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Early Childhood Education and the Saudi Vision 2030

BY

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Abstract

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has realized that education is one of the pillars of developed countries that seek leadership and excellence. Paying attention to it has become an imperative for societies that wish to be in the ranks of nations. The paper described the development of early childhood education (ECE) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This paper outlined the components of the educational system, the objectives of the kindergarten, the curriculum, and daily activities. In 2016, the kingdom directed its attention to education through Vision 2030 to make it a main axis and pillar in order to give an important message that early childhood education must be developed. Therefore, we saw the importance of highlighting the 2030 vision in education (especially early childhood education) and the recent developments and achievements in this sector made since the launch of Saudi Vision 2030.

Keywords: Kindergarten-early childhood education- Saudi Vision 2030

تعليم الطفولة المبكرة ورؤية المملكة ٢٠٣٠

الملخص:

أدركت المملكة العربية السعودية أن التعليم هو أحد ركائز الدول المتقدمة التي تسعى إلى الريادة والتميز. لقد أصبح الاهتمام بها ضرورة ملحة للمجتمعات التي ترغب في أن تكون في مصاف الدول. وصفت الورقة تطور التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة في المملكة العربية السعودية. تطرقت هذه الورقة إلى مكونات النظام التعليمي وأهداف الروضة والمناهج والأنشطة اليومية. في عام ٢٠١٦، وجهت المملكة اهتمامها إلى التعليم من خلال رؤية ٢٠٣٠ لجعله محورياً وركيزة أساسية؛ لإعطاء رسالة مهمة بأن التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة يجب تطويره. لذلك، رأينا أهمية إبراز رؤية ٢٠٣٠ في التعليم (خاصة تعليم الطفولة المبكرة) والتطورات والإنجازات الأخيرة التي تحققت في هذا القطاع منذ إطلاق رؤية السعودية ٢٠٣٠م.

الكلمات المفتاحية: روضة الأطفال-تعليم الطفولة المبكرة-رؤية السعودية ٢٠٣٠

Introduction:

The first institution of early childhood education in the Kingdom was established in 1965 when the first private kindergarten, Dar Al-Hannan, was established in Jeddah, in the western region. Other parts of the Kingdom followed suit, and within four years, there were 13 kindergarten centres in the country. According to Al-Jadidi (2012), the private sector took responsibility for kindergarten education in the Kingdom until 1975, when the Ministry of Education (which was also concerned with boys' education) opened the first public kindergarten in Makkah and took responsibility for the kindergarten centres (MoE, 1989). In 1980, the GPGE, which was later merged with the Ministry of Education, officially assumed the responsibility for all private and public kindergartens and for licensing teachers to work in this field. Subsequently, the government decided to develop early childhood education and contributed to an increase in the number of kindergarten schools, which were divided between the public and private sectors. The following table 1 illustrates the growth of ECE in Saudi Arabia from 1984 to 2016 (MoE, 2004, 2016a).

Table 1:
Growth of ECE in Saudi Arabia from 1984- 2016

	1984-1985	1994-1995	2004-2005	2011-2012	2016-2017
Kindergartens	543	794	1320	2461	3403
Classes	2589	3928	5704	12266	17619
Children	79608	83649	100032	182435	293234
Teachers	4630	7007	9744	17993	26611

Source: (MoE, 2004, 2016a)







As shown in the table above, at the beginning of this decade, the number of kindergarten schools was 2461, with 12,266 classes, which included 182,435 children and 17,993 teachers (MoE, 2011). In 2016/2017, this number rose to 3403 kindergarten schools, with 17,619 classes, 293,234 children and 26,611 teachers (MoE, 2016). The number of children joining kindergarten schools in urban areas was much higher than in rural areas (Khomais, 2007). The rate of enrolment in

kindergarten was 15.4% of the Saudi early years population in 2016, according to estimates, but in the government view, this was still insufficient relative to the total number of children (MoE, 2016a). The take-up of Saudi kindergarten education is still limited, compared to the primary education stage, which serves 2,981,789 children in 15,818 schools (MoE, 2016a).

Notably, the kindergarten enrolment rate in KSA is reportedly the lowest among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and significantly lower than the regional, average, which is 64.4% (see Table 2 below). As a result of the low enrolment rate in kindergartens, the Government of Saudi Arabia has created plans to increase the enrolment rate in kindergartens, which will be discussed later in this paper.

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Kindergarten enrolment rates in the GCC countries.

	Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries					
	 Bahrain	 Kuwait	 Oman	 Qatar	 UAE	 KSA
Enrolment rate (%)	55.26	67.9	56.7	60.14	81.85	15.4

Source: (MoE, 2016a; UNESCO, 2016).

The system of ECE

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Early Childhood Education system is divided into two types of settings: nursery, which provides care for the youngest children, ages 0-3 years, and kindergarten, which offers both care and instruction for children aged 3-6 years (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016). The current study is concerned with Saudi kindergarten settings. Children are enrolled in kindergarten grade one (KG1) at age three, followed by kindergarten grade two (KG2) at age four, and then kindergarten grade three (KG3) between the ages of five and six (Madini, 2005). Children of both genders are allowed to go to kindergarten institutions, but all the teachers and caregivers are female, as this is a government requirement (Al-Jadidi, 2012).

According to the *Organisational guide for nursery and kindergarten* in Saudi Arabia (MoE, 2018a), there are three types of kindergartens in Saudi Arabia: public, private, and applied public. An applied public kindergarten is a distinguished kindergarten supporting the other two types of kindergartens in administrative and technical aspects. This supportive kindergarten has particular objectives such as contributing to raising the performance of public and private kindergartens, offering workshops and training courses related to the early years stage, training of female teachers in the implementation of kindergarten programmes and organisation of classroom environments, and providing a rich library of educational tools for children and teachers.

In Saudi kindergarten schools, both sexes follow the same curriculum (AlKhatib, 2006). Attending kindergarten in Saudi Arabia is not a requirement for enrolling in primary school (UNESCO, 2011). The MoE considers ECE as a preliminary stage and “an independent stage in its curricula and structure” (MoE, 2004:18). Madini (2005) reported that 74.2 per cent of children attend only KG3, because parents prefer their children to adapt to the educational environment before primary school and they consider the last year of kindergarten is sufficient to ready a child for the next stage, as they can more easily see the relevance of the more formal and structured teaching in KG3 than the ‘play’ in KG1 and KG2. Similarly, the data of an Education and Training Survey issued by the General Authority for Statistics (GaStat, 2016) show that 76.4 per cent of kindergarteners were attending the third grade. When children graduate to primary school, the legally mandated system of gender segregation starts, whereby girls and boys each have their respective institutions (in 2019, this system was changed, and more information will be provided in this paper).

Objectives of kindergarten

In Saudi Arabia, the main objective of kindergarten is to orient children to the educational life and its challenges, by means of “upright and moral upbringing in tandem with tenets of education” (Samadi & Marwa, 2006:23). The MoE (1996) formulated the aims of kindergarten

so as to integrate them with the overall policy of education in KSA. The aims are:

- Nurturing the instincts of the children. This involves pursuing the children's moral, physical and mental development in a natural environment close to that of the family, with compliance to the tenets of the Islamic faith.
- Orienting the religious inclination of the children and inculcating the virtues and values of Islam based on the oneness of God (Tawhid), in conformity with the children's instincts.
- Inculcation of good behaviour among children through aiding their acquisition of Islamic values of good behaviour in the school environment.
- Acclimatising the children to the typical environment they are likely to meet at school and hence remove the sense of isolation they are likely to encounter within the school set up.
- Instilling in abundance the wealth of proverbs and parables on basic truths and knowledge that surround the children.
- Equipping the children with physical exercise, teaching them the sense of hygiene and then orienting the children on how to live by healthy principles.
- Encouraging the culture of imaginative thinking and enabling children's potential to grow and unfold through good care.
- Taking care of the needs of the children, pleasing them and educating them at the same time without overloading or spoiling them.
- Safeguarding the children from perils, guiding against early manifestations of unruly behaviours and also guiding them in coping with childhood problems in correct ways (MoE, 1996).

Curriculum and daily activities

In this section, a description is provided of the newest edition of the Saudi kindergarten curriculum, and a typical school day's activities in a Saudi kindergarten classroom.

In the early 1980s, a group of educators from the Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND) established the first kindergarten curriculum in Saudi Arabia (MoE, 2004). The most recent restructuring of the kindergarten curriculum, the 7th edition, was published in 2004 (MoE, 2004).

The kindergarten curriculum in Saudi Arabia is styled as a child-centred curriculum, which includes several themes, such as family, friends, libraries and books, as well as health and safety (MoE, 2004). The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education provides a guidebook for kindergarten teachers. This manual suggests themes, activities, rhymes, and lessons plans, and gives teachers some sort of flexibility in terms of content. In order to show accountability, teachers are required to plan lessons in advance, and assess the lessons later. For each lesson, teachers must have activities that encourage children's reading and writing skills, and also help to develop their social and emotional skills. Teaching is geared towards a holistic development that includes physical education and even spiritual development (MoE, 2004). One of the basic ideas behind the Saudi kindergarten curriculum is teaching the children the traditional and cultural values of Saudi Arabia (MoE, 2008).

The Saudi kindergarten curriculum is divided into units, each of which explains and expounds on a theme. Each unit starts off with an introduction that provides the ideas behind a specific topic. Then, the unit explains ideas which teachers are expected to explain to children in the classroom. There are prescribed learning targets that children are expected to reach by the end of a theme. Below is a table with examples of concepts and expected learning outcomes within the theme of family.

Table 3
: Saudi Kindergarten Curriculum: Family Theme

Family Theme
<p>Examples of major concepts within the theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each person belongs to a family. - Each family member plays a certain role. - Each family has a family history. - Some children live with their parents; others live with their extended family.
<p>Examples of suggested learning outcomes within the theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name their family members (parents, grand-parents etc.), - Describe different family members and their roles, - Know how to respectfully greet family members, - Learn the alphabet, - Be able to write some letters.
<p>Examples of activities:</p> <p>1- Circle time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher should present pictures or videos showing families in different settings and cultures. - Teacher should invite a mother with a new-born baby to talk about the newborn. - Teacher shows slides or pictures of family members performing different tasks (for example, a picture of a grandmother baking traditional bread, mother feeding her baby, or father fixing a car). <p>2- Lessons in Reading and Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher should teach the alphabet. - Teacher should tell students to complete their worksheets. <p>3- Corners Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library corner: teacher should tell students stories about themselves and their family. - Science and discoveries corner: teacher should place several objects in a sack and ask the students to use their sense of touch to name the objects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cognitive corner: sorting objects and tracing cards. - House corner: Teacher should include clothes and fabrics for role-playing, like scarves, purses, sunglasses, and traditional Saudi outfits for boys and girls. - Art corner: students should be helped to create a photo collage showing the concept of family. - Construction corner: students should use plastic objects or toys to represent family members.

It can be seen from the above that the activities suggested for circle time reflect traditional gender roles. Saudi education reflects normative thinking on gender and socializes children into traditional roles through the images it presents of familial roles and practices.

In addition to suggesting themes' content and activities, the government curriculum addresses the classroom environment and it suggests different classroom layouts. Kindergarten classrooms are supposed to include "corners" such as a construction corner, drama or play corner, literacy and numeracy corner, science and discovery corner, art corner, household corner, and theme corner. The guidebook allows teachers to make changes to the classroom environment depending on the monthly theme.

The kindergarten school day often follows a routine, starting with learning the date of the day, Quran recitation, rhymes, and then a teacher-planned lesson (MoE, 2004). The lessons are supposed to promote interaction between the teacher and the students. However, learning by rote continues to be a basic feature of the Saudi educational system (Rugh, 2002). This shows the important influence of cultural assumptions and beliefs in the application of the curriculum (Rogoff, 2003).

Given all that has been mentioned so far about ECE in Saudi Arabia, there seems to be some evidence to indicate that the government has paid less attention to early childhood education and has not taken critical ways to solve the problem of low enrolment of children in kindergartens. Furthermore, it appears that the Ministry has not encouraged and motivated parents to register their children in kindergarten or emphasised the importance of this stage in terms of preparing children for the school environment and equipping them with fundamental knowledge. Besides, the kindergarten curriculum is outdated and needs to be improved to take advantage of, and benefit from the developments in developed countries. It should meet the needs of children in this technological era and raise the level of knowledge and creativity. In the next section, MoE projects and initiatives to reform the educational system in the Kingdom are discussed.

Education and Saudi Vision 2030

In April 2016, the Saudi Council of Ministers tasked the Council of Economic and Development Affairs (CEDA) to launch an ambitious plan, known as the Saudi Economic Vision 2030, to introduce the kingdom's long-term goals for diversifying the economy and reducing dependence on oil. The plan emphasises the link between education and a competitive economy. The crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) officially announced this vision, which focuses on a variety of economic and education reforms, cultural and entertainment projects, as well as business and investment endeavours (CEDA, 2016). This vision *"is built around three themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation"* (CEDA, 2016:13). According to the Saudi Economic Vision 2030, education is a key pillar in contributing to economic growth (see Figure 1), and the word "education" is repeated more than 29 times in the vision's document.

The vision includes many educational goals, as Prince MBS stated:

"Among our commitments ... an education that contributes to economic growth. In the year 2030, we aim to have at least five Saudi universities among the top 200 universities in international rankings. We shall help our students achieve results above international averages in global education indicators. To this end, we will prepare a modern curriculum focused on rigorous standards in literacy, numeracy, skills and character development. We will track progress and publish a sophisticated range of education outcomes, showing year-on-year improvements". (CEDA, 2016:40)

"We will continue investing in education and training so that our young men and women are equipped for the jobs of the future. We want Saudi children, wherever they live, to enjoy higher quality, multi-faceted education. We will invest particularly in developing early childhood education, refining our national curriculum and training our teachers and educational leaders". (CEDA, 2016:36)

"We will build a centralized student database tracking students from early childhood through to K-12 and beyond

into tertiary education (higher and vocational) in order to improve education planning, monitoring, evaluation, and outcomes”. (CEDA, 2016:41)

“We want to deepen the participation of parents in the education process, to help them develop their children’s characters and talents so that they can contribute fully to society. Families will also be encouraged to adopt a planning culture, to plan carefully for their future and the futures of their children. We intend to embed positive moral beliefs in our children’s characters from an early age by reshaping our academic and educational system”. (CEDA, 2016:28)



EDUCATION
THAT CONTRIBUTES TO
ECONOMIC GROWTH



Figure 1: Extract from Vision 2030, showing focus on education.

These quotations from the vision show the government's intention to lead education to excellence by enhancing higher education, preparing a modern education curriculum, tracking the progress of education outcomes, supporting teacher training, developing early childhood education, involving children and their families in the educational reform and recognising the importance of collaboration and a teamwork culture. Allmnakrah and Evers (2019) suggested that the vision showed a recognition that there is an urgent need in Saudi Arabia for educational reform, especially in the area of teacher development, in order to prevent the perpetuation of the method of rote learning. Considering that it has already been recognised that the previous education initiatives have produced little results, the Prince's comments suggest that there is a renewed commitment by the decision-makers to fund the professional

development of teachers and to implement policy changes through fostering the vision to promote the lifelong learning of students, which is fundamental to the successful implementation of kingdom's economic reforms.

The government has allocated a substantial share of its budget to achieving its educational goals. Since the Vision was announced in 2016, the Kingdom has allocated nearly 40 billion pounds annually to the education sector (see Table 4). For example, in 2016, a total of SAR 192 billion (GBP 39.4 billion) was earmarked for general education, higher education and training, accounting for 23% of the total budget (MoF, 2015). Furthermore, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has one of the highest levels of spending on education, surpassing some developed countries. For instance, in 2017, most of the European Union countries, including Germany and United Kingdom spent an average of 4-5 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education (Eurostat, 2019), whereas Saudi Arabia has spent above 6 per cent of GDP per year on education from 2016 to 2020 (MoF, 2020).

Table 4:
Annual allocations to education under Vision 2030.

	Years				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
The Education sector budget (SAR billion: GBP billion)	192: 39.4	200: 41	195: 40	192: 39.4	193: 39.6
Percentage of the Kingdom's total budget	23%	22.5%	20%	17.5%	19%

Source: (MoF, 2020)

The MoE started to reshape the education sector under Vision 2030 in order to achieve the vision's goals based on the three themes (see Figure 2). In June 2016, the National Transformation Programme (NTP) was started, to achieve Saudi Vision 2030 and to recognise the challenges encountered by government organisations in the economic and development sectors. The programme sets strategic objectives based on the Vision, addresses expected challenges up to 2020, and offers

interim indicators that measure achievement. As part of the programme, the MoE was assigned some strategic objectives to be fulfilled by the year 2020, such as increasing the average number of annual professional development hours completed by teachers from 10 hours to 18 hours, increasing the average number of annual professional development hours completed by headteachers from 5 hours to 20 hours, and increasing the enrolment rate for kindergartens from 13 to 27.2 per cent.

Education and Vision 2030 Connecting Goals and Themes of Vision

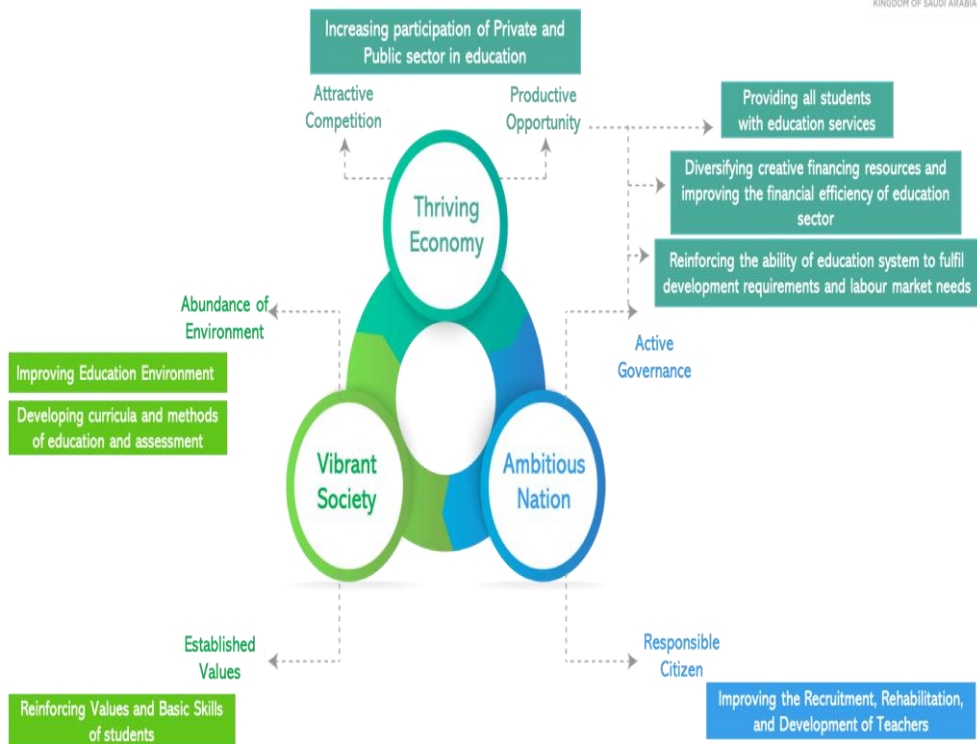


Figure 1: The inter-related themes of Vision 2030
Source: (CEDA, 2016)

Arguably the aspects of this vision most pertinent to the current study were that it included the following: developing the ECE sector, improving the educational environment, creating opportunities for teacher training, and developing curricula and teaching methods.

Regarding the ECE sector, the MoE has made intensive efforts to establish regulations and policies for kindergartens, enabling kindergarten staff to recognise their specific duties and responsibilities and to exercise their roles, with confidence (Alshanqiti, 2018). Since 2016, the ministry has introduced five guidance books for kindergartens, such as the *Organisational guide for nursery and kindergarten*, the *Procedural guide for nursery and kindergarten*, both published in 2016, with second editions in 2018, and the *Teacher guide for the Self-learning Curriculum in kindergarten* (MoE, 2018b). The objectives of these guides are to raise awareness of the importance of organisational management, set out the organisational structure of the kindergarten, identify and maintain a record of the specific roles and responsibilities of kindergarten members, enhance the collaboration among headteachers and teachers with families and the community, and keep up with the national and international developments in the ECE sector (Tatweer, 2017). For example, some of the responsibilities of kindergarten management, which are mentioned in the *Teacher's Guide* (MoE, 2018b), are creating the general conditions in the kindergarten, shaping the general pattern of work, distributing the daily tasks of employees, arranging the daily programme, organising exchange of roles between teachers in the classroom, as well as liaising with the educational authority.

The MoE, in consideration of the different demands of young learners and in its commitment to improving performance and developing job plans, is working to build an institutional structure conducive to a system of young children's schooling that prepares learners for higher education stages and in accordance with the statement in the Organizational Guide to the Ministry issued by the Council of Ministers (Decision No. 511 of 06-05-2019). The general objective of the General Department of Early Childhood, which is part of the General Education Agency, is to strive towards ensuring high quality education

for children from three years of age to their third year of primary school and to track the quality of the ECE programme by authorized criteria to prepare children to enter primary school (MoE, 2019).

With the above aims in mind, a group of initiatives has been set for early childhood education: one of these is the development and nationwide expansion of kindergartens, including projects and programmes aiming to provide equitable, quality and inclusive education for all, and increase opportunities for lifelong learning for all. Total enrolments at kindergarten schools will be the key performance indicator for this objective. The target is to increase children's enrolment from 17% to 95% by the year 2030.

To achieve this initiative, the ratio of teachers to children in kindergarten was decreased from 1:12, in the first edition of the *Teacher's guide* (MoE, 2016b) to 1:15 in the second edition (MoE, 2018b). In addition, to support early childhood expansion, the Ministry planned to open and operate 650 new public kindergartens and provide promotional tracks and facilities for private investors to open at least 1000 kindergartens. This is expected to create important opportunities, such as providing a large number of educational functions for the kindergarten stage and others. This will be achieved through Tatweer Building Company (a government company owned by Tatweer Holding Company, which is owned by the Public Investment Fund) which offers many programmes in cooperation with the Department of Kindergartens in the MoE (see Figure 3).





 <p>Build new KGs Build new 650 public kindergartens across the Kingdom.</p>	 <p>Kanaf program For licensing and qualifying early childhood buildings.</p>	 <p>Land lease to operators Public land lease to kindergarten operator.</p>
 <p>Build attached KGs Free space in a public school operated publicly or rented out to private operator for the purpose of operating a kindergarten.</p>	 <p>Developer model Land lease to the developer, multiple land plots grouped together and tendered as a package.</p>	 <p>Employer model A partnership between government, employers and private sector to offer subsidized kindergartens for employee children.</p>

Figure 3: Early childhood expansion programmes to achieve the Saudi Vision 2030

An initiative has also been launched for the utilization of human, material and financial resources to support the achievement of the ministry's enrolment targets by assigning female teachers to teach boys in early primary school levels by the academic year 2020/2021. In 2018, the Ministry of Education announced a project of combining the kindergarten stage (after the abolition of KG1) and the first three grades of primary school in public schools, to become one stage of five years, called the early childhood stage. This stage will be supervised by only female teachers, while the boys' primary stage will be limited to the fourth, fifth and sixth primary grades and supervised by male teachers. In 2018, The Minister of Education, Dr Ahmed Al-Essa, announced that the academic year 2020/2021 is the date set for full implementation of this

project. In early 2019, the first public school that included both the kindergarten and early primary school levels opened in the city of Tabuk.

Nada al-Ismail, the Director-General of Early Childhood at the MOE, said that the results of local and international tests for boys and girls in primary schools in Saudi Arabia showed a significant difference in the results between boys and girls (Ien, 2019). Al-Mansour (2019) argued that female teachers are more approachable and less intimidating for young boys at that stage than their male counterparts, and they will give them a more fruitful learning experience. As a result, the Ministry decided that female teachers should be assigned the task of teaching in the early primary school grades to bridge the gap young boys used to encounter after moving from kindergarten to primary school. Furthermore, through this project, the MoE aims to assure that every child has access to quality education, enhance the efficiency of the educational system, increase space utilization efficiency and take full benefit of public-school buildings. Notably, there are about 184 private schools in the Kingdom, which already employ female teachers to teach boys in the early primary school grades; the first private school applying this strategy was established in Riyadh in 1975 (Ien, 2019).

For the first time, in the academic year 2019/2020, this project was partially implemented through female teachers teaching young boys, in separate classes from young girls, in 1460 public schools across the Kingdom. Moreover, the ministry set up 3,313 kindergarten classes to accommodate 83,000 children, to increase children's enrolment rate in kindergartens from 17% to 21%. Figure 4 shows the statistics of early childhood schools in Saudi Arabia for the academic year 2019/2020.

1,460 Early education schools	3,313 Classrooms for 83,000 kindergarten students
3,483 Classrooms for 81,000 early childhood education students	\$533 million Saved from the education budget in space alone

Source: (Al-Mansour, 2019).

Figure 4: Statistics of early childhood schools for the academic year 2019/2020

Another set of projects is planned to support achieving ministry objectives, such as establishing a television channel for children to support the MoE's visual media projects, developing regulations and rules for early childhood, building the capacity of a group of experts in early childhood, opening schools (kindergartens - early childhood), and conducting studies and research that support early childhood initiatives and projects (MoE, 2019).

The Corona pandemic did not discourage the rational and tireless work of the government to continue implementing the plans emanating from the ambitious vision. The MoE was fully prepared to confront this pandemic and ensure that the education process in the Kingdom would not stop. The aspect of early childhood education has received attention and appreciation, and the Ministry has allocated to kindergartens a free electronic application for distance education called "virtual kindergarten", through which all educational services are provided for children, in an effort to develop the child's abilities and skills through enjoyable education, reduce time and effort on parents, and benefit from a modern technology to make learning accessible to children at any time and place.

On the fifth anniversary of the Kingdom's Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's crown prince Mohammed Bin Salman (MBS) announced that the vision contributed to the implementation of many achievements in

various fields (Alarabiya, 2021). The figures showed an increase in the rate of enrolment in kindergartens from 13% in 2015 to 23% in 2020, while the percentage of female teachers in primary classes (boys) in government schools increased to 11%, and the number of beneficiaries reached more than 300 thousand beneficiaries of the services of the virtual kindergarten until the year 2020.

Conclusion

The paper reviewed the development of early childhood education in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This paper outlined the components of the Early childhood Education system, the objectives of kindergarten, the curriculum, and daily activities. More recently, education has been made one of the cornerstones of the national development plan, Vision 2030, which was launched in 2016. One of the aims of the vision is the development of early childhood education, with ambitious targets for enrolment and plans for restructuring the early childhood education system.

In conclusion, it could be said that the early childhood education sector - in particular - has witnessed five long years full of planning, change and development for the better to keep pace with the ambitious vision and that what has been achieved in these five years exceeds what has been achieved over several years and will be the biggest catalyst to complete the march growth and achievement.

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