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JAPANESE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION  
AND  
ITS PRACTICABILITY IN PAKISTAN

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## JAPANESE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION AND ITS PRACTICABILITY IN PAKISTAN

### INTRODUCTION:

Under review is the Japanese Education System with the objectives to examine the possibility of absorbing strong points of the system into Pakistani Education System. It is likely to mention here that there is no comparison between Japanese system and Pakistani system. Japan is one of the advanced countries spending 8.6% of the G.N.P. on Education, whereas Pakistan is still struggling to achieve the target of 2% of G.N.P. for Education. Five years compulsory and free education is a challenge for Pakistan when Japan has 9 years compulsory free education. For comprehensive analysis of the report it would be better to summarize the salient features of the system in the following lines.

### Present System:

The present educational system is known as 6-3-3-4 system; elementary education for six years; lower secondary for three years; upper secondary for three years and higher education for four years. The elementary and lower secondary education are compulsory and free.

Compulsory education was introduced in three steps. The Government introduced compulsory education for the first four years of elementary schooling in 1886, and later extended it upto a total of six years in 1907. 90% enrolment was attained as early as the end of 19th century.

The post-war reforms did not bring about any radical changes with the exception that local Governments were given a greater role in the management of education and the period of compulsory schooling was extended from six years to 9 years in 1947. The present participation rate is reported to be 99.9 per cent.

#### Pre-School Education

Kindergartens play a key role in the development of elementary education. Children of 3 to 6 years of age are admitted to these institution which provide them courses of one to three years duration. The kindergartens are designed to provide children an environment conducive to healthy, mental as well as physical growth. At least 60 per cent of the entrants at the elementary schools are reported to have attended kindergartens.

#### Content of Education

Eight subjects prescribed for the two levels of compulsory education are:-

- i) Japanese language
- ii) Social Studies
- iii) Arithmetic /Mathematics
- iv) Science
- v) Music
- vi) Drawing and Handicrafts
- vii) Health and Physical Education
- viii) Home Making/Industrial Arts.

The lower secondary level schools have additional elective subjects such as foreign languages and vocational subjects related to trade, agriculture, industry, business and fisheries. In addition to the teaching subjects, moral education (not religion) and special activities are compulsory for students at these two levels.

The curricula of the elementary and lower secondary education lay emphasis on basic educational grounding rather than specialised education.

The upper secondary education is open to students of 15 years who qualify an entrance examination for admission to this level of education. The upper secondary school courses may be general or specialised vocational. The general courses taken by 70% of the students are meant for those who intend to join higher studies or employment in non-vocational areas. The vocational courses are classified into several categories including technical, commerce, agriculture, fishery, home economics, fine arts and mathematics.

Regardless of the courses, all students are required to study standard subjects in Japanese language, social studies, mathematics, science, health and physical

education and music/fine arts/handicrafts. Home making is compulsory for female students.

Parallel to upper secondary education schools, there are technical colleges running five year courses in mechanical, electric and chemical fields of engineering for students who complete the lower secondary education. The small stream institutions were created to meet the shortage of technicians.

The higher education is of four years duration leading to Bachelor's degree. The Bachelor's degree in medicine and dentistry, however, require six years. Moreover, the Graduate schools at Universities offer a two year course for Master's or a five year course for Doctorate to those holding Bachelor's degree. A side stream of higher education is run at junior colleges which offer courses for two years or three years duration leading to Bachelor's degree.

After 12 years of successful schooling a student can apply for admission at graduate level provided he qualifies a procedure of selection in two phases:

- (i) The Joint First Stage Achievement Test conducted simultaneously throughout Japan by National Centre for University Entrance Examination;

- (ii) The second Stage Examination conducted by each University for those who qualify the first test:

The courses at the higher education level are classified as general education, foreign languages, health and physical education and specialised education. The specialised education is conducted at various faculties i.e. law, literature, economics, commerce, engineering and teaching. A candidate for Bachelor's degree is generally expected to earn 124 credits out of which 76 pertain to the field of special education.

At higher level the maximum number of students is found in social sciences and engineering. The details of enrolment are as below:

i) Social Sciences	37.7%
ii) Engineering	16.8%
iii) Humanities	15.3%
iv) Education & Teaching	10.7%
v) Medicine	6.2%
vi) Agriculture	3 %
vii) Natural Sciences	2.6%

### Teachers

The Japanese have given a very high social status and prestige to persons belonging to teaching profession. There are 13 million teachers of all categories in Japan. A teaching certificate corresponding to the requirements of teaching at each level of education is mandatory for employment in the profession. The teaching certificates are awarded by prefectural boards of education to candidates who possess the requisite academic qualifications and acquire the specified number of credits at the recognised courses run for teachers training at various Universities. The Ministry of Education has devised an elaborate system stipulating requirements to attain teaching certificates for different levels of instruction. The certificates for secondary level of education are invariably given in specified subject areas.

Appointments of teachers are made through appointment examination in both teaching and professional subjects given to holders of teaching certificates. The National Government has prescribed salary scales for four categories of teachers i.e. (i) Universities and Junior colleges, (ii) technical colleges, (iii) upper secondary schools and (iv) lower secondary and elementary schools. The local governments generally follow the pay scales



introduced by the Central Government. The salaries and allowances paid to teachers since 1974 have been higher than the emoluments paid to comparable government servants.

In-service teacher training obligatory for teachers at the pre-university level is conducted by the Ministry of Education as well as various Education Boards.

#### Administration of Education

The Ministry of Education, in addition to the areas of its direct control, provides supervisory umbrella to the prefectural Boards of Education and education in the private sector. The Ministry exercises direct control over the national universities, research institutes, some junior colleges and almost all technical colleges. The Ministry has a supervisory role in the allocation of funds to local Boards of Education and guidance with regard to curriculum standards and methods of instruction. The Ministry provides the local governments an approved list of text-books from which they make selection according to local conditions.

The Boards of Education appoint Superintendents of Education with the approval of the Ministry of Education.

The Universities in the public sector exercise a great degree of autonomy. The Presidents and Deans of the Universities are elected by the teaching community. Allocation of funds to the Universities are worked out on the basis of a standard formula and, once the funds are allocated, the Universities have a great measure of freedom in their utilization.

The national government allocates funds to the local governments through the Local Allocation Tax System, which is a permanent device to divert a part of the central revenues to the local governments in order to meet short-falls in the latter's revenues. The total expenditure on education represents the 8.6 per cent of Japan's G.N.P.

All the kindergartens are established in private sector. The elementary and lower secondary schools are mostly run by municipal governments. About 76 per cent upper secondary schools are run in the public sector mostly by the local governments. There are 62% government-owned technical colleges.

The National Government has established 20.6% of the 451 universities. The role of private sector in establishment of junior colleges is even greater accounting for 83.4 per cent of the total number of colleges.

The participation rates at various levels of education are as under:-

i) Kindergarten	60%
ii) Elementary and Lower Secondary	99.9%
iii) Upper Secondary	96.5%
iv) Higher Education	33.3%

Findings:

The review and analysis of the Japanese System of Education reveals the following findings:

- i) Education is prescribed free, compulsory and universal by law for first nine years of schooling in Japan.
- ii) The free primary compulsory education has been enforced in three steps i.e. for four years in 1886, for six years in 1907 and for nine years in 1947.
- iii) The Kindergartens prove to be a great impetus for the development of elementary education as 60% of the entrants to elementary education are claimed to have attended Kindergartens.
- iv) The Kindergartens are organised by the private sector. The elementary and secondary schools are mostly run by the municipal/local governments.
- v) Curricula are prepared at the national level and an approved list of textbooks is provided by the Ministry to Local Governments/Institutions. They are free in the selection of books according to the local requirements.

- vi) The content of education at elementary and lower secondary levels of education is general in nature and need-oriented. The students at upper secondary level are introduced with special education. Upper secondary education is a three years preparatory course to ~~University~~ University/Higher education.
- vii) Parallel to upper secondary education there are technical colleges running five years course in mechanical, electrical and chemical fields of engineering. The courses of these colleges are designed keeping in view the demand of their graduates in the open market. These courses help in developing the cottage and other industries.
- viii) One language is followed throughout the system except voluntary learning of other languages.
- ix) The higher education in Japan is highly selective cutting down the participation rate from 96.5% at upper secondary level to 33.3% in higher education. It is offered strictly on merit to those who qualify:
  - (1) The Joint First Stage Achievement Test conducted simultaneously throughout Japan; and
  - (2) Second Stage Examination conducted by each University/Institution of higher education. Higher education is mostly controlled by the private sector.
- x) Teachers enjoy a very high social status and prestige. Rigorous recruitment tests and in-built system of in-service training programmes are some of the requirements of the teaching

profession. The salaries paid to teachers are higher than the emoluments paid to comparable government servants.

- xi) The expenditure on education in Japan amounts to 8.6% of the G.N.P. The Centre allocates the funds to local governments through Local Allocation Tax System, which is a permanent device to divert a part of the central revenues to the local governments.
- xii) The Central Ministry has a supervisory role in allocation of funds and guidance with regard to curriculum standards and methods of instruction.

Recommendations:

In the light of the main features of the Japanese System of Education and Keeping in view their practicability in Pakistan, the following recommendations are made for expansion and improvement of education in the country:

- i) In order to ensure the overall development of the children and to provide a sound base for primary education, the establishment of pre-primary institutions (Kindergartens, child care centres etc) be encouraged in the private sector. Federal Government should provide every possible assistance for the establishment of these institutions.
- ii) The primary education is considered to be the foundation of any education system. To increase the participation rate at this level and to make education accessible to

each individual we should not delay to enforce the compulsory and free education. For this purpose the education for five years should be made compulsory in selected parts of the country and this should be extended to all parts of the country by 1988.

- iii) The curricula at primary and secondary levels are already being designed at Federal level. These curricula need to be made need-oriented and practical in nature. Subjects of science and mathematics should be made compulsory upto higher secondary level.
- iv) Instead of sole textbook system, there should be more than one textbooks approved by the Federal Ministry of Education for a particular subject of a grade/level. The institutions should be free in making selection from the approved list according to the local requirements.
- v) Higher education should be made selective. In order to determine the eligibility for admission to higher education a test should be designed and conducted at national level. Different Educational Institutions (both professional and general) may develop their own criteria for admission of the students who have already qualified the National Eligibility Test.
- vi) For those who do not qualify for admission to higher education, the stream of vocational/technical education should be reinforced,

developed and expanded further. The programmes of these institutions should lead to the latest technological developments in the country and should be helpful in self-employment.

- vii) The curricula taught in vocational/technical institutions should be designed according to the needs of the industry. Production units may be attached to these institutions.
- viii) As far as possible linkages between the manpower requirements in different fields and institutions of higher education be established. The institutions of higher learning should focus on the creation of new knowledge and technological development in the country.
- ix) To improve the quality of education, the mode of selection of teachers should be revised and improved. For this purpose an Education Cadre/Service should be created and the teachers should be recruited on the basis of test and interview. Accordingly their salaries should be enhanced to make the education service more attractive.
- x) At least 4 to 5 per cent of G.N.P. should be allocated for education. Private sector should be encouraged to establish the institutions of higher education. Maintenance of standards of education by these institutions should be controlled by the Federal Ministry of Education.

- xi) Islamic education and the inculcation of Ideology of Pakistan be ensured and reinforced as we can not afford secular education.
  
- xii) In order to evolve effective strategies to improve the system in the country, a group of educationists may visit Japan to study the system in detail with respect to development of curriculum, textbooks production, teacher training programmes, evaluation procedures and linkages between education and industrial development.