Studying equal educational opportunities in education systems in order to provide a model for establishment of educational justice

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ABSTRACT

Both architecture and tourism have long history in Iranian. The present investigation was aimed to study equal educational opportunities in education systems in order to provide a model for establishment of educational justice. The method of investigation was fundamental in terms of objective and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection. The population consisted of all administrations, teachers and experts in Iran in the academic year of 2013-2014, which 305 of them were chosen as sample size using multi-stage cluster sampling method. Content validity was employed in order to check the validity of the questionnaire. In this regard, the questionnaire was confirmed by the related specialists and experts. Moreover, Cronbach’s alpha method was used in order to check the reliability, which the value was 0.99 and this demonstrated the very high reliability of the questionnaire. The data analysis was carried out using SPSS and LISREL software in two phases of (frequency, average and standard deviation) and inferential (regression test, covariance matrix analysis and structural equation modeling). The findings demonstrated that the level of students’ access to equal educational opportunities (entrance rate), equality of input human resources of education system, equality of input financial and physical resources of education system, equality of performance of education system (transient rate) and equality of performance of education system (rate of promotion, rejection and educational failure) have impact on educational justice.

INTRODUCTION

Justice is a word that has been able to conquer many minds and languages since long time ago. Justice has variety of dimensions including economical, judicial, political, educational and ethnic justice. Educational justice is one of the most fundamental dimensions of justice and it is emphasized in our religious culture as much as science and education. Progress and improvement in today’s society depends on realization of educational justice. Educational justice can change education in variety of fields and can provide the groundwork for the incidence of talent and capabilities at macro levels [3].

Justice is of issues that have been considered by scientists for many years and has had impact on political, economical, social and cultural aspects, but specialists and scientists have considered justice in education less than the other aspects. Right to have education is one of the aspects of human right, and the annual reports at national and international scales demonstrate slow progress in this case. Nevertheless, the population of illiterate adults and children who have to be educated is a confirmation that greater effort should be made to achieve greater quantity despite the acquired progresses in the field of education [16].

Equal access to educational opportunities is one of the goals of systems (Islamic Republic of Iran that is designed based on social justice). Providing educational justice and reduction of inequality in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness in students is one of the critical and significant principles and one of the missions of educational system. Considering the importance and impact of educational justice, the fundamental issue is to ascertain justice and educational justice in the fields of education for the learners. According to the distribution of the country and unique climatic, cultural-organizational and ethnic circumstances, how can we develop and extend educational justice belief and provide the practical implementation field of it? To do this, it is needed to...
evaluate the status of access to educational opportunities in different regions of the country and among men and women at educational levels including elementary school, secondary school, high school and university on one hand, and to consider strategies to decrease inequality in access to educational opportunities on the other hand. According to the importance of education in training and teaching human beings, it can be stated that education system is one of the significant factors in flourishing and development of talent, and the effectiveness of education should be optimized through finding appropriate strategies. This is accomplished in the case of ruling educational justice in educational institutes of the country. Educational justice is of the most fundamental dimensions of organizational justice that can change all upstream spheres and provide the groundwork for the incidence of talent and capabilities at macro levels [21].

There were only a few individuals had access to education in the period before the Islamic revolution of Iran. Looking for “educational equality and education for all” was presented after the revolution and the groundwork was provided for it.

Realization of justice in a society is in close relationship with education and culture in that country. If there is the avoidance of corruption, discrimination, betrayal and injustice and people are tended to justice, then it can be expected to reach to a kind of balance in education, which is called educational justice. The high position of education and existence of capable and great talents make the need for justice more essential. Educational justice means exploitation of appropriate facilities by all the existed talents in the country. This demands strong and comprehensive will in order to provide the groundwork for utilization of facilities by prevention of accumulation of resources and capabilities in certain points or some rich areas. Educational justice is of principles that have been recently implemented and emphasized by the authorities. Educational justice is the hope and wish that can bring a bright tomorrow for the children of this country. Providing the possibility of educational and cultural development and moderation for everyone regardless of gender, class, race or color is one of the important branches of justice [11].

It is obvious that people who justice has became a belief for them and this belief was originated from school textbooks can play an important role in ruling transcendent human values beside appropriate educational equality. Realization of educational and cultural justice, all capable talents is flourished and governments try to comprehensively educate people to respect justice and norms using the existed facilities and potentials. Paving the way for education has been a significant and political objective in developing countries during the last three decades. Moreover, Iran has emphasized on the important of this issue apart from international treaties and conventions, and national and religious rules [5].

Realization of educational justice is of vital and important principles. Considering the necessity and impact of educational justice, the main issue is that how the justice can be realized and what can be done in order to make the educational justice comprehensive in the fields of training and teaching (education). Moreover, according to the distribution of the country and unique climatic, cultural-organizational and ethnical circumstances, how can we develop and extend educational justice belief and provide the practical implementation field of it? Providing equal opportunities for public access to education in the society is one of the most important ways of realization of social justice. Moreover, all individuals have the right to use equal education system. One of the indices of social progress in the present world is education and the way of using it. Based on this, countries, especially developing countries, make their best to provide equal access to education for public [8].

“Equality” refers to provision of equal opportunities with respect to specific needs of each individual, because individuals are different in knowledge, skills, ability of learning, cultural background and educational requirements [7]. “Equal opportunities in education” means preventing or reducing discrimination between people in terms of race, physical condition, age, language and social classes [20]. Equality of opportunities in macro dimension is a kind of humanistic perspective, which is considered as an index in developed societies. In micro dimension, equality of opportunities and educational justice are tools and mechanism that lead to flourishing of creative ideas and provide the possibility of development of capabilities for all individuals equally. Equality of opportunities in education is referred to a situation in which individuals who are not from a specific group have the possibility of social mobility through education [3].

Necessity and importance of educational justice can be studied in two other perspectives. From the first perspective, it can be considered as an objective or a tool in order to achieve long-term goals of social equality. In the classical liberal concept, equality means that all individuals are the same against the law regardless of race, color, and social and national origin. In a socialist perspective, education is considered as the main tool for equalization of social differences. Equality of educational opportunities can be achieved only when all people have equal access to education. This is accepted at international levels but it is not achieved yet [19]. Changes in combination of population and human resources and rapid development of population have led to changes in age and as a result, changes in the structure of employment pyramid. Based on the report published by the global bank, percentage of the workforce will increase during the twenty first century and this will be more obvious and tangible among low-income and lower classes groups. Moreover, participation of women in occupations
requires high levels of skill, which this will clarify the necessity of equal access to educational opportunities for women and low-income people [11].

Educational system is a complex set in which components and sub-systems can help to achieve the predefined goals when they are organized appropriately.

The discussed educational system consisted of input, process and output.

As it was mentioned, educational indices can be classified in three categories,

a) Input indices of educational system: It refers to whatever enters the educational system including material and financial resources, students and teachers.

Outputs are as follows,
1. Ratio of student to teacher
2. Ratio of students to classroom
3. Student per capita
4. Percent of national budget that is allocated to education
5. Ratio of enrollees to the related age group
6. Percentage of skilled teachers
7. Ratio of computer and other devices to student
8. Educational environment per capita

b) Indices of educational system process: It refers to the level of achieved accomplishments in attained the determined objectives for the education system.

On other words, it is the efficiency of the system.

It is consisted of:
1. Promotion rate
2. Repetition and dropout rate
3. Percentage of students passing
4. Results of standardized tests
5. Hours of in-service training

c) Indices of outputs of educational system: it refers to graduates who leave the system at different levels.

Graduates leave the education system with different levels of skill, expertise and knowledge having diploma or license. They usually can enter the labor market. It

It is consisted of:
1. Graduates' expertise
2. Ratio of individuals who graduated the general education courses to children who need to be educated
3. Ratio of individuals who got diploma to students entering high school [13]

Of course, researches have been conducted in this regard, which some of them are mentioned in the following.

Girls in all grades have less access to education than Boys do [14,6,18]. Girls in developed regions have more access to education than girls in developing regions do [6,18]. Despite gender inequality in less access to education for girls at all levels of school, they have better educational performance in the educational system [6].

Justice in the present era, which is full of injustice, is like a clear spring that can purify the spirit. Realization of this principle in education can bring bright future for children in this country. Educational justice and presentation of a model and strategy to achieve it was studied in the present investigation. Justice is the most valuable goal for human beings' salvation, which it is the requirements for progression in any society, especially Islamic communities. In fact, all efforts are a mean to achieve justice. Values such as freedom and equality are correlated with justice. On other words, if freedom and equality do not lead to justice, then they are not valuable. Improvement of an educational system takes place when the deficiencies are modified, because, deficiencies are as defects and imperfections for the system and desired results as outputs or outcomes will not be obtained from it. The first step in order to rectify any defects and deficiencies is to identify them and their factors. In this regard, the research hypotheses are mentioned in the following.

1. The amount of students' equal access to educational opportunities (input rate) has impact on educational justice.
2. Equality of input human resources of educational system has impact on educational justice.
3. Equality of input physical and material resources of educational system has impact on educational justice.
4. Equality of educational system performance (pass rate) has impact on educational justice.
5. Equality of educational system performance (promotion, rejection, academic failure rate) has impact on educational justice.

Eventually, according to the mentioned research hypotheses, the conceptual model of the research is presented in figure 1.
Methodology:

The present investigation was fundamental in terms of objective and descriptive-survey in terms of data collection. The population consisted of all administrations, teachers and experts in Iran in the academic year of 2013-2014. According to the time limitation and large extent of the studied population, the researcher collected data from a number of schools as sampling. Cochran method was used in order to determine the sample size and appropriate cluster sampling method was used in order to choose the school.

Based on the chose cluster sampling method, five provinces were firstly chosen. Subsequently, four regions were selected from the province randomly and then, 30 individuals were randomly chosen from the school administrators, experts and managers of each region. Afterwards, the prepared questionnaires were sent them through Education Research Institute. Eventually, 305 questionnaires were completed and collected.

The Educational Justice Questionnaire (EJQ) of Golparvar [12] was used in order to evaluate educational justice in different regions, which is based on five-point Likert scale (1= totally disagree to 7= totally agree). Moreover, the researcher-made questionnaire is based on the native culture of Iranian universities.

In addition, Gini coefficient was utilized in order to judge about the amount of educational inequality in different courses and to compare them with each other. Gini coefficient is of indices that is used for comparing inequality in different regions and courses, and Lorenz curve represents the the amount of inequality. Whatever the curve is closer to the equilibrium line (the bisector of the first quadrant) there is less unequal distribution of educational opportunities, and vice versa.

In order to measure the inequality between urban and rural areas in access to educational opportunities, quantitative indices were considered, which UNESCO uses it annually to determine inequalities all over the world.

Content validity was employed in order to check the reliability of the questionnaire. In this regard, the questionnaire was confirmed by the related experts and specialists. Moreover, the Cronbach’s alpha method was used to check the reliability, which the value was obtained equal to 0.99 and this demonstrated the high reliability of the questionnaire.
In order to interpret and analyze the collected data, inferential and descriptive statistic was used. Descriptive statistic including frequency, average and standard deviation was utilized to determine the status quo. Moreover, the regression test and covariance matrix analysis was used (factor analysis method with confirmatory aim and SEM) to answer the research hypotheses.

Findings

In this section, it should be mentioned that the model fitting was studied using SEM prior to the investigation of the research hypotheses and model, and all the fitting indices confirmed it. Figure 2 and table 1 can be referred in order to study the model and hypotheses.

**Fig. 2: Investigation of the model using SEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Studying the research hypotheses</th>
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<td>Performance equality</td>
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<td>Amount of impact</td>
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<td>Level of significance</td>
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<td>Input resources</td>
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<td>Level of significance</td>
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<td>Having education</td>
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<td>Level of significance</td>
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<td>Educational justice</td>
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<td>Level of significance</td>
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According to table 1, the following results are obtained.
- The amount of impact of human resources on educational justice is equal to 0.247 and the significance level is equal to 0.007, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that human resources have significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of material resources on educational justice is equal to 0.108 and the significance level is equal to 0.007, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that material resources have significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of pass rate on educational justice is equal to 0.163 and the significance level is equal to 0.005, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that pass rate has significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of promotion rate on educational justice is equal to 0.065 and the significance level is equal to 0.035, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that promotion rate has significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of enrollment rate on educational justice is equal to 0.185 and the significance level is equal to 0.008, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that enrollment rate has significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of performance equality on educational justice is equal to 0.411 and the significance level is equal to 0.010, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that performance equality has significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of input resources on educational justice is equal to 0.371 and the significance level is equal to 0.009, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that input resources have significant impact on educational justice.
- The amount of impact of having education on educational justice is equal to 0.247 and the significance level is equal to 0.008, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that having education has significant impact on educational justice.

Conclusion:

Educational justice is of principles that have been recently implemented and emphasized by the authorities. Moreover, implementation of this principle has been emphasized in education’s work program. Educational justice is the hope and wish that can bring a bright tomorrow for the children of this country.

Providing equal opportunities for public access to education in the society is one of the most effective ways of realization of social justice. Equal access to educational opportunities is one of the goals of many systems (including Islamic Republic of Iran, which is designed based on social justice). Providing educational justice and reduction of inequality in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness in students is one of the critical and significant principles and one of the missions of educational system.

The relationship between the indices of education system (input, process and output) and educational justice was studied in the present investigation, which the results demonstrated a significant relationship between all the indices and educational justice.

Considering the importance and impact of educational justice, the fundamental issue is to ascertain justice and educational justice in the fields of education for the learners. Moreover, according to the distribution of the country and unique climatic, cultural-organizational and ethnical circumstances, it should be considered how could we develop and extend educational justice belief and provide the practical implementation field of it? To do this, it is needed to evaluate the status of access to educational opportunities in different regions of the country and among men and women at educational levels including elementary school, secondary school, high school and university on one hand, and to consider strategies to decrease inequality in access to educational opportunities on the other hand.

According to the carried out studies on equality of physical and material resources, the following factors have been prioritized.

Equal annual cost allocation to schools; observing meritocratic principle ; equality of ratio of educational textbooks to students; equality of ratio of students to classroom; equality of the per capita cost of education at all levels in all regions; appropriate distribution of educational facilities; equality of number of students to laboratories in all regions; cultural development of families. Therefore, it can be concluded that equality of physical and material resources has impact on educational justice.

According to the conducted studies, equality of pass rate in all schools and different regions and equality of accomplishment of all students in various academic levels are of important factors in this question. The hypothesis of equality of educational system performance (pass rate) has impact on educational justice.

Equality of promotion rate in all schools and regions, equality of rejection rate in all schools and equality of educational failure in all schools and regions are of the most important factors in equality of educational system performance. Hence, it can be concluded that the hypothesis of investigating the performance of education system system (rate of promotion, rejection and educational failure) has impact on educational justice.
The first hypothesis was about the impact of students’ equal access to educational opportunities (input rate) on educational justice, which it was demonstrated that equal access of students to educational opportunities has impact on educational justice. The finding is in harmony with the results of other researchers such as Opheim [21], Ismail Sorkh [2], Moradi [14], Masoodi and Javaheri [15] and Atashak [1].

Review of the literature on the third hypothesis demonstrated that that equality of input human resources of education system has impact on educational justice. The result is in harmony with the findings of other researchers such as Abdoos [8] and Karimian Varchi [10]. Review of the literature on the third hypothesis demonstrated that equality of input material and physical resources of education system has impact on educational justice. The result is in line with the findings of other researchers such as Bathmarajah [22], Farjadipour [9] and Mirhadi [17].

Investigating the literature on the fourth hypothesis indicated that equality of educational system performance (pass rate) has impact on educational justice. According to the findings, it is obvious that the finding is in harmony with the result obtained by Rebell [23]. Review of the literature on the fifth hypothesis demonstrated that equality of educational system performance (rate of promotion, rejection and educational failure) has impact on educational justice. The finding is in line with the results of other researchers such as Jamali et al. [4] and Golparvar [11].

Eventually, the following recommendations are made in line with the results obtained from the present investigation.

- The process of implementation of educational justice demands full support of the parliament and the cabinet (government) in education.
- Education policymakers should pay special attention to the promotion of enrollment rate and realization of Shavian index of gender at all educational levels.
- Fair distribution of educated and experienced human resources in the country through recruitment in University of Farhangian and allocation of appropriate quota across the country
- Development of appropriate curriculum proportional to success and specific circumstances of each province
- Establishment of proper groundwork for the education of boys and girls, especially someone who failed to educate
- Identification of children from birth and development of a specific educational certificate for each child in order to register them in the case they have to be treated and educated. This educational certificate should be mandatory for all residents across the country (public education).
- To observe meritocratic principle at staff and school management levels and to avoid extreme politicization and political work.

REFERENCES