DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION SYSTEM IN IRAQ

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ABSTRACT

It’s generally agreed that the origins of the Iraqi education systems go back to the days of Abbassid rule (750-1258).

During this period, learning was based on Islamic philosophy and conducted through two main institutions: Al-kuttab and Al-madrassa.

When Iraq came under Ottoman rule the Turks set up military schools. Under the British occupation the education ladders was changed, the primary level involved two types of six-year primary schools.

At the time of its foundation, the Iraqi Kingdom had very little to begin with by way of education provision.

In 1931, an attempt was made to reform the educational system as a whole.

In order to meet the social and economic changes in Iraq, another attempt to develop the education system was made in 1952.

During the period 1958-1968 further progress was achieved in relation to the growth of number of students.

More details will be shown in the research.

Key Words: Education, history, delopment, Iraq.

INTRODUCTION

Iraq is a country of various physical features. It is famous for the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates. It has a rich heritage history stretching from the ancient past to recent times. Its land witnessed the rising of the greatest and oldest civilization in the world Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian. Iraqi society consists of various ethnic, language and religious groups. This variety has influenced positively the content of the existing national culture. The historical background of the country has an obvious impact on the development of education systems quantitatively and qualitatively.

Education in Abbasid Period

It is generally agreed that the origins of the Iraqi education systems go back to the days of the Abbassid rule (750-1258), during this period, learning was based on Islamic philosophy and conducted through two main institutions, the first was the
Al-Kuttab, or foundation school. In this pupils attended the house of the religious teacher, the “mulla”, commonly attached to mosques, to memorize and learn the holy Koran. Second, there was the Al-Madrassa or higher institute. In this, students normally assembled around the teacher for tutoring and individual teaching. The main subjects provided for the students in such institutes were: Islamic theology, logic, philosophy, history, poetry, literature, and Koranic interpretation.

**Education Under The Ottoman Rule**

This form of education was the prevailing one until the middle of the sixteenth century, when Iraq came under Ottoman rule. The Turks set up military schools to provide their army with officers and opened civil schools to meet the needs of government for administrators.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the following types of secular schools existed in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire including Iraq: a primary school of three years duration, a post primary school also of three years duration and a secondary school of five years. After the post primary stage there were also certain vocational, agricultural, and teacher training schools (Ahmed, 1987: 132-134).

**British and The Education in Iraq**

When the country was occupied by the British in 1918, the educational ladder was changed. The primary level subsequently involved two types of six – year primary schools: one type with English in the curriculum, and the other without this provision. The secondary school became of four years duration, and higher education was available in three colleges, namely those of law, medicine and commerce (Kadhim, 1978: 68-69).

**Education in The Iraqi Kingdom Era**

At the time of its foundation, the Iraqi kingdom had very little to begin with by way of education provision: the scanty number of primary schools, the one and only school barely above primary level, and a law school that was not of collegiate standard, were all that the country then possessed. It is, therefore, not surprising that the government was confronted with the very serious problem of finding suitable persons to fill essential official posts. In order to remedy this shortage, the Iraqi government gave its attention to the varied problems of education. The expansion of primary education was given priority. To meet the needs for teachers, short courses were arranged and many untrained teachers were recruited (Al-Bahrani, 1981: 102).

In 1931, an attempt was made to reform the educational system as a whole. The ministry of education requested the teachers college of Colombia university to make an inquiry into the matter and to put forward its recommendations for
improvement. A committee of inquiry headed by Paul Monroe undertook a critical survey of educational provision in Iraq and made the following suggestions as to need

a. To build more schools, specially secondary schools.

b. To adapt education to local needs.

c. To accept the fact that Iraqi schools could be effective agencies for economic growth.

d. To consider the development of teacher training.

In order to meet the social and economic changes in Iraq, another attempt to develop the education system was made in 1952 when the ministry of education requested UNESCO to send a technical expert to Iraq to advise on the socio-economic and cultural factors affecting industrial education. One of the expert’s recommendations was for the setting up of a permanent programme of in-service education for secondary teachers of industrial subjects involving additional study and training during summer vacations.

**Education from 1958 until 1968**

Because of the need to meet more effectively the political aspirations of the 14th revolution in 1958, greater attention was paid to reorganizing the educational systems at all levels. New aims were agreed upon and a remarkable expansion took place to meet emerging social needs. Furthermore, the year 1958 witnessed the establishment of the University of Baghdad, when all separate higher level colleges were incorporated to form a university (Kadhim, 1978: 70-71, 74, 75)

During the period 1958-1968, further progress was achieved in relation to the growth of numbers of students: in secondary schools these increased from 98,583 in 1958-1959 to 254,033 in 1967-1968 (Yousif, 1985: 20). Besides the economical and political changes, this large increase may belong to the cultural development which had emerged among the people who increasingly wished to send their children to schools.

**REFERENCES**

