

A Comparative Investigation of Bangladesh and African Sub Continent Countries Pre-Primary Education

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Background: Purpose of Comparative Education Research: Comparative education research helps to understand educational processes between the countries where the analysis is carried out. Mainly comparative education research helps understand other countries' education systems. It also helps to draw some lessons to improve the education system. Besides, Comparative education research, many cases may generate new knowledge and contribute to the theory. Comparative education research contributes to improving the desired aspects of the education process through three specific following ways:

1. Understanding the countries themselves
2. Using the knowledge gained from the examples of the two countries to generalize to others and contributing to the theory *Understanding the countries themselves*

Through the use of comparative analysis, African sub continent countries will appreciate their education program. The conditions of the educational cycle and the other essential elements of comparative education research should be described. Besides, they should also consider each other's structures and gain lessons to develop their systems. In particular, the government authority can often use comparative education research findings as evidence to identify its potential areas for improvement. They should build on others' related perspectives to adapt them to their issues to incorporate appropriate solutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Using the knowledge gained from the examples of the two countries to generalize to others

The comparative education analysis refers to a thorough explanation of the history and the associated phenomena between the target countries, which occur in various geographical settings. This offers a comprehensive overview of the development of generalizations about the different facets of school systems. The themes methodology starts right from the outset to tackle the specific problems of qualitative education-comparison and study. Examples and experience from the two countries in educational systems also include generalization processes that better understand one's school environment.

Contributing to the theory

Comparative education research further adds to the theory by investigating the countries' educational method to be studied.

It gives way to various views on educational realities. It broadens existing knowledge and compares aspects that include new dimensions and lenses that make the current theory more diversified.

However, this paper explains some specific aspects of pre-primary education in Bangladesh. It also seeks to compare the Bangladeshi system with African sub continent countries that have been identified through comparative education. Research carried out by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and published the findings as 'Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2015) provides the premise of the present study.

II. CONCEPT OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Pre-primary education is considered the basis for the preparatory phase of formal education that provides the necessary support to children for their proper growth and development (DPEd, 2013; Barnett, 2008). Pre-primary education is the basis of the preparatory phase of formal education. Globally, pre-primary education is assumed to provide the children with the requisite resources for their future growth and development. Pre-primary education aims to provide the necessary support and activities before the formal primary level of education.

It ensures their right to prepare for formal schooling by providing children with opportunities for care, survival, play, entertainment, and the basic introduction of literacy and numeracy skills. All pre-primary education approaches are focused on and defended by children and include aspects of their growth and development, both physically, emotionally and socially, that include all other related elements that ensure their holistic development (DPEd, 2013, p.85).

UNESCO (2006) points out that the purpose of pre-primary education is to help children develop the structures they need to plan for successful learning later in primary school. The Finnish National Board of Education (2010) established the critical role of pre-primary education. This seeks to encourage children's tremendous potential to progress comprehensively on the developmental dimensions of physical, psychological, financial, cognitive, emotional and other relevant influences that play a role in fostering children's growth and

development. As the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) (2010) points out:

The central role of pre-primary education is to foster favourable growth, creation and learning opportunities for children. It includes fostering and tracking physical, economic, educational, cognitive and emotional growth and avoiding any problems that might occur. It is necessary to reinforce the healthy sense of self-esteem of children through meaningful learning activities and to provide incentives for varied encounters with others (FNBE, 2010, p.5).

UNESCO (2006) points out the pre-primary education as a natural entry to early childhood provision that entails the most realistic way to approach the EFA declaration that learning begins at birth:

For the education sector, pre-primary education is a normal entry point into early childhood education. Pre-primary education is to be prioritised on the basis that it encourages the holistic development of children, that it is provided in an environment that meets the basic educational standards and that there is a gradual approach for the incorporation of younger age groups. So long as these preconditions are met, the pre-primary education system is the most prominent part sensible way for the education sector to approach the EFA declaration that learning begins at birth (UNESCO, 2006, p.3).

Pre-primary education is a one-year-long school readiness programmed for children of 5+ years of age to be prepared for further quality education in formal primary schools. Pre-primary education ensures a smooth transition to primary education and lay the foundation for lifelong learning (Haque et al. 1, 2013; Kaul, V., 2002). Therefore, pre-primary education has already been accepted as an essential part of the government strategy for quality primary education in Bangladesh, like other developing countries worldwide (MoE, 2010). Education policy (2010) has emphasized pre-primary education as the preparatory phase of formal primary education in Bangladesh. It stresses the value of pre-primary education that generates 'an atmosphere conducive to the development of intrinsic human dispositions, such as the senses of infinite wonder, limitless enthusiasm, excitement and inexhaustible fervour that exist in the depths of the infantile psyche' (MoE, 2010, p. 11).

III. IMPORTANCE OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Quality pre-primary schooling for both girls and boys has been promoted globally in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It considers that the initiative to prepare children for higher quality education in formal primary schools worldwide, particularly in developed countries, is successful (Osborn, Cutter & Ullah, 2015; Thomas et al., 2020). Empirical data from longitudinal studies in various countries suggests that pre-primary schooling has critical beneficial

impacts on children's subsequent academic and personal lives (Berlinski, Galiani&Gertler, 2006; UNESCO, 2006).

Haque et al. (2013) point out that pre-primary education ensures a smooth transition to primary education and provides lifelong learning. Therefore, pre-primary education has been seen as a popular strategy to protect children from formal education around the world. Kaul, V. (2002) suggests that pre-primary schooling has undoubtedly had a significant effect on children's future development at and above the school's primary stage. Pre-primary schooling is also reasonably necessary for the growth of small children before they reach formal school. However, pre-primary education plays an essential role in promoting children's holistic development, including their development of physical, emotional, social, and other related aspects of children's growth and development.

Pre-primary education has also positively impacted children's learning and skills growth, such as solid and enduring academic abilities, social activity, language skills, daily participation, a greater sense of responsibility, improved vocabulary, and decreased grade duplication in the high school curriculum. Consequently, pre-school programs grow children with solid language and communication abilities with a fundamental awareness of early-school reading and numeracy skills that allow them for improved academic success in primary schools (Card and Krueger 1992; Sammons et al. 2008). UNESCO (2006) stresses the value of pre-primary education as :

Pre-primary education, though short it can be, will encourage the comprehensive growth of infants. Emphasis should be placed on well-balanced development. Health, safety, a healthy and secure atmosphere and outreach to parents and families would not be of any less value to the education and treatment of pre-primary age children UNESCO, 2006, p.3.

Comparative research in different countries has shown that well-designed pre-school education programs produce long-term improvements in school success factors, including higher achievement test scores, lower grade repeat rates, and higher education achievement (Barnett, 2008). Pre-primary education contributes to the achievement of primary education goals later in life by establishing quality learning skills in early childhood.

Pre-primary Education in Bangladesh

Pre-primary education has been accepted as an essential part of the government strategy for quality primary education in Bangladesh (MoE, 2010). Education policy (2010) has emphasized pre-primary education as the preparatory phase of formal primary education in Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh launched the pre-primary education initiative, under Primary Education Development Programmed _ II

(PEDP II), by introducing pre-primary lessons, prevalently referred to as "kids program"(DPE, 2006).

The government of Bangladesh has already approved its essential elements that include national curriculum for pre-primary education, operational framework, development arrangement, GO-NGO cooperation instruction for entire PPE, pre-primary examine relief run of the mill and comprehensive ECCD policy. Necessary books and materials have been adopted and developed accordingly by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

Bangladesh has seen a rapid rise in pre-primary education from 895,000 children enrolled in 2010 to 2.86 million five years later (Graham, 2017). To accelerate pre-primary intervention, the government and civil society partners have worked together to make one year of pre-primary education universally available in the country.

Table 1: Number of Institutes Providing Pre-primary Education by Type of Schools

Type of Schools	Number of Schools
GPS	38,185
NNPS	24,129
RNGPS	98
NRNGPS	1,328
Expt. School	17
Ebtedayee Madrasha	1,224
Community School	100
Other School	29,957
Total	95,038

Source: DPE (2015), Annual Primary School Census – 2019

Pre-primary education in Bangladesh has proliferated in a few years. The number of children in pre-primary classrooms has also been increased. The consistency of classroom practices remains a concern (Education Watch, 2013; Jahan, 2002; Daka et al., 2020). Graham (2017), a study forum, points out primary education's status, which notes that critical concerns surrounding the standard of pre-primary education should be

highlighted, and scientific data on this should be identified. As it states:

Bangladesh has seen dramatic growth in pre-primary education from 895,000 children enrolled in 2010 to 2.86 million five years afterwards. Government and civil society partners have worked together to make one year of pre-primary education universally available in the country – but the quality of education delivered remains a major issue.

Comparative research evidence shows that, in some cases, teaching techniques in pre-primary classes did not differ from those in primary grades. Sports and other enjoyable games as part of the instruction are entirely missing from pre-primary classrooms. Moreover, book-based one-way deliberation has, unfortunately, been the most popular in many cases (Education Watch, 2013). Active individualized instruction in a general pre-primary classroom in the government pre-primary school in Bangladesh is also a daunting challenge for an instructor (Rashid, F., 2015).

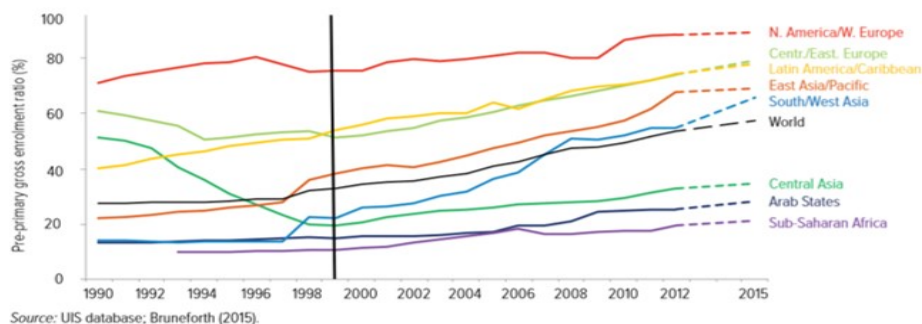
Status of Pre-primary Education: Global Agenda

Pre-primary education is gaining prominence on the global agenda. The Millennium Development Targets did not provide any commitment to pre-primary education for girls. Nevertheless, both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 curriculum plan emphasize early childhood learning and especially on pre-primary education. New policies and programs are emerging at the country level that expands pre-primary education in the year or two before compulsory schooling or efforts to improve these services' quality This increased emphasis is not unexpected, considering the increasing evidence from around the world that pre-primary education attendance improves children's school preparation, adjustment to kindergarten, and early and beyond success.

The graph below (Figure 1) shows the pre-primary enrolment rates in different regions of the worlds. The charts on the last pages provide information about country-specific information.

Figure 1: Pre-primary Enrolment rates in different regions in the world

Pre-primary enrolment rates are projected to have increased by three-quarters during the Dakar period
Pre-primary gross enrolment ratio, world and regions, 1990–2012 and 2015 (projection)



Source: UNESCO, 2015, p.5.

Also reported empirical research from the United States and the United Kingdom, findings in low-and middle-income countries often indicate the important beneficial impact on pre-primary education:

Approximately one year of pre-primary education in Argentina culminated in an overall 8 per cent rise in grade 3 language and mathematics grades and had beneficial results on non-cognitive behavioral skills.

In Bangladesh, infants in a high-quality pre-school curriculum outperformed the test group in verbal and non-verbal thinking and school preparation.

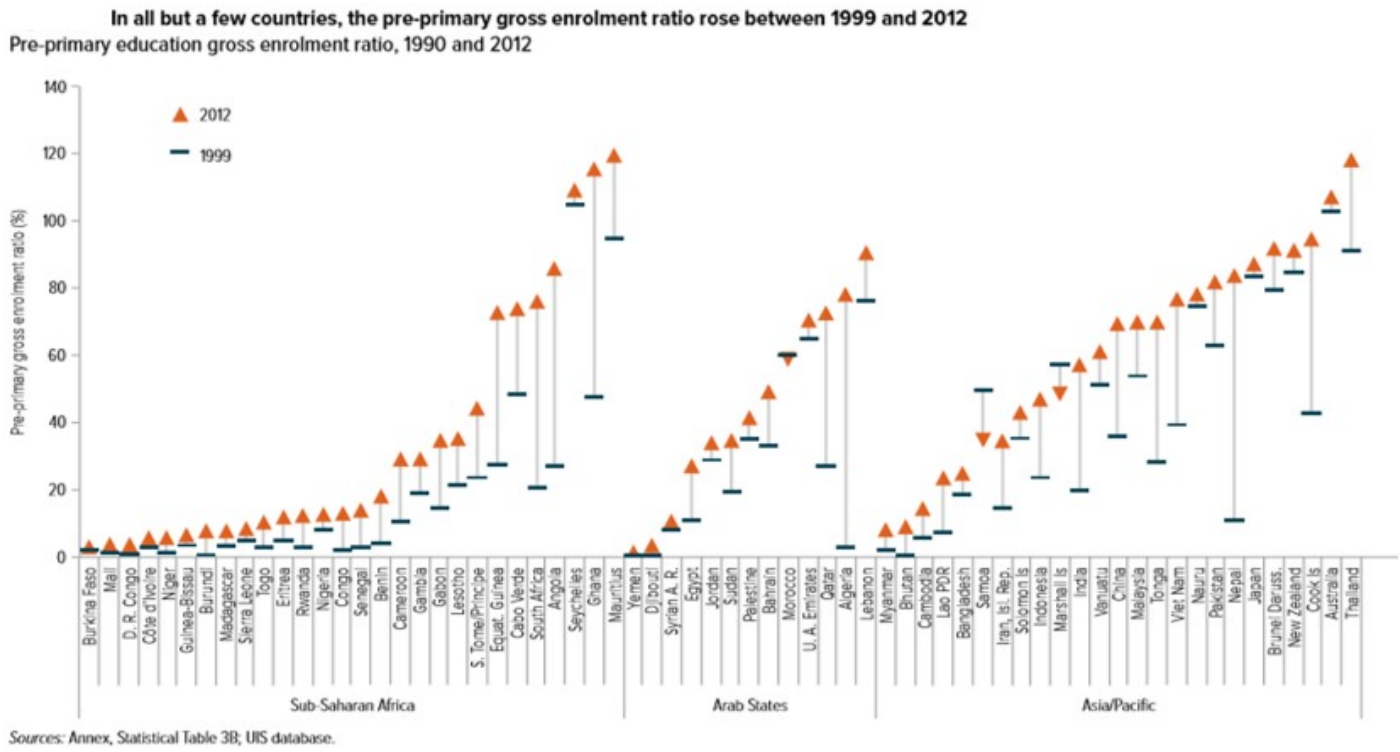
In Mozambique, relative to the control community, infants in the rural nursery were 24 per cent more likely to participate in primary school and demonstrated increased academic ability, fine motor skills and results.

Enrolment in pre-primary education around the world

According to the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2015), enrolment in pre-primary education has risen by almost two-thirds (to 180 million) in the last decade. Although it is encouraging to see that the gross enrolment rate increased from 32.8% in 1999 to 53.7% in 2012, only a tiny percentage of children 17% in low-income countries had access in 2012. These statistics also mask significant regional disparities. Among low-and middle-income countries, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have the highest participation rate (74.5%), while sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest participation rate (19.5%). South and West Asia and East Asia and the Pacific have made the most progress in enrolling students in pre-primary in recent years.

The graph below (Figure 2) shows a different african sub continent country's expansion ratio of gross enrollment in pre-primary schools between 1999 and 2012.

Figure 2: Pre-primary Gross Enrolment Ratio in different Countries

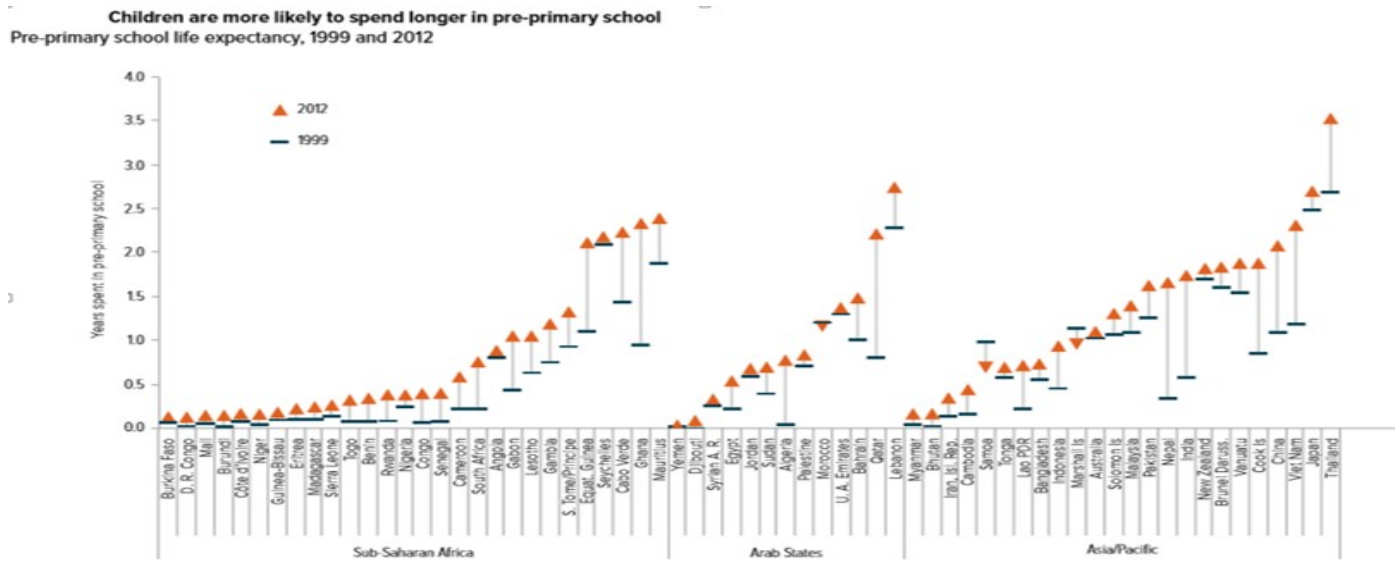


Source: UNESCO, 2015, p.60.

These comparative findings in the graph help each country understand the role's gross status and learn from each other. They will take insights and perspectives from each other to improve their pre-primary education program. This is a detailed illustration of how a comparative education method will lead to each other's education systems.

The graph below (Figure 3) shows the distribution of time spent by children in pre-primary schools in different countries. This graph provides information and understanding of how children in pre-primary schools in Bangladesh spend time with other countries worldwide.

Figure 3: Distribution of Time the Children spend pre-primary schools in different Countries



Sources: Annex, Statistical Table 3B (website); UIS database.

Source: UNESCO, 2015, p.60.

This comparison graph in different countries certainly shows a comparative overview of what the government of Bangladesh can do to improve its existing practice of pre-primary education.

Budget in Pre-primary Education: Lessons from Other Countries

As a percentage of government spending, expenditure on education has improved little since 1999. In 2012, the world average was 13.7%, dropping short of the goal of 15 % to 20%. Sub-Saharan Africa is where governments have dedicated the highest median share of government budgets on education (18.4%), led by East Asia and the Pacific (17.5%). Just 12.6 per cent is assigned to South and West Asia (Table 8.1). Of the 129 countries with data, 53 spent 15% or more of the total government expenditure on education in 2012, of which 12 were low income and 17 are poorer middle income countries. Of the 53 countries that spent 15 per cent or more of the total government expenditure on education, 20 spent 20% or more; of the 15 with comparable data for 1999 and 2012, 8 – including Ethiopia and Niger – started to spend less than 20% in 1999, but were allocated 20% or more by 2012.

A limited proportion of education budgets were dedicated to pre-primary Education in Bangladesh. As a percentage of overall policy spending on schooling, global median spending on pre-primary education contributed to just 4.9% in 2012. North America and Western Europe allocated 8.8% of education budgets to pre-primary education, while sub-Saharan Africa spent 0.3% on pre-primary education. Of the 51 countries with accessible data in 1999 and 2012, 37 raised public spending on pre-primary education as a GDP share over the period. Disaggregated by income, the differences are significant. In the 22 high-income nations, 18 boosted the pre-primary share in school budgets. Of the nine low and low

middle-income countries, five – including Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the United Republic of Tanzania – increased their share.

How Comparative Education Research helps Bangladesh to improve its current practice of Pre-Primary Education

The Government of Bangladesh can benefit from the lessons learned from the findings of comparative education research. A detailed, comprehensive and comprehensive comparative education research can certainly provide multi-faceted opportunities to be considered in promoting existing policies, practices, procedures and processes in the context of pre-primary Education in Bangladesh. Any of the essential findings to comparative education work on the pre-primary educational cycle can be described as follows:

As comparative education includes researching education from a viewpoint where situations, primarily global, are linked to one another; thus, in this case, Bangladesh's government can consider the realities of pre-primary education by contrasting circumstances in other countries.

Observations in comparative education research help each other understand the nature of the different education systems that exist in a wide range of contexts around the world. Here, Bangladesh's pre-primary education strategy will be acquainted with the pre-primary education processes implemented in various regional settings and take sufficient time to know about specific facets of education followed by others.

Comparative education often referred to as comparative and foreign Education (CIE), has been conceptualised as a multidisciplinary endeavour spanning local and global expertise, integrating science philosophy and information specific and specialised. Lessons learned from the results of

comparative education study The Government of Bangladesh, thus, agree on possible measures to help implement its pre-primary education to reach the required level of achievement. Through comparative education research, the government of Bangladesh can improve pre-primary education and set a standard that can be established based on pre-primary experience worldwide. It can certainly lead to a further drive to ensure the quality of pre-primary education, taking into account international perspectives.

During comparative education research, Bangladesh's government will study its current pre-primary education policies and procedures and align them with international trends. It can increase its acceptance of its policy and practice to be established by pre-primary scholars and open the window to provide enriched lessons for others to follow.

Bangladesh's government can review its existing pre-primary education policies and procedures and align with international trends through comparative education research. It can increase its acceptance of its policy and practice to be established by pre-primary scholars and open the window to provide enriched lessons for others to follow.

IV. CONCLUSION

Comparative learning is highly viewed as an interdisciplinary macro-field of education. It draws on the different disciplines of the social sciences for its theoretical and methodological resources. Comparative education research is carried out intensively to study cross-societal issues or education systems properly. Using the above analysis on pre-primary Education in Bangladesh and other countries, the Government of Bangladesh receives broader experience and learning from other countries that improve its pre-primary education system.

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