

Education in Light of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kingdom of Bahrain "An Analytical Study"

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Received: 15 Oct. 2023, Revised 1 Nov. 2023, Accepted: 29 Nov. 2023

Published online: 1 Dec. 2023

Abstract: Quality education is one of the goals of sustainable development - ensuring quality, equitable and inclusive education for all and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain has set a set of sub-goals to achieve this goal. Hence, the study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable development goals on education in Bahrain in order to identify the challenges and opportunities available to improve the quality of education, knowledge economy and develop human capital. This paper attempts to answer a major question: What is the impact of sustainable development on education in the Kingdom of Bahrain? To answer this question, the researchers will show quantitative data released by Bahrain's local government institutions and international organizations. The study is based on the hypothesis that Bahrain is among the countries that pay great attention to education and sustainable development by investing in technical and vocational education and training, and encouraging innovation and creativity. In order to test the hypothesis, the researchers preferred to use the analytical descriptive approach, by describing the quantitative data that related to education and its relationship to sustainable development. The study sought to demonstrate the impact of sustainable development goals on education in the Kingdom of Bahrain, solve the problem from which it was launched, and answer its questions, by analyzing the basic elements of the impact of sustainable development on education. As it was proven to us through testing the hypothesis, its validity, which was based on the fact that Bahrain is among the countries that pay great attention to education and sustainable development through investing in technical and vocational education and training, and encouraging innovation and creativity. The Bahraini government has taken serious steps in this direction, by focusing on improving the quality of education, developing skills, enhancing job opportunities, and promoting technical and vocational education and e-training. Moreover, Bahrain seeks to achieve a knowledge economy, by transforming the economy into a knowledge economy, developing infrastructure and investing in scientific research and technological development.

Keywords: Education Quality, Sustainable Development in Bahrain, National Strategy, Education and Training, Bahrain

1. Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals are the latest global commitment to eradicating poverty, promoting prosperity, developing education, and ensuring sustainable development until 2030. To achieve these goals, the Kingdom of Bahrain has developed its strategy for the year 2030 AD, as the sustainable development goals represent a global development agenda, and an important consideration for the national development strategy in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Quality education is one of the goals of sustainable development - ensuring quality, equitable and inclusive education for all and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain has set a set of sub-goals to achieve this goal. Hence, the study aims to investigate the impact of sustainable development goals on education in Bahrain in order to identify the challenges and opportunities available to improve the quality of education, knowledge economy and develop human capital. This paper attempts to answer a major question: What is the impact of sustainable development on education in the Kingdom of Bahrain? To answer this question, the researchers will show quantitative data released by Bahrain's local government institutions and international organizations.

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2. Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an international socio-economic term, with which the United Nations has drawn a map for environmental, social and economic development worldwide. Its first goal is to improve the living conditions of every individual in society, develop means of production, and manage them in ways that do not lead to the depletion of the planet's natural resources. The SDGs will help humanity to use natural resources in line with planet capacity in order to save it for future generations. [1] It can be defined as meeting the needs of society at the present time through the optimal use of available resources without wasting the right of future generations to benefit from these resources, and this includes the main aspects of development, which are economic, environmental and social. [2]

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The SDGs include (17) goals, and Goal (4) includes ensuring quality, equitable and inclusive education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. Education is considered an essential pillar for achieving the SDGs, such as poverty eradication, health, gender equality, decent work, responsible consumption, climate change, peace and justice, and strong institutions.

With regard to education, and from the economic point of view, ensuring the abundance of trainees for all basic economic sectors, and from the social point of view, ensuring sufficient availability of education for all for a healthy and productive life. As for the environmental aspect, it is through striving to include the environment in information and educational programs[3].

Bahrain also continued its commitment to achieving the objectives of Goal (4), through the development of policies, initiatives and texts of legislation.

3. Economic Vision 2030

Bahrain's development march extends for decades, and its pace has accelerated with the comprehensive development, and the issuance of the Economic Vision 2030 (EV), which enshrined sustainability, competitiveness, and justice, with the aim of doubling the real family income by the year 2030. The Bahraini government has paid great attention to economic, human, infrastructure and urban development, which has successfully achieved the development goals and laid the right foundations for the launch of sustainable development, as the Kingdom of Bahrain is making outstanding efforts in achieving sustainability in all aspects of development. The Economic Vision 2030 is based on the principles of sustainability, as it drew clear directions to provide a supportive environment for sustainability, and a dignified and safe life for citizens and residents.

The Bahrain's economic vision 2030 endeavor to move from an economy based on oil wealth to a productive economy capable of competing globally by integrating the private sector into the modernization, educations and development programs. This vision aim to expand the middle class by investing in primary and higher education in particular [4].

In Bahrain, it has been developed the quality of education to enhance investment in human capital and facilitates the achievement of SDGs and the EV [5].

Bahrain has adopted the Education 2030 Strategy, which aims to modernize and develop the educational system, and improve the education quality for all academic levels. The government launched the qualification and training program, which aims to train workers and youth in digital and technical skills, and improve their capabilities in the labor market [6]. These initiatives have led to strengthening Bahrain's efforts to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development.

The Bahraini government attaches great importance to providing a safe and healthy educational environment, ensuring the quality of education and improving the standard of living for citizens and residents alike. Bahrain has sought to achieve sustainable development by developing infrastructure, protecting the environment and preserving natural resources, in cooperation with the local and international community. In general, education and sustainable development policies in Bahrain are characterized by comprehensiveness and continuous development, and aim to achieve economic, social and environmental development in a sustainable manner [7].

Bahrain provides various and advanced training programs in many different fields, which aim to develop students' skills and qualify them for the labor market. It has encouraged innovation and creativity by supporting small and medium enterprises, and providing scholarships for distinguished and talented students. There is also cooperation between educational and academic institutions in Bahrain to develop modern and advanced study programs that are in line with the needs of the labor market and the requirements of sustainable development [8]. These initiatives contributed to improving the efficiency of teachers, developing the infrastructure of schools, and increasing investment in educational technology [9].

4. Education

Education can play a major role in the required transformation into more environmentally sustainable societies, in coordination with government initiatives, civil society initiatives, and the private sector. Education shapes values and perspectives, and also contributes to the development of skills, concepts, and tools that can be used to reduce or stop unsustainable practices.

Education in Bahrain is compulsory by law like Egypt, with regard to basic education that extends to the first nine years of schooling for all ages from 6 to 14 years. Therefore, the Ministry of Education is keen to ensure that all children of this age group receive appropriate education, whether in public or private schools, within the strategic map 2019-2022[10].

In addition to the foregoing, the percentage of the population not enrolled in education in the Kingdom of Bahrain is low, and this indicates the ability to absorb in all stages, especially the secondary stage, where the percentage of those not enrolled is the lowest at the level of all countries in the region, although it is not compulsory at this stage [11]

Previous educational achievements were widely appreciated and praised by international organizations, which culminated in the classification of the Kingdom among the countries with high performance in achieving the goals of Education for All, according to the annual reports of UNESCO, and its solutions in the first place in the Arab world in education indicators, according to the Boston Consulting Group report for 2018 And 2019, and the World Bank's Human Capital Index 2018, and international tests for mathematics and science "TEMS 2019", and the first in the world in indicators of enrollment in secondary and higher education according to the report of the World Economic Forum on competitiveness and the gender gap for the year 2018, and its advanced position among countries with "very high human development." According to the report of the United Nations Development Program 2020, and the 43rd place in the world in the Global Knowledge Index 2020 issued by the United Nations Development Program and the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, and its achievement of the first place in the world in the sub-indicators related to the qualifications of teachers, and the rates of student enrollment in post-professional and technical programs high school, internet use and mobile network coverage (100%), eighth globally in "school environment" and 22 globally in "technical education environment", seventh globally for researchers specializing in higher education, and 11 globally in efficiency of higher education students[12]

Bahrain also continued its successes in integrating people with special needs into government schools, and providing all educational services designated for them, to complete their educational path at a rate of (38%) in the academic year 2019/2020, dedicating their own

channel on YouTube, and taking into account the human dimension in providing education during Covid-19 pandemic [13]. Bahrain also ranked first in the level of proficiency in mathematics for secondary education in the Arab countries, as statistics indicate that the percentage of students who achieved the minimum level of proficiency in mathematics in 2015 reached (75%), outperforming all Arab countries [14].

Table (1): Showing some educational indicators in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Achievement Indicators	Result
Student absorption rate in primary education	100%
gender parity ratio	100%
Almost complete eradication of illiteracy	Achieved
Enrollment rate in secondary education	97%
The level of academic achievement among the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council	Rank one
The expected number of years of academic achievement for the student	Mean 16.25 years
The level of proficiency in mathematics for secondary education.	75%
The level of proficiency in mathematics for primary education.	72%

These statistics indicate that the Kingdom of Bahrain has made remarkable progress in the field of education, with a 100% absorption rate achieved in primary education, and the Kingdom ranked first among the GCC countries in terms of academic achievement. Bahrain also ranked first in the region in the number of years expected for a student in academic achievement, and achieved a high enrollment rate in secondary education.

Statistics indicate the Kingdom of Bahrain’s many achievements in education, as the student absorption rate in primary education reached 100%, the gender equality rate reached 100%, the almost complete eradication of illiteracy, and the enrollment rate in secondary education reached 97%. Bahrain also ranked first among the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council in the level of academic achievement, and ranked first in the region in the number of years expected to be spent by a student in academic achievement, with an average of 16.25 years, and this indicates a high probability of spending additional years in education for children.

5. Digital Empowerment

Bahrain has excelled in the Arab world in terms of the percentage of youth and adults who have information and communication technology skills, and was superior in some skills by a large difference from the countries closest to it, including the skill of preparing electronic presentations using software, as the percentage of the Kingdom reached 52%, and the closest Arab country to it is Emirates, and the percentage for the same skill was 32% [15]

Table (2) Showing some educational indicators in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Achievement Indicators	Result
The skill of preparing electronic presentations by software	%52 (first in the Arab world)
The number of channels on YouTube	14
The number of computers available to needy students	10000

Distance education has been developed through digital content and the educational portal [15] as it offers thousands of educational materials, lessons, activities, applications, and panel discussions through the portal and reliable and safe digital platforms, establishing (14) channels on YouTube, and broadcasting lessons on the sports channel on Bahrain TV, in cooperation with the Ministry of Information, And other indicators that reflect the excellence of the digital empowerment program in education. These initiatives were launched in the context of a national strategy to enrich digital knowledge content and the knowledge-based economy, especially after the establishment of the National Space Science Authority in February 2014, and the trend towards strengthening educational curricula and educational institutions related to artificial intelligence science.

6. Internationalization of Education

The Bahraini government has strengthened cooperation and partnership with international universities, by concluding cooperation and partnership agreements in various academic and research fields. The Bahraini government is also seeking to attract international students to Bahraini universities, and to provide scholarships and the necessary facilities to achieve this end. Universities also seek to make efforts to make the Kingdom an academic point of attraction for students from around the world, as the international student is the one who converts information into knowledge, and so that the graduate of Bahraini universities is an "international student", as students are prepared for the requirements of life, which includes preparing them for the labor market.

As for the academic attraction of students from around the world, this is one of the things that universities take into account, because the student residing in the Kingdom or applying to study at the university from outside Bahrain enjoys a special place, as students of different nationalities and from different countries are welcomed. Also, because of the diversification of the student body, the multiplicity of its cultures, and the approximation of distances between different countries of the world, through this student mix.

Many universities are also working to enhance cooperation and partnership with many international universities by concluding cooperation agreements between the university and international partners. These agreements include areas such as the exchange of students and professors, the organization of joint academic and research events, and the exchange of expertise and information in various fields.

International students studying in Bahrain have the opportunity to learn about different cultures and languages. Thanks to this cooperation and partnership with international universities, students can obtain high-quality education and gain valuable experiences in various fields, which will enable them to successfully integrate into the international labor market.

7. Training

The Kingdom of Bahrain is keen to pay attention to the field of training, as the Kingdom of Bahrain is home to competencies and a highly skilled workforce, as it ranked second in the Arab world and 35th globally in the Human Development Index 2022. The Government of Bahrain has taken serious steps to hone the skills and expertise of individuals to meet the ever-changing requirements of the labor market, in order to support and achieve national development and its commitment towards the international goals of sustainable development approved by the United Nations. The Kingdom of Bahrain has also sought to bridge the gap in the number of economic sectors, by providing specialized training and development programs to ensure quality education and sustainable economic growth.

One of the most prominent training programs to create job opportunities for qualified Bahraini cadres in the public and private sectors is the technical cadres development program, which aims to refine, highlight and support young Bahraini university graduates with technical specializations looking for work, to be human capital and distinguished and experienced national cadres in line with the requirements of labor market to make them the best choice in employment [16].

The Labor Fund (Tamkeen) is considered one of the main pillars of the initiatives of the national reform project in Bahrain, and one of the most important outputs of Bahrain's economic vision 2030 to support the private sector and enhance its role as a main engine in national development, to empower Bahrainis in line with market requirements, and strengthen the capabilities of institutions to contribute to the expansion of the national economy. Tamkeen is a unique model for investing private sector funds in the form of training programs and professional certificates to build qualified human resources, as it offers a number of programs for individuals and businesses in Bahrain, which include training, consulting, financing, entrepreneurship support, and others.

The Institute of Public Administration "BIPA" provides various training services between the National Program for Government Leadership Development, specialized programs, contractual courses, workshops and training courses, which aim to achieve advanced government performance that supports economic and social development plans through developing performance to keep pace with development ambitions and enhance resources, And building capabilities that are in line with innovative changes for continuous development, in addition to creating policies and strategies that ensure the achievement of sustainable development.

Conclusion

Education and sustainable development are among the most important aspects that must be considered to achieve sustainable economic and social development in Bahrain. Education is a crucial factor in developing human resources, increasing employment opportunities, promoting innovation and renewable technology, and is a key element in making the Bahraini economy more competitive.

Through these efforts, Bahrain can achieve the goals related to sustainable development, by achieving a balance between the economy, the environment and society, ensuring the sustainability of economic growth, preserving the environment and improving the quality of life for the current and future generations. Thus, the joint effort must continue to enhance education, develop skills, improve job opportunities, and promote innovation and renewable technology, to achieve sustainable development in Bahrain. Despite the challenges facing Bahrain, it is committed to achieving sustainable development goals and improving the quality of life for society in the future.

The study sought to demonstrate the impact of sustainable development goals on education in the Kingdom of Bahrain, solve the problem from which it was launched, and answer its questions, by analyzing the basic elements of the impact of sustainable development on education. As it was proven to us through testing the hypothesis, its validity, which was based on the fact that Bahrain is among the countries that pay great attention to education and sustainable development through investing in technical and vocational education and training, and encouraging innovation and creativity. The Bahraini government has taken serious steps in this direction, by focusing on improving the quality of education, developing skills, enhancing job opportunities, and promoting technical and vocational education and e-training. Moreover, Bahrain seeks to achieve a knowledge economy, by transforming the economy into a knowledge economy, developing infrastructure and investing in scientific research and technological development.

The multifaceted role of sustainability education is not limited to its positive side, as it can promote unsustainable practices. This is an excessive consumption of resources, so education may need to be adapted and transformed to ensure its positive impact. Education has a major role to play in addressing environmental challenges, and education can improve livelihoods by increasing incomes and developing the skills needed to transform economies and consumer systems. Education can also influence individual and collective environmental behavior through contemporary and traditional approaches to lifelong learning

Education enhances people's resilience to climate-related risks, as the communities most at risk from disasters caused by climate change are generally found in countries with unequally low levels of educational attainment. Education can help societies prepare for and adapt to disasters related to climate change.

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