



## Higher education in Asian and European countries; comparative study

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### ABSTRACT

Although it is loudly pronounced that the world has become global village but there can be seen a huge gulf among the poor and rich countries particularly in education, The tertiary average enrolment, percentage of GDP for education, literacy rate of youth, pupil teacher ratio and number of universities were selected as criterion to analyse the ratio among these factors which painted a gloomy picture. The data has been collected by various official web sites of the relevant countries and from the World Bank Reports, UNESCO Institute of Statistics. The findings show that there is a big gap in all of the indicators. Particularly tertiary regional average enrolment, GDP spent on education ,literacy rate among youth, research publication per year, number of PhDs produced yearly, teachers students ratio and number of universities public and private both are included. It is recommended that the technology and skills should be transferred to these comparatively less developed countries along with financial assistance. The regional conflicts and tension and the factors that cause hindrance in development of education must be removed by joint efforts of both of these countries. They have already contributed reasonably in the development process but it needs to be precise and education oriented.

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### Introduction

Education is only source to boost resources of human capital growth and development to achieve multidirectional status of developed countries. The development of all sectors, as it is observed in developed countries completely depends on educational sectors development particularly higher education. Unfortunately many of the Asian countries ignored it and remained legging behind in providing basic necessities of life to its public that depends on finance and quality higher education which make scientists, explorers and researchers. There is demarcation of developing and developed nation at international level. This Asian region stands lower at developmental hierarchical ladder because it only developed its human resources quantitatively rather than qualitatively. Asian Development Bank (2008) says that the first and foremost problem in Asian countries is lack of education in general and higher education in particular. The second problem is tremendously increasing and unmanaged population growth rate while sources to manipulate human capital had never been fully utilised. The third problem with these developing countries is political immaturity and internal and external instability. The fourth hurdle in these countries is lack of genuine leadership on one side while on the other side a very few of the families hold most of the wealth and they have been highly powerful and influential in the state matters since centuries.

They do not want masses to become master of their own fate. The destiny of nation depends on research and development that is part and parcel of higher education but it stays away from people reach in these countries. UNESCO (2000) writes that some of the regional giants like Japan, Malaysia and Singapore were equal with rest of the Asian countries in 60s but they had made a significant progress in all sectors of life.

A developing country is a country that has low standards of democratic governments, industrialization, social programs, and human rights guarantees which are yet to develop those standard met in the west. It is often a term used to describe a nation with a low level of material well being. Despite this definition, the levels of development may vary, with some developing countries having higher average standards of living. The countries with more advanced economies than other developing nations, but which have not yet fully demonstrated the signs of a developed country, are grouped under the term newly industrialized countries. The application of the term developing country to any country which is not developed is inappropriate because a number of poor countries have experienced prolonged periods of economic decline. Such countries are classified as either least developed countries or states. Although there are political motive behind stamping any country as a failed state in the world.

The term developed country is used to describe countries that have a high level of development according to some criteria. What criteria, and which countries are classified as being developed, is a contentious issue and there is fierce debate about this. Economic criteria have tended to dominate discussions. One such criterion is income per capita and countries with high gross domestic product (GDP) per capita being described as developed countries. Another economic criterion is industrialization. Countries in which the tertiary and quaternary sectors of industry dominate being described as developed. More recently another measure, the UNESCO Human Development Index (2008), which combines with an economic measure, national income, with other measures, indices for life expectancy and education has become prominent. However, many anomalies exist when determining "developed" status by whichever measure is used.

According to economists such as Jeffrey Sachs (2005), however, the current divide between the developed and developing world is largely a phenomenon of the 20th century. Annan (2004) defined a developed country as follows. "A developed country is one that allows all its citizens to enjoy a free and healthy life in a safe environment but according to the Division, There is no established convention for the designation of "developed" and "developing" countries or areas in the United Nations system. It notes that the designations "developed" and "developing" are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. The UN also notes In common practice, Japan in Asia, Canada and the United States in northern America, Australia and New Zealand in Oceania, and Europe are considered "developed" regions or areas.

### Objectives of the Study

The major concern of the article is a comparison of the three developing Asian countries with three developed western countries with regard to higher education

Secondly, finding out the differences in the following heads of the higher education student's teacher's ratio, enrolment ratio with population number of universities pupil teacher ratio. Surely these countries do not have sufficient funds and resources but the question is whether they try to allocate as much percentage of budgets as it is done by developed countries. Some of the earlier comparisons were carried out from a different angle.

Wilcox (2003) emphasizes on health by making a comparison of the situation in countries with a developed or underdeveloped venereal disease control service, with respect to organization, statistical reporting, various agencies treating venereal disease, clinic and diagnostic facilities, personnel involved in venereal disease management, and other aspects.

Bacchus (1995) comments on comparison of concern of educational achievements by calling it as incorrect to think that this undue concern for passing examination is typical of the developing countries only. The same concern also exist among student in the economically more developed countries but where the two situation differs is in the extent of the concern which no doubt tends to be greater among student in developing countries Bell and Pavitt (2002) presented a big contrast in technological accumulation and industrial growth between developed and developing countries

Dimmock and Walker (2002) build a case for comparative and international educational leadership and management, arguing that the development of conceptual frameworks and instrumentation are imperative if the field is to keep abreast of globalisation of policy and practice.

The developed countries, selected are United Kingdom, Sweden and Canada which did not develop themselves by others help but by their own efforts and effective planning and management of the resources. Over all in the following table there is a general human development index difference between developed and developing countries that has been indicated by the an average GDP per capita, life expectancy, adult literacy rate and infant mortality rate. Watson and Bianchi (1999) presented this table to show the developing and all developing countries

Benn (2007) states that developed countries government's top priority was education during last two decades while in developing countries it is still at the bottom level. The top priority for the world must be education and education only to address the issue discussed above.

**Table 1. General development indicators**

General Indicators	Developing Countries	All developed countries
Real GDP Per capita In US\$	965	2,904
Life Expectancy at Birth	51	61.5
Adult Literacy Rate (%)	48.1	69.7
Infant Mortality /1000 births	110	70

(World Bank, World Development Report 1999)

He outlined that focusing on education, support and training to help people into work has been crucial to the success of the UK government so far. Developing countries too look to earning a living as the best route out of poverty. Just as in Britain, it is economic growth, not charity or handouts that will help end dependency and give people the chance of a better life. This is why the DFID White Paper 2007 set out how growth, governance, human security and dealing with conflict and fragile states are central to what we seek to do. Providing people with the means to make a better life depends on governments creating the right climate for private investment, stability and growth.

### Limitations of the term 'developing country'

There is criticism of the use of the term 'developing country'. The term implies inferiority of a 'developing country' compared to a 'developed country', which many such countries dislike. It assumes a desire to 'develop' along the traditional 'Western' model of economic development which many countries, such as Cuba, have chosen not to follow. Thus Cuba remains classed as 'developing' due to its low gross national income but has better health outcomes (as measured by maternal and infant mortality) and better literacy rates than some states of the USA The term 'developing' implies mobility and does not acknowledge that development may be in decline or static in some countries, The World Development Indicators after conducting a multi faceted survey declared different countries on a scale, starting from No one where Sweden was placed at 5, Canada at 14 and UK at 29 in quality of life. The survey classifies the countries into four groups, high income, and middle high income Middle income emerging countries and Lower income where Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India are considered as emerging developing countries

The World Bank reports 'targeting the poor' in 1999 presents some glimpses of the comparison among rich and poor countries.

Lynch (2002) said that global education marketplace is equal to \$2 trillion in which 15% of global education market is in developing countries.

Saeed (2007) comparing Pakistan and UK system of education says that there are some similarities but there are big differences between the provinces of Pakistan and in the four countries in United Kingdom. World Bank indicators 2007 of OECD countries present another gloomy picture.

There are a few researches conducted in comparison of African countries with European countries and America. Indian comparison with China has also been done but the area that the researchers have selected has never been done before, particularly these parameters that have been selected in this article are unique in a sense that the combination of Asian countries and two European states and one state that belongs to American contents. So it covers three continents.

### Research Methodology

The data provided by international agencies UNISCO UNCEF, WORLD BANK and other agencies on internet has

been assessed in tabular and analysed in graphical form. Criteria for defining developing countries and developed countries is derived from UNESCO education indicators. The variables that were analysed are enrolment, teacher’s student’s ratio, funding for education, literacy rate and research works during the year 2007/8 Number of universities and higher education institutes

Procedure : It is intended to be a qualitative research so the data that is provided by Unesco Institute Of Statistics and the information provided by respective higher education commission of the developing and developed countries. The researcher task was to manipulate the comparison of the two types of countries and finding out the gap or gulf between them. In the end an effort will be made to suggest how this gap can be reduced and removed and what contribution the developing nation needs to promote the development and progress. The following data has been collected from Higher Education Commissions and University Grants Commission of the respective countries to analyse five indicators of the country. The following table has been generated to see and find the candid clear differences among these countries. The following five heads are collected to identify the percentage average enrolment, Percentage of GDP for education, literacy rate of youth, yearly research publication, number of PhDs out put and student teacher ratio. The numbers of universities are also mentioned to show their performance.

**Table 2. Country Indicators**

Educational Indicators	Developing Countries			Developed Countries		
	Pak	S. L	India	Sweden	Canada	U.K
Tertiary regional average Enrolment %	11	11	11	70	70	70
% of GDP for education	2.6	2.5	3.2	7.1	4.9	5.5
Literacy rate of youth	59	64	64	99.1	99.1	99.1
Pupil teacher ratio	39	23	40	10	17	18
No of universities	124	15	415	49	125	170
Population per Uni in million	1.359	1.345	2.833	0.191	0.278	0.365

**Data Analysis and Discussion**

There is a candid clear difference between two streams of countries. The table has been generated by the researcher after consulting different sources of information on net. An extra care has been taken to avoid any human error. There were many other areas that can be analysed but only the higher education has been focused because it was the main area in the set objectives to be analysed. There are some limitations as the data changes from year to year but it was a fruitful effort to find the current data available at the electronic media.

- 1.The first criteria was tertiary regional average enrolment which is same with three Asian countries 11 % although the population of these countries is different but the ratio was the same. It is quite high among the developed countries that are 6.5 times more than developing countries which show a huge difference. The developing countries average enrolment is 70%.
2. The second criteria was % of GDP spent on education although it differs

From year to year but it has been fixed during 2007/8 which varies in developing countries because of different factors. In developing countries like Pakistan it is 2.4 with Sri Lanka 2.5 and India 3.2 It shows the variation in developing as well where Pakistan stands at bottom where as India stands at top. In developed countries the ratio is very high comparatively. The developed countries also differ as Canada is at bottom 4.9 UK

on second 5.5 and Sweden is at the top with 7.1 % of GDP spend on education. It is very clear how much priority the education is given in all these countries.

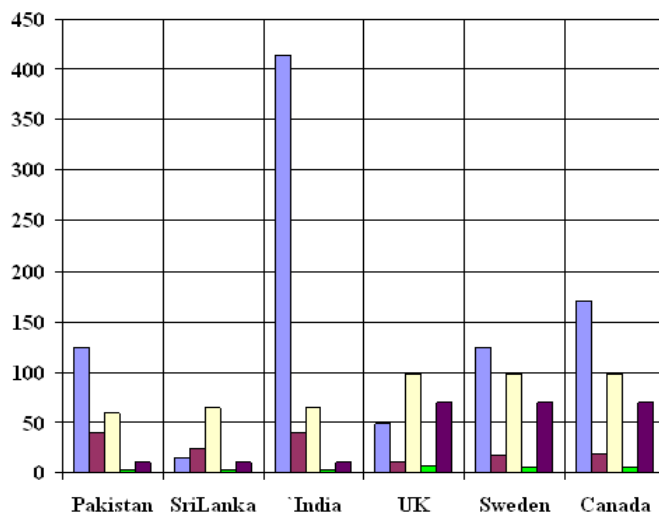
3. The third criteria would be literacy rate among youth which also differs with big margin. Pakistan stands at the lowest as its ratio is 59% and Sri Lanka and India are equal 64 % but all the three developed countries are equal 99.1 %. The difference in developed and developing countries is quite considerable which is 37%.

4. The fourth standard that has been selected was about research publication published in a year. There is much difference in that too. The developing countries have single digit thousand research publication per year while developed countries have double digit figure in thousands. Only three countries data could be obtained so there is very big difference

5. The fifth indicator was opted as number of PhDs produced in a year. Only meagre data is collected as many countries considered it as post graduation so they include all those who obtained master or M Phil degrees The UK Pakistan and Sri Lanka data is presented there

6. The sixth criteria was student teacher ratio. India stands at bottom while Pakistan is in the middle and Sri Lanka is at top in developing countries while in developed countries Sweden is at the top Canada is in the middle and UK is at number 3 but the difference quiet clear as it is almost double than the developing countries.

7. The last but not the least is Number of universities and Degree Awarding Institutions that is creditable for the population of the country. Pakistan and India are densely populated so they have 1.359 and 2.833 million per university respectively while Sri Lanka 1.345million per university. The developed countries had very good ratio as Sweden is at the top where 0.191 Canada is at number two with 0.278 and UK is at number three with 0.365 universities per million population. The statistics shows that there is a big difference in number of universities the population they covered. It is an urgent need to strike balance which is very wide by introducing more and more universities in public and private sectors.



**Recommendations**

The above analysis tells us about the difference in developing and developed countries. It is strongly recommended that these disparities should be overcome by promoting education good governance and sharing of the great fund of knowledge that the developed nation possess. They should

increase scholarships, provide chances for faculty enhancement, help to provide infrastructure to improve education and learning process, share the knowledge, skills and experiences that could boost up the different section of education process in developing countries. The developing countries need to mobilise their resources toward education, research infrastructure development, strengthening democracies and empowering the people to have a good and civilised life with reasonable per capita income. They must inculcate a spirit of equality advancement and progressiveness to their nationals by imparting education in general and higher education in particular to overcome the menace of ignorance backwardness and irresponsible attitudes. It is imperative to make this world a place to live by wiping out the elements of extremism, corruption, intolerance and injustice from the society.

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