



مقارنة بين تصميم المناهج الدراسية وتطبيقها في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية واليابان وسنغافورة والعراق

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الملخص

يقدم هذا البحث دراسة مقارنة للأنظمة التعليمية في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية واليابان وسنغافورة والعراق، مركزاً على أربعة أبعاد رئيسية:

- الأهداف التعليمية
- محتوى المنهج
- ممارسات التدريس
- أساليب التقييم

باتباع المنهج الوصفي التحليلي إذ تحدد الدراسة أنماط التشابه والاختلاف بين هذه الأنظمة. وبينما تركز الدول الأربع جميعها على تعزيز التفكير النقدي ومهارات حل المشكلات، إلا أنها تختلف اختلافاً كبيراً من حيث عمق المنهج، وتكامل الأدوات التكنولوجية، واستراتيجيات التقييم.

• تعطي اليابان وسنغافورة الأولوية للتعليم التعاوني والتقييم المستمر.

• يعتمد العراق بشكل أساسي على المناهج التقليدية التي تركز على الامتحانات. واستناداً إلى هذه النتائج توصي الدراسة وزارة التربية باعتماد تدابير تكيفية مستوحاة من أفضل الممارسات الدولية لتحسين تصميم المناهج وتعزيز منهجيات التدريس وتطوير المهارات المعرفية العليا، ومواءمة التعليم الوطني بشكل أوثق مع المعايير العالمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المنهج، التعليم المقارن، استراتيجيات التدريس، التقييم، الأهداف التعليمية

## A comparison of Curriculum Design and Implementation in the United States, Japan, Singapore, and Iraq

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## Abstract

This research provides a comparative study of the educational systems in the United States, Japan, Singapore, and Iraq, focusing on four key dimensions:

- educational goals
- curriculum content
- teaching practices
- assessment methods

Adopting a descriptive-analytical approach, the study identifies patterns of similarity and difference across these systems. While all four countries emphasize fostering critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, they differ considerably in terms of curriculum depth, integration of technological tools, and evaluation strategies.

- Japan and Singapore prioritize collaborative learning and continuous assessment
- Iraq predominantly relies on traditional exam-focused approaches. Drawing on these findings

the study recommends adopting adaptive measures inspired by international best practices to improve curriculum design, enhance instructional methodologies, and develop higher-order cognitive skills, aligning national education more closely with global standards.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Comparative Education, Teaching Strategies, Assessment, Educational Objectives

## 1.Introduction

The competitiveness analysis of the curriculum plays an important role in the problems of knowledge preparation of education systems and that they possess advantages and disadvantages and are more conscious of the outcome (Helmy, 2000). Besides knowledge of education, the world today that is highly volatile in nature needs a system of education that imparts not only knowledge but inculcates in someone, questioning, creativity and problem solving skills (Badran, 2000) .



This observe studies the United States, Japanese, Singapore and Iraq curriculum and focuses on 4 dimensions: targets, content, coaching strategies and evaluation

practices.

- The U.S. Model is premised on versatility, mastering focused on pupils, and generation embodiment.
- The guided systematic curriculum in Japan is systematically structured and guided and is aimed at mastery through guided practice and formative assessment.
- Singapore is integrating high content material with practice and daily evaluation and this is considered to be producing very good results in general examinations such as TIMSS and PISA. In evaluation.
- Irrespective of any current efforts towards reform, Iraq is confronted with challenging circumstances regarding the past methods, holes in content material, and limited evaluation methods.

The comparative attitude is a useful evidence-based, culturally sensitive curriculum enhancement tool applicable to Iraq.

## 2.Previous Studies

- Mustafa (2002): Examined worldwide schooling programs in Egypt, Japan, and america, finding that each country has unique strengths in program structure, with a shared focus on student skill improvement and sensible getting to know.
- Al-Saeedi (2018): Compared the instructional systems of Saudi Arabia and america, showing that the U.S. Prioritizes lifestyles abilities and personal boom, while the Saudi device emphasizes spiritual and national values.
- Al-Anzi (2020): Focused on instructor coaching programs in Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Japan, and South Korea, revealing structural similarities with Saudi Arabia but differences inside the emphasis on sensible and carried out components.
- Al-Daafis (2023): The paper compared the training system in Saudi Arabia to the innovative integrated training system in Singapore that focuses on critical and creative thinking.

## 3.Methodology

In this analysis, a descriptive-analytic methodology is employed to get a glimpse



of the US, Japanese, Singaporean, and Iraqi academic systems, which emphasize four primary factors of academic systems, i.e.: the purposes of instruction, the curriculum content, teacher teaching and methods of assessment.

- **Educational Objectives:** The article evaluated descriptiveness and comprehensiveness of knowing dreaming, relatedness to the 21st-century longing, and relationship to national rules and regulations that sustain requisite wondering and world preparedness.
- **Content of the Curriculum:** It was evaluated based on the analysis of intensity and sequencing between concept and practice and realistic packages and thinking of packages of the importance.
- **Assessment Strategies:** Read through formative and summative assessments used, along with tests, tasks and observations and how they match up with objectives and curriculum content material.

The analysis of legitimate textbooks and curriculum documents began on the basis of a constructed framework, supported by means of reviewing coverage documentations, educational literature, and educational reviews to select tendencies and effective practices.

#### 4. Findings

The following section depicts the findings of the comparison of design process of curricula and their application in the United States, Japan, Singapore and Iraq as the main similarities and differences between the four educational systems of the countries are revealed.

##### ٤.١. United States

1. **Educational Objectives.** Making schools ready, graduating quality students and majoring in the required subjects, being responsible citizens, adult literacy and having a safe and drug-free learning environment.
2. **Curriculum Content.** Decentralized; local authorities, subject experts, teachers, academics, and publishers collaboratively develop curricula.
3. **Teaching Methods.** Guided discovery, cooperative learning, problem-solving, and traditional approaches.
4. **Assessment.** Lesson exercises, unit tests, group assessments, and interactive activities.
5. **Teacher Preparation.** Focuses on general knowledge, subject-specific expertise, professional skills, and technological competence.



**Table (1) Curriculum Components in United States**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Assisting individuals in achieving self-actualization</li><li>2.Shaping individuals into responsible citizens who respect their country's laws</li><li>3. Introducing individuals to social and economic facts</li><li>4. Preparing students to become productive members of their society</li><li>5.Enabling U.S. students to rank among the top globally</li><li>6.Creating schools free from violence and drug abuse</li><li>7.Promoting the principle of equal opportunity</li></ol>
<b>Content</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Characterized by low rigidity and high fragmentation</li><li>2.Emphasizes positive aspects</li><li>3.Responsive to learners' characteristics, needs, and abilities Structured and pedagogically aligned across grade levels</li></ol>
<b>Teaching Methods</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Cooperative learning</li><li>2.Guided discovery</li><li>3.Standard method</li><li>4.Problem-solving method</li><li>5.Self-directed learning</li></ol>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1Automatic progression in the primary stage</li></ol>



	2.In the secondary stage, student achievement is evaluated through daily activities, test results, and collaborative work with peers in committees and projects
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#### ٤.٢. Japan

1. **Educational Objectives.** Holistic student development, lifelong learning, scientific and technological advancement, and fostering civic responsibility.
2. **Curriculum Content.** Informed by research, parental input, and central and regional committees.
3. **Teaching Methods.** Emphasize practical application, problem-solving, interactive learning, and monitoring student progress beyond the classroom.
4. **Assessment.** Continuous in primary education, standardized exams in secondary education.

**Table (2) Curriculum Components in Japan**

Domain	Japan
<b>Objectives</b>	1.Based on specialized research studies and the formation of dedicated committees  2.Relies on experimentation  Takes into account learners' abilities and characteristics
<b>Content</b>	1.Providing equal opportunities for education  2.Compulsory education for a duration of nine years  3.Co-educational system Fostering a sense of citizenship among the population  4.Encouraging a spirit of inquiry and scientific thinking
<b>Teaching Methods</b>	1.Discovery learning  2.Group learning  3.Cooperative learning Use of modern technology
<b>Assessment</b>	1.Primary stage: continuous assessment throughout the academic year with no failure at this stage  2.Secondary stage: assessment conducted through tests



	determined based on students' abilities
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### ٤.٣. Singapore

1. **Educational Objectives.** Inclusive education, fostering creativity, responsible citizenship, and ethical values.
2. **Curriculum Content.** English 33%, mother tongue 27%, mathematics 20%, other subjects 20%, with limited religious instruction.
3. **Teaching Methods.** Interactive classroom teaching, group work, teacher guides, and integration of information technology.
4. **Assessment.** Internal school-based and national exams determine student pathways in specialized or general programs.

**Table (3) Curriculum Components in Singapore**

Domain	Singapore
<b>Objectives</b>	1. Providing education for all individuals. 2. Developing individuals with critical thinking and creative skills Preparing individuals to become responsible and productive citizens.
<b>Content</b>	1. The curriculum content is relatively intensive, incorporating a wide range of diverse activities, with thinking skills integrated throughout the curriculum.
<b>Teaching Methods</b>	1. Whole-class interactive teaching 2. Peer tutoring 3. Self-study 4. Additional remedial lessons for students Use of modern technologies
<b>Assessment</b>	1. Based on tests conducted over the first and second semesters, with a weighting of 40% for the first and 60% for the second 2. Includes four main tests, some designed solely by the teacher and others collaboratively designed with Cambridge

### ٤.٤. Iraq



- 1. Educational Objectives.** Promote Arab identity, civic responsibility, technological proficiency, and equal educational access.
- 2. Curriculum Content.** Foundational skills, sciences, mathematics, languages, and extracurricular activities (arts, sports, practical exercises).
- 3. Teaching Methods.** Blend of traditional and modern strategies, including problem-solving, discussions, and use of educational technologies.
- 4. Assessment.** National examinations across all educational levels, with challenges stemming from political instability and limited resources.

**Table (4) Curriculum Components in Iraq**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Iraq</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Preparing citizens who are committed to belonging to the Arab nation</li><li>2.Belief in the shared destiny of the Arab nation</li><li>3.Preparing responsible and productive citizens</li><li>4.Emphasizing modern technology</li><li>5.Focusing on intellectual, emotional, and physical education</li><li>6.Providing educational opportunities for all citizens</li><li>7.Valuing the history of the Arab nation and preserving its heritage Emphasizing the Arabic language</li></ol>
<b>Content</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Providing learners with basic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic</li><li>2.Includes facts, concepts, generalizations, and theories in the fields of science and mathematics</li><li>3.Contains artistic, athletic, and literary activities</li></ol> <p>Incorporates practical exercises</p>
<b>Teaching</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Traditional method</li></ol>



<b>Methods</b>	2.Problem-solving approach 3.Discussion method
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is conducted through various types of tests, including: 1.Primary stage final examination 2.Intermediate stage final examination Secondary stage final examination

## 5. Discussion

The study's findings highlight key components essential for effective educational systems:

A comparison of the educational curricula in Japan, the United States, Singapore, and Iraq reveals clear differences in educational philosophy, curriculum structure, and teaching methods. However, they all share the overarching goal of preparing learners capable of adapting to the demands of the 21st century. Japan has adopted a values-based and collaborative education philosophy, with its curriculum emphasizing discipline and responsibility, and developing practical thinking through "investigative lessons" that transform the teacher into a researcher within the classroom and the student into a partner in constructing knowledge. The United States, on the other hand, is characterized by a diversity of curricula, varying according to the specific characteristics of each state, but unified by national standards such as Common Core, which promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, along with extensive integration of technology and project-based learning strategies that incorporate real-life situations.

In contrast, Singapore adopted a philosophy of quality and integration, formulating its curriculum based on the principle of "Teach Less, Learn More" to develop a deep understanding of concepts rather than mere memorization. This approach relies on the CPA model, which connects the concrete and the abstract, and on intensive teacher training to ensure effective implementation. This is reflected in the global excellence of its students in TIMSS and PISA assessments.

Iraq, on the other hand, has been striving for years to develop its curricula according to international standards. However, implementation still faces challenges related to excessive centralization, weak teacher training, and an over-reliance on rote memorization and traditional exams without the effective



use of technology or thinking strategies. Nevertheless, the Iraqi curriculum is rich in national and religious values, representing a solid foundation upon which to build more modern and interactive curricula.

When these four experiences are combined, it becomes clear that an integrated educational model should combine the discipline of Japan, the flexibility of the United States, the depth of Singapore, and the authenticity of Iraq. The integration of these models can lead to the development of a modern Iraqi curriculum that combines authenticity and modernity, and focuses on learning based on thinking and creativity, and the use of artificial intelligence and modern technologies in developing learning, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the Iraqi student and his ability to compete globally.

## 6. Recommendations

The recommendations focus on developing comparative curricula methodology, enhancing quality, and expanding the scope of research:

### 1. Developing Curricula Research Methodology:

- Methodological In-Depth: Emphasizing interpretive studies (to understand the underlying causes of problems) and critical studies, and utilizing them to establish an educational theory that suits the Arab context.
- Diversity in Research Methodologies: Employing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies according to the nature of the problem, and using more than one methodology to achieve objectivity and comprehensiveness.
- Focusing on Qualitative Studies: Employing qualitative studies with their diverse approaches, especially ethnographic studies that require actual fieldwork.
- Modern Tools: Using modern data collection tools and the possibility of combining more than one research tool.

### 2. Expanding Scope and Approaches:

- Curriculum-Context Relationship: Examining the relationship between curriculum and the cultural context and its effects.
- Exploring Higher Education: Focusing on studying and understanding the roles, theories, and meanings of curricula within the context of higher education.
- Interdisciplinary and Future-Oriented Research: Expanding interdisciplinary research and studies, and directing research towards future needs and anticipated patterns of change.
- Adopting the Proposed Vision: Considering the dimensions of the proposed vision for comparative studies in curricula.



### 3. Strengthening Collaborative and Institutional Work:

- Collaborative Studies: Prioritizing collaborative studies due to the importance of teamwork.
- Project Support: Encouraging research projects in comparative studies under the auspices of educational bodies and institutions.
- Awareness and Events: Raising awareness of the importance of comparative studies and holding conferences addressing its issues.
- Establishing a Specialized Journal: Establishing a specialized journal for comparative studies in curricula under the supervision of specialized bodies.

### 4. Developing Researchers' Skills:

- Skills Development Programs: Developing programs to enhance the qualitative research skills of faculty members and researchers.
- Academic Courses: Ensuring that colleges of education include courses to train graduate students in acquiring qualitative and quantitative research skills, such as conducting interviews, observation, and case studies.

## Suggestions

The study suggests conducting specific research focused on analyzing the current situation and identifying priorities:

- The nature of comparative studies in master's and doctoral theses submitted to curriculum and teaching methodologies departments (globally and in the Arab world).
- Identifying research trends in published comparative curriculum studies (globally and in the Arab world).
- Presenting a proposed vision for research priorities in comparative curriculum studies.
- Analyzing the future trends and visions for studies in curriculum and teaching methodologies offered in various faculties of education.
- A comparative historical analysis of the knowledge requirements of diverse curricula across different time periods.
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## Conflict of Interest



The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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