

## **Study Tour on ‘Management and Administration of Primary Education’ in Seoul of South Korea from 10-18 December, 2016**

### **Introduction:**

Presently Bangladesh government is focusing for ensuring quality primary education and that is why Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) sponsored a sectoral flagship program- Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP3) for the year 2011 to 2017. Under PEDP3 Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) arranged training and study tour programs for teachers and officials during the years in home and abroad. One of the study tour program- ‘Management and Administration of Primary Education in Seoul, South Korea’ was organized from 10 to 18 December 2016. Mr. Md. Akram-Al-Hossain, Additional Secretary of MoPME led the team. The study team flew from Dhaka to Seoul on 10 December 2016 and after completing the program came back Dhaka on 19 December 2016.

### **Program Objective:**

The fundamental objective of the study tour program was to strengthen the primary education system of Bangladesh with sharing ideas and best practices relating to management and administration functions in schools and offices in Seoul, South Korea.

### **Program Itinerary:**

The main focus on program itinerary was to visit two Elementary schools, one Middle school and one office of education at different district level in Seoul. The members of the team extensively visited the schools and office, and got brilliant ideas about Korean education system especially the management and administration of elementary and middle school of Korea, curriculum, schools activities and support to students. Apart from schools and office visit the team also visited some important and historical places in Seoul, which impressed us about the country as a whole.

### **Education in South Korea:**

Education in South Korea is provided by both public schools and private schools. Both types of schools receive funding from the government, although the amount that the private schools receive is less than the amount of the state schools. South Korea is the top-performing OECD country in reading literacy, math and sciences with the average student scoring 542 and has one of the world’s highest educated labour forces among OECD countries. The country is well known for its high feverish outlook on education, where its national obsession with education has been called ‘education

fever'. Higher education is an overwhelmingly serious issue in South Korea society, where it is viewed as one of the fundamental cornerstones of South Korean life. Education remains a high priority for South Korean families as success in education holds a cultural status as well as a necessity to improve one's socioeconomic position in South Korean society.

### **Primary Education in South Korea:**

Primary education in Korea is free and compulsory from the age of six. Primary school (named Elementary School) consists of six grades, which begin after one or two years in a pre-school. Children study a range of subjects including languages, mathematics, arts and physical education. Once children turn five, parents automatically receive an enrolment letter for admission to a government primary school from a neighborhood representative, who is in charge of a local area. Children generally go to the school in the district where their parents are registered. If children are enrolled in a private school, parents should inform the local district office that their child does not need a place in a government school.

Elementary school consist of grades one to six (age 8 to 13 in Korean years). In elementary school, the curriculum differs from grades 1-2 to grades 3-6. Usually, the class teacher covers most of the subjects; however, there are some specialized teachers in professions such as physical education and foreign languages, including English. Those who wish to become a primary school teacher must major in primary education, which is specially designed to develop primary school teachers. In Korea, most of the primary teachers are working for public primary schools.

Middle school runs for three years grade 1-3 (that is grade 7-9 with linking the elementary school grade) and is free and compulsory. Since 1990, progression from primary school to middle schools has essentially been universal. In middle school, students are streamed according to ability in Mathematics, English, Korean Language, Social Studies and Science. Graduates of middle schools or the equivalent may enter high schools.

### **School Organizational Structure:**

The government of Korea regulates educational system through the Ministry of Education. Both public and private elementary and middle schools follow the national curriculum framework developed by the Ministry of Education. To support the schools there are 180 regional offices of education at districts level, 16 to 19 provincial offices and Ministry of Education and MEST school council/Board are elected. At school level principal is the key person for its management and administration. The government provides each area with funding and educational

guidelines, and the individual provinces and states are responsible for implementing and enforcing these. Korea is equipped with public and private sector schools but all elementary school expenditure is borne by government and education is free.

**Visited Schools and Office:**

1. Heunjin Elementary School
2. Gunpo Office of Education
3. Eonnam Middle School
4. Jangwi Elementary School

**Findings from schools and office visit:**

After visiting the listed schools and office, presentation with questions answers, documents analysis, discussion with the authority of office and schools, teachers and guides along these team members' opinions and expressions are counted as finding, are as follows:

1. Most of the Korean school has large campus, well equipped with infrastructure and furniture. Enough space for accommodating principal room, vice principal room, Head teacher and teachers' room, library, materials room, indoor play ground, gymnasium, swimming pool, cooking place, dining hall and auditorium.
2. Classroom is well decorated with one desk with drawer and one chair for each student. Metallic board, large TV screen and multimedia are available in and every classroom with fixed large bulletins board at behind the classroom.
3. School has six to nine more sections for each grade level- teacher student ratio is 1:25-30. Except special subject one teacher was engaged for one class section in elementary school and teacher support materials and equipment were in classroom.
4. Generally, ten subjects (Korean Language, Ethics, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Technology and Home Economics, Physical Education, Music, Fine Arts and English) are taught at elementary school (grade 1 to 6). Additional teachers are recruited for special subjects like music, physical education, arts and crafts. Textbooks and other materials made by following the national curriculum are provided by the government through its district level office of education.
5. English has been taught as a part of the regular curriculum from grade level three and mostly native speaker hired from abroad for conducting the English language classes. Game and program based learning tools help each and every student to participate and to learn with joy.

6. Science, music, debate are organized by the students of different grade level. Science classes are conducted in science lab and found the students' activities at the lab very much effective and creative.
7. Teaching learning process at classroom situation was fully participating and enjoyable, ICT tools were frequently used during the class. No corporal punishment was imposed in classroom. In teachers' room each teacher has a separate corner with materials and ICT tools for preparing their next classes.
8. Every Teacher completed four years' university degree in pedagogy (both in practice and theory) to teach in elementary school. Before joining at school, a teacher needs to pass Teacher License Examination. In case of promotion from teacher to head teacher or vice principal or principal or higher official depends on their school and classroom qualitative activities and research in education.
9. Generally, schools are one shifted, started from 8am to 3.30pm. Students of pre-class and early grade 1-3 leave school after taking lunch at school. After the school hour, additional opportunity for the slower learners are available at school in the evening session by providing some fees.
10. Korean children spend 220 days a year in school. Over 34 weeks of schooling per year children attend 850 hours of classes in grade one and two, 966 in grades three and four and 1088 in grades five and six. They have every five years plan and a strong class routine. In class routine, after two period 10 minutes are stopgap except lunch break.
11. School feeding program is supported by the government. At school premises food are prepared. Some schools served food to students and dining hall, some of schools served the food at classroom. Numbers of staffs are deployed for maintaining food arrangement.
12. Each school has neat and clean wash block with several basins for hand wash and several toilets for boys and girls. Drinking water provisions are in school premises. Students individual boxes were available in corridor for spending school bags and others materials.
13. The assessment process is fully formative, no formal and terminal assessment system is addressed. Teacher has to maintain the continuous assessment tools and anecdotal notes, and keeps portfolio as a record of achievement. School authority, the principal has right to certify the students for promoting next class or school as well.
14. Both of Government and private schools are controlled by the government, education is free, students are coming from respective school catchment area. Students' mothers are getting monthly allowance for each of their baby from government through Bank; school authority is not responsible for that.

15. Formally no local level authority or school management committee is found in system, though guardians have opportunity to work for school as volunteer. Principal is the key person for the school management and administration. Principal, vice principal, head teachers and teachers and other school staffs are the team composition of the school.
16. Office of education is settled at district level with composition of more than 100 officials and staffs, headed by a Superintendent and Chief of Sections. This office is responsible for paying school expenditure, salaries of school staffs and providing training for teachers.
17. Instructors placed in district offices for arranging training for its schools' teachers. Teachers are interested to get training on different issues with the concern of school authority. While a teacher begins his carrier as a teacher, he/she attends to pedagogy meetings that are periodically promoted for update and training needs mostly identified.

### **Recommendations:**

According to study tour findings and overall impression the study team members, we would like to recommend for strengthening management and administration of primary education of Bangladesh, are as follows:


1. The environmental settings and physical facilities of our school are rapidly improving including infrastructure, furniture, water and sanitation and play ground also. But in the context of global status these are not adequate. Additional room space for students, Head teacher, teachers, library and laboratory and a common space like auditorium are needed. So, better environment and facilities should be created within post PEDP-3 period.
2. In our school multimedia classroom is just started but one laptop and multimedia projector is not enough for creating better environment in classroom. Two more multimedia classrooms should be established and necessary ICT tools should be provided during the post PEDP-3 and in future every classroom should be prepared on the basis of multimedia for ensuring quality education at primary level.
3. It is the time to increase contact our and for this why two shifted school need to transfer one shift. Class routine of our schools can be revised by placing stopgap after two periods for students' relief from learning at a time. Before school feeding initiatives for all students, class routine should be revised considering lunch time. Parents can be motivated and engaged to provide food or tiffin to their children.



4. School and classroom based formative assessment should be introduced in large scale. With a midterm plan school authority would be strictly maintaining the objectivity of the assessment and providing enough power to them to provide class and school completion certificate.
5. For ensuring quality education through classroom teaching and learning, graduate in pedagogy teachers should be recruited and to create opportunity of promotion provision for them. Post of Assistant to Senior Assistant, Assistant Head teacher, Head teacher, Assistant Instructor/Assistant Education Officer, Instructor/Education Officer can be created. To ensure promotion, examination system can be introduced. The candidate and teacher who have good working experience and research work on education are encouraged in recruitment and promotion rather than seniority.
6. Different offices, institutions or centers are responsible for providing administrative, financial, technical and academic training support to school and teachers in our county. One office can be setup for providing all supports at district level.

**Conclusion:**

In concluding remarks, we would like to thank government of Bangladesh for selecting us for the study tour, which encourage us to do better for ensuring quality primary education. The tour impressed us in and every aspect of civil life and quality of Korean elementary education and it has encouraged us to follow and adapt best practices of them in our primary education system to ensure quality education by 2030.

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