

Education System in New Zealand

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1. Introduction

New Zealand, island nation in the South Pacific Ocean, is located south of the equator in the Southern Hemisphere, and marking the eastern boundary of the Tasman Sea, a portion of the Pacific Ocean that separates New Zealand and the nearest large landmass, Australia, by a distance of about 1,600 km (1,000 mi). New Zealand includes two large islands that constitute most of its landmass, as well as numerous small islands. New Zealand administers two overseas territories, Tokelau and Ross Dependency (in Antarctica). However, the majority of New Zealanders live in urban areas, and many now earn a living in service industries such as tourism. The capital of New Zealand is Wellington. The largest and most cosmopolitan city is Auckland.

Education in New Zealand generally follows the three-tier model which includes primary schools, followed by secondary schools (high schools) and tertiary education at universities and/or polytechs. Yet, in this paper, the discussion also includes education at early childhood level as well as the English education. Most of the information of the education system presented here is summarized from Wikipedia and Microsoft Encarta (2009).

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has ranked New Zealand's education as the 7th best in the world. Moreover, The Education Index, published with the UN's Human Development Index in 2008, based on data from 2006, listed New Zealand amongst the highest in the world, tied for first with Denmark, Finland and Australia (Hayat and Yusuf, 2010). Therefore, discussing New Zealand education is significant for enlarging our knowledge on education horizon and for the betterment of Indonesian education.

New Zealand's academic model was developed after the British system, meaning that qualifications earned in a New Zealand educational institute, at any level, can generally be used around the world (Spoerl, 2007). This belongs to one of the potential strengths of its education.

2. Early Childhood Education

Many children attend some form of early childhood education before they begin school. The early childhood education consists of play center (birth to school age), kindergarten (ages 3 – 5), licensed early childhood centers (ages 0 – 5) (usually privately owned), and chartered early childhood centers (ages 0 – 5) (state funded). The difference of each type of early childhood education is only on the funding. Both play center and kindergarten can be operated by private institution or state funded. Licensed centers are run by private institution while chartered centers are funded by the state.

In Indonesia, from the age of 2, children in general attend pre-school playgroup, known as *PAUD (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini)*. From the age of 4, they attend kindergarten (*Taman Kanak-Kanak*). Similar to those in New Zealand, this education is not compulsory, as the aim of this is to prepare them for primary school. Of the forty-nine thousand kindergartens in Indonesia 99.35% are privately operated schools. The kindergarten years are usually divided into "Class A" and "Class B" students spending a year in each class.

3. Primary, Intermediate and Secondary Education

Education in New Zealand is free and compulsory for all children aged 5 through 17. Most schools cater for either primary, intermediate, or secondary school students:

- Years 1–6: Primary School (Ages 5–11)
- Years 7–8: Intermediate School (Ages 10–13), which provides a transition from primary schooling to secondary schooling.
- Years 9–13: Secondary School (Ages 13–17)

The schools provided are commonly in the form of Full Primary School (Ages 5–13), or separate primary and intermediate schools. Area schools are generally found in rural areas, where there are not enough students to run three separate schools productively.

In Indonesia, children ages 6–11 attend *Sekolah Dasar* (SD) (literally Elementary School). This means that the children in New Zealand start primary school earlier than Indonesian children. Similar to New Zealand education, this level of education is compulsory for all Indonesian citizens, based on the national constitution and students must study for six years to complete this level. Yet, the compulsory education is only lasted until Junior High school, generally known by the abbreviation "SMP" (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*) which spends 3 years. Some schools offer an accelerated learning program, where students who perform well can finish elementary school in five years. In Indonesia, some students may stay in the same grade if they don't pass, but in New Zealand the grading is automatically done (Hayat & Yusuf, 2010). Remedial teaching does not necessarily mean repeating the same class.

There are three types of school: state, private (or registered or independent) and state integrated schools. State and state integrated schools are government funded. Private schools receive about 25% of their funding from the government, and rely on tuition fees for the rest. State integrated schools are former private schools which are now "integrated" into the state system under the *Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975* "on a basis which will preserve and safeguard the special character of the education provided by them".

The fee in New Zealand schools is not much different to that in Indonesia. While state funded tuition is free, students must still pay for course materials and related costs. Also, almost all schools charge a tax deductible "voluntary donation" that most parents pay, this may range from \$40 per child up to \$800 per child. Typically parents will outlay \$500–\$1000 per year for uniforms, field trips, social events, sporting equipment. Private or independent schools charge tuition fees while state integrated schools, which are often church funded, may charge an additional levy for the school buildings. International students with valid student visas can also be enrolled in state funded schools provided they pay the appropriate international student tuition fees.

Most students attend public secular schools; only a minority attend private or church-affiliated schools. According to Independent Schools New Zealand, an advocacy group for private schools, about 86% of all school-aged children attend state schools, 10% attend state integrated schools and 4% attend private schools.

For state schools, the Education Amendment Act 2000 puts in place a new "system for determining enrolment of students in circumstances where a school has reached its roll capacity and needs to avoid overcrowding." Schools which operate enrolment schemes have a geographically defined "home zone". Residence in this zone, or in the school's boarding house, if it has one, gives right of entry to the School. Students who live outside the school's home zone can be admitted, if there are places available, in the following order of priority: special programmes; siblings of currently enrolled students; siblings of past students; children of board employees and staff; all other students. If there are more applications than available places then selection must be through a randomly-drawn ballot. The system is complicated by some state schools having boarding facilities for students living beyond the school's zone. Typically these students live in isolated farming regions in New Zealand, or their parents may live or work partly overseas. Many secondary schools offer limited scholarships to their boarding establishment to attract talented students, such as good rugby players, in imitation of private school practice.

Those living in isolated farming regions in New Zealand can also enroll to area schools which are generally found in rural areas. The learning facilities such as materials, books, media, etc., are supported by the state delivering them regularly to make sure that the students have similar access to education facilities to those living in cities.

Critics have suggested that the system is fundamentally unfair as it restricts the choice for parents to choose schools and schools to choose their students although it does allow all students living in the community to have entry, as of right, regardless of their academic or social profile. In addition, there is evidence that property values surrounding some more desirable schools become

inflated, thus restricting the ability of lower socio-economic groups to purchase a house in the zone, though this is off set by the fact that students are accepted from rental accommodation or from homes where they are boarding with a bona fide relative or friend living in the zone.

The academic year in New Zealand varies between institutions, but generally runs from late January until mid-December for primary school, secondary schools and polytechnic. This is longer than the academic year for universities which runs from late February until mid-November. While in Indonesia, the school year is divided into two semesters. The first begins in the beginning of July and ends in December; the second begins in January and ends in June.

The credit based system assigns a numeric value to each subject, with core subjects like English and Math earning more credits than elective subjects like drama or sport. This system gives students the opportunity to tailor their learning, while still achieving fundamental literacy and numeracy requirements (Spoerl, 2007).

A recent proposal by the New Zealand Government, called Schools Plus, would see students required to remain in some form of education until age 18. Disabled students with special educational needs can stay until the end of the calendar year they turn 21.

4. Homeschooling

In addition to education at schools, homeschooling is also significant in New Zealand. Parents may home school their own children if they can prove that their child will be "*...taught at least as regularly and as well as in a registered school...*", and are given an annual grant to help with costs, including services from The Correspondence School. Students living more than 5 kilometers walking distance from the nearest school (or public transport to school) may be exempted from attending school but may be required to enroll in a correspondence school. The percentage of children home schooled is well under 2% even in the Nelson

region, the area where it is most popular, but there are many local and national support groups. The percentage is low because many schools give facilities by contracting public transport operators to provide school buses that deliver students to the school gate in the morning and home again at the end of the school day.

A study conducted by Fletcher, et.al (2010) on effective reading instruction and home-school relationship in New Zealand has revealed the parents' perceptions about children learning to read in schools. This study approaches effective reading strategies by looking at the children's relationships with their parents and the parents' ability to read. In this study, six schools in New Zealand are explored. Among the conclusions are as follow:

- a. School and community libraries were identified as an important resource for parents and school children.
- b. The school and teacher's roles in facilitating parental involvement and providing a clear and accurate understanding of their children's reading achievement and development are critical.
- c. One or both parents' interest and abilities in reading appeared to be influential in encouraging their children to read.
- d. New Zealand is a good context for this study because a considerable proportion of the adult population do not have adequate reading skills. These parents discussed supports and challenges they perceived that impacted their children's reading and learning in general.

5. Tertiary Education

Students who wish to attend university must fulfill the requirements of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement, which is undertaken during the final three years of high school. New Zealand also offers foundation or bridging schools, which help students prepare for university studies. Foundation schools are usually attended by international students who are unused to the New Zealand academic system or don't have the English skills, and Kiwi students who don't have the formal qualifications to apply for university (Spoerl, 2007). While in

Indonesia, the university preparatory school is given for three years in "SMA" (*Sekolah Menengah Atas*).

The system of higher education in New Zealand includes eight major universities. The largest are the University of Auckland (founded in 1882), at Auckland, and Massey University (1926), with campuses at Auckland, Palmerston North, and Wellington. Other institutions of higher education are the University of Waikato (1964), at Hamilton; the Victoria University of Wellington (1899); the University of Canterbury (1873), at Christchurch; the University of Otago (1869), at Dunedin; Lincoln University (1990; formerly Lincoln Agricultural College), near Christchurch; and the Auckland University of Technology (2000, formerly the Auckland Institute of Technology). These universities are state owned and follow a research based academic method. Many have appeared in international Best Universities lists. Every university in New Zealand offers degrees in the arts and humanities (including teaching), business and the sciences.

The New Zealand university academic year begins in late February and usually ends in October. The year is split into two semesters of about twelve weeks each, except for the Victoria University of Wellington, which has trimesters. University students enjoy a two week break in the middle of the year and about six weeks at the end of the year.

Several colleges provide teacher training, and polytechnic institutions offer degree programs, diplomas, and certificates in various technical and professional trades. Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics are also state owned institutes of learning. While they follow a similar structure to universities, they specialize mainly in vocational training, providing teaching in industry based learning such as hospitality or the trades. There is a strong emphasis on practical learning, so teaching and examinations are often hands on, or modeled on a real world example. Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics offer certificate and diploma level qualifications. They sometimes also offer limited undergraduate and post graduate degrees.

Funding for tertiary education in New Zealand is through a combination of government subsidies and student fees. The government funds approved courses by a tuition grant based on the number of enrolled students in each course and the amount of study time each course requires. Courses are rated on an equivalent full-time Student (EFTS) basis. Students enrolled in courses can access Student Loans and Student Allowances to assist with fees and living costs.

Domestic students will pay fees subsidized by the Government, and the student-paid portion of the fee can be loaned from the Government under the Government's Student Loan Scheme. Weekly stipends can be drawn from the loan for living expenses, or the student can apply for a needs based (on assessment of parental income) "Student Allowance", which does not need to be paid back or non-refundable. It is limited which means tested and the weekly amount granted depends on residential and citizenship qualifications, age, location, marital status, dependent children as well as personal, spousal or parental income. The allowance is intended for living expenses, so most students receiving an allowance will still need a student loan to pay for their tuition fees.

Funding for Tertiary Institutions has been criticized recently due to high fees and funding not keeping pace with costs or inflation. Some also point out that high fees are leading to skills shortages in New Zealand as high costs discourage participation and graduating students seek well paying jobs off shore to pay for their student loans debts. As a result, education funding has been undergoing an ongoing review in recent years. However, from April 2006, the interest component on Student Loans was abolished for students who live in New Zealand.

6. New Zealand English and Maori Influence

The English language was established in New Zealand by colonists during the 19th century. The most distinctive influences on New Zealand English have come from Australian English, British English in Southern England, Irish English, Scottish English, the prestige Received Pronunciation, and the Māori language. New Zealand English is similar to Australian English in pronunciation, with some

key differences. One of the most prominent differences is the realization of /ɪ/: in New Zealand English of the word KIT, as in some South African varieties, this is pronounced as a schwa /ə/. Because of this difference in pronunciation, some New Zealanders claim Australians say "feesh and cheeps" for *fish and chips* while some Australians counter that New Zealanders say "fush and chups".

In informal speech, some New Zealanders use the third person feminine *she* in place of the third person neuter *it* as the subject of a sentence, especially when the subject is the first word of the sentence. The most common use of this is in the phrase "She'll be right" meaning either "It will be okay" or "It is close enough to what is required". This is similar to Australian English.

The dominant influence of Māori on New Zealand English is lexical. The proportion of words of Māori origin is at approximately 0.6%, mostly place and personal names. The everyday use of Maori words, usually colloquial, occurs most prominently among youth, young adults and Maori populations themselves. Examples include words like "kia ora" ("hello"), or "kai" ("food") which almost all New Zealanders know.

Māori is also ever-present and has a significant conceptual influence in the legislature, government, and community agencies (e.g. health and education), where legislation requires that proceedings and documents are translated into Māori (under certain circumstances, and when requested). Political discussion and analysis of issues of sovereignty, environmental management, health, and social well-being thus rely on Māori at least in part. Māori as a spoken language is particularly important wherever community consultation occurs.

The influence of Maori's culture also appears in literature. The beginning works of New Zealand's Modern literature address difficult questions of biculturalism and the survival of the Maori community and culture. Some works are also influenced by the oral literary tradition which is a vital part of Maori society. Traditional Maori literature consists of history, tales, poems, and legends, all of which have been preserved through the generations by oral recitation. The Polynesian ancestors of the Maori established tribal kin groups in defined

territories, following Polynesian custom. Each group produced a complex oral tradition concerning all aspects of its life. Some traditions were exclusive to the Maori tribe that composed them; others came to be known and used universally. The strikingly poetic language of the compositions aided their memorization and recitation. The main types of composition are *whakapapa* (genealogy/family tree), *karakia* (incantations/prayer), *korero* (narratives), *whakatauki* (sayings), and *waiata* (sung poetry).

7. English Education

The current trend of the teaching of English in New Zealand deals with communicative approach. The communicative approach used does a lot to expand on the goal of creating communicative competence compared to any other methods that professed the same objective. In this case, teaching students how to *use* the language is considered to be at least as important as learning the language itself.

In communicative approach, teachers are exploring pedagogical means for 'real-life' communication in the classroom. It is an effort to get the learners to develop linguistic fluency, not just the accuracy that has so consumed our historical journey. Students are also equipped with tools for generating language performance to facilitate lifelong language learning among the students, not just with the immediate classroom task.

Another approach employed is activity-based learning. Its core premises include the requirement that learning should be based on doing some hands-on experiments and activities. The idea of activity-based learning is rooted in the common notion that children are active learners rather than passive recipients of information. If child is provided the opportunity to explore by their own and provided an optimum learning environment then the learning becomes joyful and long-lasting.

The philosophy of activity-based learning finds its antecedents in the common notion that learning can be best when it is initiated by the surrounding

environment and motivated by providing optimum opportunities to learn. A fearless and freedom to express environment always adds to best learning outcomes.

The key feature of the activity-based learning is that it uses child-friendly educational aids to foster self-learning and allows a child to study according to his/her aptitude and skill. Under the system, the curriculum is divided into small units, each a group of Self Learning Materials (SLM) comprising attractively designed study cards for particular topic. When a child finishes a group of cards, he completes one "milestone". Activities in each milestone include games, rhymes, drawing, and songs to teach a letter or a word, form a sentence, do maths and science, or understand a concept.

The English education in New Zealand is also supported by some programs such as Colombo plan scholarship and English Language Institute. Colombo plan is a regional organization that embodies the concept of collective inter-governmental effort to strengthen economic and social development of member countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. The primary focus of all Colombo Plan activities is on human resources development. It has grown from a group of seven Commonwealth nations - Australia, Britain, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand and Pakistan - into an international organization of 26, including non-Commonwealth countries. When it adopted a new constitution in 1977, its name was changed to "The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific" to reflect the expanded composition of its enhanced membership and the scope of its activities.

One of the 4 permanent programmes of Colombo plan is Long-Term Scholarships Programme (LTSP). Over the years, while adhering to the concept of human resource development and south-south cooperation in addressing issues of economic and social development, the programme content of the Colombo Plan has been changing to take account of the needs of member countries in a fast changing world economic environment. In the early years, the training programmes were more of a long-term nature while recent programmes have been

focusing on providing advance skills and experience sharing aimed at arriving at the best practices in different fields, for instance in English education.

The English Language Institute (ELI) has been an important part of Victoria University for over 40 years. Since 1961, students from 120 countries have studied at the Institute either on the English language courses or on the widely-respected teacher education programmes. The teacher education programmes are now offered by the School while the English language courses continue under the name of the English Language Institute.

The highly qualified teaching staff at the Institute have had professional experience in working with students from many parts of the world - the Pacific, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Language teaching at the Institute benefits directly from our long-established research programme on the English language and the processes of learning and using it. Most of the course materials are designed and developed in response to the needs of the students. The Institute also provides English language courses and consultancies for special professional or academic groups.

8. Concluding Remark

Comparing between the education system of New Zealand and that of Indonesia is inseparable with the related aspects as summarized in the following table:

Aspect	New Zealand	Indonesia
Population	4,154,311 (2008 estimate)	237,512,360 (2008 estimate)
Population density	16 persons per sq km	130 persons per sq km
Urban population distribution	86 percent (2005 estimate)	48 percent (2005 estimate)
Rural population distribution	14 percent (2005 estimate)	52 percent (2005 estimate)
Official language	English, Maori	Bahasa Indonesia
Life expectancy	79.1 years (2008 estimate)	70.5 years (2008 estimate)
Infant mortality rate	6 deaths per 1,000 live births (2008 estimate)	31 deaths per 1,000 live births (2008 estimate)
Literacy rate	99 percent (1995)	89.5 percent (2005 estimate)

Being ranked as the 7th best education in the world and listed amongst the highest education index in the world, New Zealand education is significant to discuss for enlarging our knowledge on education horizon and for the betterment of Indonesian education. By understanding education in New Zealand, it is expected that we can reflect to our education system better. Based on data from 2006, Indonesian's literacy is ranked 48 among 56 countries (Hayat and Yusuf, 2010). Therefore, it is a great challenge for us to start reaching the betterment from now on, from local context and from the smallest innovation which can be done.

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