schools 43 students per teacher (NEMIS, 2014).

In Israel, student-teacher ratio is more manageable and appropriate which is significant for the effective learning of pupils.

Budget allocation

Israeli's Government spending 6.09% of GDP on its education (UNESCO, 2017) while Pakistani's Government spending 2.9% of GDP on education (Pakistan Economic Survey, Ministry of Finance; Government of Pakistan, 2016-17). The comparison reveals that Israel is spending three times more GDP on education as compared to Pakistan and spending according to international standards.

Enrollment rate

In Israel, the enrollment rate at Primary level is 97.1% and at Secondary level is 98.7% (UIS, UNESCO, 2012), while in Pakistan the enrollment in primary schools is 74% and at secondary level reaching up to 55% (Trading Economics, 2018).

Drop-out rate

Children out of school at primary level in Israel are 1.4% and at lower secondary level 2.07% students are out of school (UNESCO, 2019) while in Pakistan more than 33% drop outs during the primary level (Shah, Haider, & Taj, 2019) and 73% at the secondary level (classes 4 to 10) (NEMIS, 2014). Children out of school at primary level in Pakistan ranked 2nd in the world while Israel is ranked 67th (Mughal, Aldridge, & Monaghan, 2019; UIS, 2017).

Literacy Rate

The literacy rate of Israel is 98.6% (UNESCO, 2018), while in Pakistan is 56.2% (L.F.S, 2001-14)

The literacy rate of Israel is significantly higher than Pakistan. Pakistan is struggling to achieve the goal of universal primary education.

| | Pakistan | Israel |
|---|---|--|
| Policy on Elementary Education Objectives | Focus on free and universal primary education Struggling to increase the literacy rate of the country | Focus on free and universal primary education Focus on developing lifelong skills and democratic values among students |
| Structure of Elementary Education | Have three stages of elementary education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katchi • Primary • Middle | Have three stages of elementary education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preprimary • Primary • Lower secondary |
| School Types | Schools introduce different curriculum | Country imparts state curriculum |
| National Curricula | At primary level, focus is on reading and writing abilities | At primary level, more focus on history and geography |
| Teaching Approach | Teacher-centered approach | Student-centered approach |
| Use of Technology | A.V aids in public schools are chalk board and white board. | Technology like touch screens, tablets, I-pads, multimedia and projectors |

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|-----------------------|--|--|
| Medium of instruction | Medium of instruction is English | National language, Hebrew and Arabic |
| Student-teacher ratio | In rural primary schools 39 students per teacher In urban schools 43 students per teacher | 17 students per teacher |
| Budget Allocation | 2.9% of GDP | 6.09% of GDP |
| Enrollment Rate | Primary level 74% Secondary level up to 55% | Primary level is 97.1% Secondary level is 98.7% |
| Drop-out Rate | Primary level 33% Secondary level 73% | Primary level 1.4% Lower secondary level 2.07% |
| Literacy Rate | Literacy rate is 56.2% | Literacy rate is 98.6% |

Discussion

In educational perspective, international comparisons are with great importance to comprehend the recent advancements, innovations and improvements in countries. According to Saeed (2007), comparison of Pakistan and the Israel in various educational dimensions showed conspicuous differences among the two countries. The study revealed that by setting minimum criteria for curriculum of higher education degrees, the gaps between both countries' elementary educational systems are estimated to be minimized (Saeed, 2007) as recommended by the researcher in the present study. In Pakistan, the Federal Ministry of Education at Islamabad is responsible for the formulation of national level plans and policies. Indeed, Government of Pakistan has made a well-rounded education policy and its objectives are focused to increase with the literacy rate of Pakistan and advancement of elementary education sector within coming five years. Results of the comparative study of higher education system in Pakistan and China also underlined the similar variances as observed in the current study that there is a clear difference between educational scenarios of both nations and suggested the ways to bridge this gap by implementation of educational policy (Yingyu, 2015). The government has set the defined targets and working with the execution of policy. But the execution of policies are not that satisfactory and the main problem faced by the government is the implementation of this policy. The implementation process of the government is incapable which makes the government policies inadequate hence the expected desired results are not accomplished yet.

Conclusion

It is concluded from the above discussion that literacy rate of Israel is significantly higher than Pakistan because in Israel budget allocation is higher than Pakistan which is 8.7% of GDP. In Israel schools, the medium of instruction is their national language. Their student-teacher ratio is also low at all levels so Israel's teachers focus more on their students. They introduce high level technology for their students at all levels of elementary education. The fundamental concept of Israel is to provide all representatives with high-level education. Israel provides basic universal primary education for all children. Pakistan is less focusing on history, values and cultural heritage at the primary level. In

Pakistan, it must be focused on the curriculum to achieve the goal of national identity and integrity. Medium of instruction should be in the national language to prepare the students learning more effective and efficient. The number of teachers may be increased in the schools to decrease student teacher ratio so that teachers can pay more individual attention to every child in the classroom and student-teacher approach might be introduced.

Recommendations

From the present study, further it is recommended that:

- Bridge the gaps between the formation and implementation of educational policies to make education accessible for all the children.
- Medium of instruction should be in the national language to enrich and amend better learning in Pakistani pupils.
- Budget allocation in education sector should be increased so that the major constraints of infrastructure in the educational institutions can be reduced.
- Traditional classrooms need to be replaced by digital equipped technology so that students can broaden their access to knowledge rather than rote memorization.
- The number of teachers need to be increased in the schools to decrease student/teacher ratio so that teachers can pay individual attention to every child in the classroom.

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