The United Kingdom's education policy has its upsides but the downsides outweigh those, but reforms could fix those issues. Some recommendations from Canada's education system would be to have a bilingual school system that teaches their native language and English, and also make teachers get two degrees one of these being a Bachelor of Education. While also paying their teachers a very high salary. In the United Kingdom right now teachers get paid around 20,000 to 40,000 pounds. The United Kingdom could also incorporate a program at the end of their education that can help them get into university, go into the workforce, or help them specialize in their trade. In education systems right now students graduate with a degree and there are no programs at the end to help them decide whether to go into the workforce, or help them get into university so students can be confused. Some recommendations from Finland would be to have the most highly educated people become teachers and get a very high salary. United Kingdom should implement intense interviews, hard written exams and an actual hand on teaching environment where they are tested to see how they would interact and handle certain situations. Right now in the United kingdom teachers only need to take ITT training which is very easy to do, and does not even require a college degree. The United Kingdom also starts school later so kids get more sleep, and also give less homework if any Finland right now starts at around 9-10 a.m while ending school at 2-3 p.m. Right now school starts very similar to the united states with older kids starting at around 7-8 a.m, while younger kids are starting around 9, while these schools also end at around 4.

Education in the United Kingdom is not the same as what us students here in the United States are used to seeing or being a part of. The education system is like most other education systems that have been looked at and talked about throughout this semester. The system has flaws, but it also has different benefits and positive factors for the system, the students, and the entire United Kingdom as a whole. England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales each have developed their own education policies with their own governance system, but that does not mean each of the four systems do not possess similarities in the structures of their systems. Back in 2012, the United Kingdom had performed around the OECD student average in two of the three main subjects, those subjects being math and reading (OECD, 2015). The third subject, science, is where the students performed above average.

The education system in the United Kingdom is split down into four key stages by students ages. Stage one running from ages 5-7, stage two 7-11, stage 3 11-14, and stage 4 14-16 with stages one and two being the primary education stages and stage three and four being secondary level education (International Student, 2019). Once students hit age 16 in stage 4 of the system, they are evaluated via assessment in order for them to complete and earn their General Certificate of Secondary Education or GCSE for short. After the GCSE is received, students can make the decision to continue on with their education and start towards further and higher education, or they can end their education at the age of 16 and move on to the workforce. In order for a student to go on to college and earn a degree, they must continue on in the further education category to receive more certificates and qualifications. Once such qualifications are met, students enter the higher education category and start working towards their degree.

Like most education systems around the world, the United Kingdom does have their different issues in education policies. For example, one of the main challenges all across the U.K. is the countries are trying to improve student performance and reduce the gaps between
students with different socio-economic backgrounds (OECD, 2015). Countries also are finding that it is very important that their governments pump sufficient amounts of money into the lower schools that have more issues than the schools of higher quality with less issues. Another key issue that the United Kingdom is facing is being able to bring in and keep the higher quality teachers. It is difficult for them to attract high-quality teachers due to the U.K. lacking the tools needed to improve schools and student performance.

Although the four countries that make up the United Kingdom which are England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales have policies that are in place for all countries, each country has their own different policies in place and has recently implemented some new policies recently over the last few years for their education systems. England has the Pupil Premium in place that is designed and in place for providing extra funding to the schools and the students who are at more of a disadvantage than others. Students who become eligible for said program are students who have been on free or reduced lunch. Northern Ireland has the policy known as Every School a Good School which is a policy that is directed towards supporting their schools and supporting the students in the barriers that might be affecting and hurting students in the classroom. Scotland’s newest program that they have put into effect is Teaching Scotland’s Future. The program is designed to review the teaching profession in order for Scotland to improve teacher’s learning and develop their careers, skills, status, and their leadership. Also, the Scottish College for Educational Leadership is in place for their teachers as a path towards them earning their masters. Finally, Wales program titled Qualifications Framework for 14-19 year-olds as well as the National Literacy and Framework.

The education policy that we will be comparing and showing is stronger than the United kingdoms’ education system is Canada. Canada's education is split into different provinces which all have different ways of teaching. Kids start to learn at the age of 6 and are put into grade 1. They stay in school all the way into 11th or 12th grade based on the province students are in. They can then either go to college, straight into the workforce, or go into a program that gets them ready to go into the workforce and can get them trained especially for their profession. “Canada is the highest educated country with 56.27 people receiving some kind of higher education (Shannon).” Overall in Canada there is not much of a difference between advantaged and disadvantaged kids. The socio economic disadvantage was 9 percent, which the United Kingdom's socio economic disadvantage is 20 percent. With Trump putting more bans on immigrants coming in Canada has been receiving many immigrants who are ready to learn and are “hungry” to succeed to make a better life for themselves. Immigrants can also attend public schools for free in Canada and in general have scored very high on OECD Pisa tests.

“The Manitoba region of Canada institutes a requirement that teachers have a minimum of 150 credit hours of post-secondary coursework, which at least 60 of those hours need to be in educational studies (Education and Skills, 2013).” New teachers also need two degrees, one of which needs to be a Bachelor of Education. British Colombia another region of Canada has an education body, The BC College of Teachers that define the criteria for requirements of teacher certification and can deny or approve an applicant based on their best qualities and along with their worst. In Quebec, post-secondary education begins with college, right after graduation from high school. Students then complete a two or three-year general program leading to university admission, or admittance into a vocational professional program that leads directly
into the labor force. Schools in Canada are also bilingual so students who graduate can fluently speaking French and English. Also there are more migrants in canada's education system than most other countries that are developed. These migrants are usually performing to the same level or higher within 3 years of being incorporated into the school system. (Coughlan, 2017) “In Canada the high school completion rate is 88.4 percent, 24.2 completion rate of college, and 26.4 percent completion rate in university (Education and skills, 2013).” Canada also has a lower spending on school systems compared to the united states even though they perform better in their school systems. Canada has the highest proportion of working adults who have achieved higher education, which is around 55 percent. Other countries are averaged at around 35 percent.

It is becoming more and more well known that Finland is one of the best education systems in the world. Pasi Sahlberg states that “Finland is regarded as one of the world’s most literate societies.” Their system can be used as a model for many education systems around the world, one of which being the United Kingdom (Sahlberg, 2010). Finland's new education system, peruskoulu- a nine year compulsory program-started in 1970, it reformed the old system, fixing its flaws and developing a system that would help their students and teachers excel. With peruskoulu, 99% of its students finish the program (Morgan, 2014). The new system prides itself on their extremely educated, highly trained teaching force that has to endure a rigorous process that is very selective. According to Sahlberg, only 1 in 10 people are able to get in Finland’s middle school teaching programs. The selection process includes steps such as intense interviews, written exams, and an actual hand on teaching environment where they are tested to see how they would interact and handle certain situations.

With this rigorous process Finland only has the best of the best teachers which is why they have well prepared students. Hani Morgan states that in the classroom Finland’s teachers spend noticeably less time teaching as compared with other countries, this is because they focus on the quality of time instead of the quantity. Students also have very little school work outside the classroom which allows them to focus on school in school and their personal lives out of school, resulting in better performance while in the classroom (Morgan, 2014). Also, Finland does not penalize or stress standardized testing. This means that teachers don’t teach based on standardized tests, they teach at a more personal and individualized level which allows students to perform better (Morgan, 2014). Although Finland is known as the world's greatest slacker when it comes to education, they are far more advanced and educated than most of the planet, with students that excel in math, science and reading, and teachers that are held to the highest of standards, they are an example that all education systems can take something from, especially the United Kingdom.

NAFSA (National Association for Foreign Student Affairs): Association of International Educators is “the world’s largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education and exchange”(About Us.). The organization's mission is to aid international students and foreign exchange students that require special knowledge and competencies. They also take part in more commonplace accommodations for students like financial aid for studying abroad or engaging in specific exchange programs. As for the United Kingdom, the growth trend for international students has started to flatten since 2012. It is the second highest destination for international students ("International Student Statistics in UK 2019") at 458,520 per year, but still has a massive amount of room for growth. Incorporating the policies and mechanisms established by
NAFSA in the UK's foreign exchange programs and international student attractions would surely boost the international recognition of its exchange programs, and create an emerging race for the #1 spot in international education. In Canada, the main attraction for international students is to apply for permanent residence (60% as of 2018, as per the Canadian Bureau for International Education), simply because of the government social programs, healthcare systems, and spending in the country. Their attractive exchange programs drive an increase in students for higher education like master's programs, massively increasing the amount of green card and permanent residency applications in the country, increasing net revenue for social systems and programs which Canada spends a ton on annually. The UK could do something similar in the sense that they create a massive advertising campaign about the post-education living situation in the UK. In the case of Finland, the professors and instructors at most of the universities get paid at rates almost double that of some great power's universities, ("Why Finland’s Higher Education System is the Best in the World"), which is largely attractive to most educated individuals searching for teaching jobs. Some of the best professors get recruited to lead lectures and teach in Finland, which is extremely attractive for international students. If the UK creates a national policy modeled or in partnership with NAFSA that drastically increases incentives and pay for teachers and instructors, they could see student retention rates skyrocket.

While there is ample room for expansion and development in the education sector of the United Kingdom, most of the policy proposals and actions discussed previously should be more than enough to increase graduation numbers and attractiveness of the school systems. If research about teaching and education points to anything, it’s that an increase in the actual content of education drives up competition and grades overall. Professors, assistants, and administrators that are more educated or prestigious in their individual professions increase the value of the school and the attractiveness of their programs. International schooling and the management of transfer students with respect to the funding of those programs also plays a huge role in the reshaping of a country's educational system. International students drive competition and bring a unique angle to the “level” of education a university or schooling system offers. Drawing upon the educational models of Canada and Finland is critical to understanding how to reform the U.K.'s education system for the better. Every problem identified can be fixed with methods identified in the above analysis, and while all of the methods and studies are not practical to be implicated at once, (or all together), certain policies at certain times can really permanently change the U.K.’s education system.

Work cited


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