



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
LarbiTebessi University -Tébessa-
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and English Language



The Impact of Thatcher's 1988 Education Reform Act on the British Educational System

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Literature and Civilisation

Candidates:

Berrouag Simla

Djallab Laila

Supervisor:

Mrs. Brahmi. Halima

Board of Examiners:

President: Mrs.GoudjilKahina **M.A.A Larbi Tebessi University**

Supervisor: Mrs. Brahmi.Halima **M.A.A Larbi Tebessi University**

Examiner: Mrs.BouazizAmina **M.A.A Larbi Tebessi University**

2021/2022

Acknowledgments

« In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful »

We thank endlessly the Almighty God for perusing our higher studies and having such precious opportunity to complete our thesis in the allocated time. We owe major thanks for our supervisor « Brahmi Halima » for her patience with us, encouragement and constructive feedback. We are deeply grateful for her help, guidance and invaluable advice during the whole work of our academic research. Our sincere gratitude and appreciation extend also to BouazizAmina and GoudjilKahina as our examiners who devoted time to read, evaluate and assess our work generously. We appreciate their insightful comments, suggestions and plentiful expertise. We would love to thank the members of the English Department and the University of Tebessa in providing us with a golden opportunity to carry on comfortably our master degree.

Dedication

I dedicate my work first and foremost for myself, to myself and by myself.

It is dedicated to the soul who never gives up, to the soul who when it fell down, it uplifts herself again and again believing in her abilities, dreams and herself.

I dedicate this work also to my dearest parents and husband for their endless love and prayers.

To the mother who always encourages me to know more and do more in my life.

To the father who believes in me without saying a word. **(SIMLA)**

I dedicated my dissertation work to

My dear and wonderful parents,

My lovely husband,

My sweet daughters Djinane Elrahman and Walla,

My sister and brother,

My friends. **(LEILA)**

Abstract

After the Second World War, Britain witnessed a period of significant change in politics, especially during the Conservative Party leadership. This change later contributed to the establishment of a new set of policies. Margaret Thatcher, the Conservative Prime Minister, introduced a set of reforms and regulations, which were influenced by the neoliberal ideology, into public educational system.

This dissertation aims at examining the impacts of Thatcher's 1988 educational reforms on the educational system that was established under the neoliberal philosophy. This research investigates whether the Post-War educational system under Thatcher's neoliberal ideology had changed during her premiership or remained the same, and whether her educational policies really improved the education standards in state schools. During the last term of the 1980's, Thatcher worked on enhancing the quality of education via the introduction of market mechanism and competition in state schools. Following the 1988 Education Reform Act, a range of reforms were initiated including parental choice, grant-maintained schools and a national curriculum. The outcome of these reforms was a change in Britain's Post-War education system and learners' performance.

Key words: Margaret Thatcher, Neoliberalism, the 1988 Education Reform Act, Parental Choice, Grant-Maintained Schools, National Curriculum.

Résumé

Après de la fin de la seconde Guerre Mondiale, le Grand Bretagne a connu une période constitutive caractérisée par un changement au niveau du système politique, particulièrement, lors de l'arrivée du pouvoir du Parti Conservateur. En effet, ce changement a contribué à la mise en ouvre d'un ensemble des réformes politiques. Margaret Thatcher, présidente du Parti Conservateur, a mis en place plusieurs réformes influencées par l'idéologie Néolibérale dans le système éducatif.

Cette étude vise à distinguer les effets de ces réformes éducatives, qui ont été mis en place après avoir adopté la philosophie du Néolibéralisme. En outre, cette étude recherche à répondre aux deux questions suivantes : Est-ce le système éducatif a connu un changement durant le mandat de Thatcher en tant que Premier Ministre adoptée l'idée du Néolibéralisme? Et est-ce vraiment leur système éducatif a amélioré l'éducation dans les écoles? Le Premier Ministre Thatcher a mis l'accent sur nombreuses préoccupations en vue d'améliorer et développer l'éducation en introduisant, des mécanismes de marché et de concurrence dans les établissements suite à la publication de la réforme éducatif de 1988. Ces réformes ont démontré un engagement fort en faveur des parents qui ont le droit de choisir l'école de leur enfant, la création des écoles indépendantes et l'adaptation d'un programme scolaire national dans le but d'améliorer l'ancien système éducatif et la performance des apprenants.

Mots Clés: Margaret Thatcher- Néolibéralisme- Le réforme éducatif de 1988- Le Choi des écoles par les parents- Création des écoles indépendantes- Adaptation d'un programme scolaire nationale.

ملخص

بعد نهاية الحرب العالمية الثانية شهدت بريطانيا فترة تغيير مهمة في سياستها خاصة خلال تولي حزب المحافظين للسلطة، حيث ان هذا التغيير ساهم في تأسيس مجموعة من السياسات الجديدة. مارغريت تاتشر، رئيسة حزب المحافظين، أدرجت مجموعة الإصلاحات التي تأثرت بإيديولوجية الليبرالية الجديدة في نظام التعليم العام .

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة آثار الإصلاح التعليمي لمارغريت تاتشر سنة 1988 على النظام التعليمي الذي انشئ بعد تبني فلسفة الليبرالية الجديدة، كما ان هذا البحث يسعى لمعرفة ما إذا كان النظام التعليمي عقب الحرب العالمية الثانية قد تغير خلال تولي تاتشر رئاسة الوزراء و تبنيها لإيديولوجية الليبرالية الجديدة أم انه ظل كما هو؟ و هل حقا ان سياساتها التعليمية حسنت معايير التعليم في المدارس الحكومية . خلال الفصل الأخير من الثمانينات ، عملت تاتشر على تطوير جودة التعليم عن طريق إدخال آليات السوق و المنافسة في المؤسسات التعليمية عقب إصدار قانون إصلاح التعليم لعام 1988 حيث أدرجت مجموعة من الإصلاحات التي تتضمن منح الحق للأباء لاختيار مدارس أبنائهم، إنشاء مدارس مستقلة و اعتماد منهاج دراسي وطني. نتج عن هذه الإصلاحات تغير في النظام التعليمي السابق و في أداء المتعلمين.

الكلمات المفتاحية : مارغريت تاتشر - الليبرالية الجديدة - قانون الإصلاح التعليمي لعام 1988 - اختيار الوالدين

للمدارس - مدارس مستقلة - منهاج دراسي وطني .

Table of Contents

Acknowledgmentsi

Abstract.....iii

Table of Contentsvi

List of Acronymsviii

Introduction10

Chapter One: Margaret Thatcher and the 1988 Education Reform Act

1. A Short Biography of Margaret Thatcher (The Young Margaret)3

 1.1 Margaret Thatcher as a Prime Minister6

2. The Educational Reforms of Margaret Thatcher13

 2.1. The Post-War Educational Policy (1944-1979)13

 2.1.1. The 1944 Education Act14

3. The Crisis of the Education Policy of the Post-War Period16

4. Margaret Thatcher’s Educational Reforms17

 4.1. Introducing Market Mechanisms to Education
 (1988 Education Reform Act)17

 4.1.1. The Creation of Grant-Maintained Schools18

 4.1.2. Parental Choice19

 4.2. Introducing the National Curriculum.....20

Chapter Two: Evaluating Margaret Thatcher’s Educational Reforms

1. Neoliberalism as an Ideology in Margret’s Thatcher Policies23

 1.1. The Meaning of Neoliberalism23

 1.2. Neoliberalism as a Political and Economic Ideology24

2. The Implications of Margaret Thatcher’s Educational Reforms25

 2.1 The Process of Implementation25

 2.1.1 The Curriculum25

 2.1.2. The Grant-Maintained Schools27

3. Reactions to the 1988 Education Reform Act28

3.1. Politicians’ Reaction	29
3.2. Parents’ Reaction	30
3.3. Teachers’ Reaction	30
4. The Impact of the Educational Reform Act on State Schools and Learners’ Performance	31
4.1. Social Separation in Schools (Segregation of Learners according to the Social Classes).....	32
4.2. The Impact of Competition in Enhancing the Schools andLearners’ Performance	33
Chapter Three: Thatcher’s Political Position after the Implementation of the 1988 Education Reform Act.	
1. Gaining Strength from the National and the International Sides	35
1.1. Gaining Power from the National Side	36
1.2. Gaining Power fromthe International Side	38
2. The Long Lasting Impact of Thatcher’s 1988 Education ReformAct.....	39
Conclusion	42
Works Cited	45

List of Acronyms

DFE	Department for Education
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
LEAs	Local Educational Authorities
NCC	National Curriculum Council
RE	Religious Education
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SEAC	School Examinations and Assessment Council

Introduction

Politicians designed the history of their nations through the adaptation of certain ideologies and policies aiming to change numerous situations and programs in their countries. In Britain, many politicians who were influenced by a number of ideologies, among them Margaret Thatcher who planned to change different fields there. Thatcher served as the Conservative Party leader from 1975 to 1990. She was the first female British Prime Minister until 1990. Her premiership was considered to be a period of change. Following her ideology of Neoliberalism, a variety of political, economic, and social issues were to be reformed; among the programs that underwent change was education.

During the 1940's, politicians took the charge of reconstructing the educational system in Britain. The 1944 Education Act ,eventually, was introduced as an attempt to reorganize education in state schools. Therefore, the British education was conducted according to the basis of this act. However, Thatcher's government changed this educational situation.

This research answers the following question to what extent did Thatcher's ideology of Neoliberalism change the education system? . In this investigation two major questions were to be asked. The first question was how did Margaret Thatcher change education in Britain, more precisely, what were the most important policies and reforms her government introduced? The second question was to what extent were her reforms effective in improving education?

Margaret Thatcher was viewed as an influential political leader in the world due to her political and economic legacy. Thus, studying Margaret Thatcher and her ideology would be an interesting topic to investigate in order to have knowledge about the most crucial events in her life as well as her policies, especially, in education. Additionally, discovering how this

political leader is different from other British politicians and particularly Conservative governors who preceded her in dealing with educational concerns.

Throughout this study, the Thatcher's era as a Prime Minister, 1979-1990, is to be emphasized on. Thatcher introduced many regulations in economy, society and foreign policy during this period. But this research paper will be restricted only to changes in the British educational system. Such sector is reconstructed owing to its great importance in the development of other sectors.

The dissertation followed two different types of research .First, the descriptive research is to be carried out to describe the post-war educational situation. In describing the situation of education after introducing Thatcher's reforms, the same research type is followed. Second, the analytical research is to be applied in evaluating the impacts of Thatcher's 1988 Education Reform Act.

This research paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter sheds light on most important events in Thatcher's life. It also discusses the post-war educational policy (the 1944 Education Act) and the crisis of these policies. The last element in this chapter represents the educational reforms that Thatcher's government introduced.

The second chapter starts by defining the ideology of Neoliberalism and how this ideology affected Thatcher's policies. Then, the chapter discusses the implications the 1988 Education Reform Act introduced by Thatcher's government. Moreover, it represents the different reactions towards this reform act. It ends with evaluating the impact of applying the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The third chapter deals with Thatcher's political position after the implementation of 1988 Education Reform Act. It shows how Thatcher become politically powerful after this act was applied. The chapter also discussed the long lasting results of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Chapter One

Margaret Thatcher and the 1988 Education Reform Act

Margaret Thatcher is considered one of the most successful political female leaders in the history of Great Britain. Her long lasting impact is still tremendous, noticeable and worthy to be presented and shown to the world. Margaret Thatcher's career was full of high accomplishments, political development and her great power in uprising individuals and the whole nation. The period of her prosperity was during being a Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990. In fact, the term Thatcherism refers to Thatcher's ideology and policies during her leadership. She serves as a political leader in different domains among which politics, education and society.

1. A Short Biography of Margaret Thatcher (The Young Margaret)

Margaret Thatcher belongs to a simple working class family. She was born on October 13, 1925 in Grantham Lincolnshire. Her father is Alfred Robert who was a grocer, owning a small grocery store, and her mother was Beatrice Roberts. Margaret's father was interested in politics and he got involved in local politics .He met his friends and colleagues in his store to discuss important political affairs and the store was the meeting room for their political interests and matters. In fact, Margaret Thatcher was greatly influenced by her father's thoughts and convictions since she used to help him in the store (Evans 607). As a result, she

used to listen to his discussions and debates with his peers especially when her father became a council member and ultimately a mayor of his city Grantham.

Owing to Margaret Thatcher's daily contact with her father, she massively got influenced by his ideas, thoughts and perspectives in life. He taught her the importance of working with ethics, values and principles. Importantly, he taught her that life becomes worthy and valuable when the individual has clear purposes and planned objectives that contribute in developing his or her society. Earl. A. Reitan in his book *The Thatcher Revolution* said the following words about the father of Margaret Hilda and the role he played in shaping her personality and inspiring her mind, "She gained her interest in politics from her father, a respected citizen of Grantham, who was a member of the town council for twenty-five years and eventually became mayor in Britain an honorary office. She described her father as an "old-fashioned liberal" and an advocate of "individual responsibility and sound finance" (18).

Margaret Thatcher was one of the excellent and serious students in her school. Her determination and love for learning paved for her the way to carry on her studies in Oxford University. She studied chemistry and at the same time she participated in the political affairs in the university to become one of the first female president in this association. After her graduation, she worked as a chemist at a plastics company. The lady devoted some time for her political interest as a volunteer in the conservative party organization. Interestingly, many politicians noticed and were amazed by her skills in public speeches and debates. Thus, they suggested for her an office to manage and run it in one of the near towns. Charles Moore in his well known book *The Authorized Biography* revealed more details about the lady Margaret Thatcher. Although Margaret Thatcher was studying chemistry; she still had passion, dream and obsession for learning, knowledge and most importantly politics (78). Margaret Thatcher was a serious, punctual student who valued time a lot. When she was at

university, she had very few serious classmates like Mary Mallinson. Mary narrated an event that happened with her friend Thatcher at the University of Oxford with their lodger Mary Foss:

Margaret was up to her eyes ... Mary Foss and I had had an easier year, but Mary was in a panic because she had spent a lot of time in social activities during the year and suddenly realized how much she had not done. We were each in our rooms, Mary downstairs and Margaret and I on the first floor, when there was a loud thump. Margaret and I rushed downstairs and found Mary flat out in a faint on the floor. We did what we could then went back upstairs to get on with our revision. When the same thing had happened for the 4th time, Margaret looked at me and said that we could not spend all day rushing up and downstairs. She realized that it was a form of hysteria. Having agreed that on no occasion had Mary suffered any injury, she suggested that next time we just left her. She was not being unkind. She was being realistic and practical. She had so much work to do and just could not afford the time (Moore 72).

In fact, there are significant conversations, discussions and stories that friends had shared with Margaret Thatcher that show the deep personality of such lady, her perseverance with her studies and seizing her precious time. All of these are presented in the same book *The Authorized Biography of Margaret Thatcher* by Charles Moore. Her friend noticed and said frankly the truth that Margaret was a rational person who used her mind regularly and she was more practical person rather than theoretical.

1.1 Margaret Thatcher as a Prime Minister

As mentioned before, Margaret Hilda Thatcher was influenced dramatically by her father who practiced politics and knew a lot about it. In addition to that, Margaret at an early age had read several books in various domains such as politics, society, and communism (Campbell 2).

After graduating from university and working as a chemist, she worked also as a head or president of the conservative association. So, she started to engage in politics and the Conservative Party. In fact, she participated in the elections of 1950 to be nominated as a candidate in the Parliament of Dratford where she knew many politicians and she contacted several experts who gave her experience, understanding and high attention as a young charming lady (Reitan 19). Margaret Thatcher carried on her mission and interest in political affairs since she became the youngest conservative candidate in the country in 1950. After that, she met a wealthy businessman Denis Thatcher who later on became her husband in 1951.

In this regard, Margaret Hilda Roberts in one of the occasions met Mr. Denis Thatcher, a rich business man, who supported her enormously in her job and future political career. They got married and she completed again her studies in law in 1953. After that, she became a

lawyer and a mother of twins (19). She finally became a leader of the Conservative Party on 11th February 1975 in the second ballot (4).

In 1959, she was elected as a Conservative Member of Parliament for Finchley. Margaret Thatcher also participated and worked hard in the Department of Pensions and National Insurance in 1961. After six years, she was a responsible woman for fuel and power and interestingly worked as a Prime Minister for education in 1970. Margaret Thatcher during that time was labeled and called by so many people as “Thatcher the Milk Snatcher” for forbidding free milk to children in all primary schools (Jackson, Saunders 03). After all that success Margaret Thatcher had achieved, she finally became the leader of the Conservative Party on 11th February 1975 in the second ballot (4).

Margaret Thatcher, a determined and strong member of the Conservative Party, was too eager to continue her political career to the highest. She had that strong will to win elections.

So, within the elections of 1978, the Prime Minister James Callaghan who was the leader of the labour party postponed the elections for certain reasons till 1979. Hopefully, in 1979, the Conservative Party led by Margaret Thatcher won the general elections on May 13th 1979 (Jackson and Saunders 5).

Margaret Thatcher was elected by many British voters to be the first female long serving Prime Minister in the 20th century. In fact, there were actually many members of the Parliament who were against hiring such a woman as a Prime Minister simply because she was a woman and she had no rational thinking. In the following article, there were an extract of a dialogue between Margaret and another man who was arguing with her. He stated: “one said that arguing with her was “prototypical” of arguing with a woman, having no rational sequence”. (*Margaret Thatcher and Conservative Politics in England* 11)

Though Margaret Thatcher was a woman, she never embraced or participated in the feminist movement. Thus, she replied as the following: “You see, she later said, you do not actually elect women prime ministers ...you elect a person ... and the fact they are either men or women is secondary” (11).

Noticeably, Margaret Thatcher had strong skills of arguing and debating. Also, she knew how to answer others questions respectfully and intelligently. Consequently, these qualities are representing her personality traits to defend her gender as a woman and her position as a female Prime Minister.

In fact, Margaret Thatcher was famous by the strong expression “The Iron Lady”. This name was given to her by a Soviet Russian journalist who was amazed by her strength. It was associated with her personality, leadership and political policies. In this regard, the author John Campbell in his book *The Iron Lady* declared that after the speech of Margaret Thatcher at Kensington Town Hall on January, the Soviet Army Newspaper Red Star named Margaret Thatcher as the Iron lady (111). Margaret Thatcher said later “they never did me a greater favor” (111).

So, the Prime Minister of UK, Margaret Thatcher, is associated with the name of the Iron lady for her success, hard work, determination, and radical reforms that she made in Great Britain.

2. The Educational Reforms of Margaret Thatcher

The history of education refers to the study of the past that focuses on educational issues such as the education systems, institutions, theories, and other related matters. The history of education is of great importance. The British history, as an illustration, has a very long history. The year of 1870 specified a significant point in the history of education in Britain as it introduced the first state interference in education through launching the Elementary Education Act. Following this Act, the British government introduced several changes in

order to improve education and provide better educational services. The main educational rectifications in fact initiated during the post-war period.

2.1. The Post-War Educational Policy

The period of the Second World War (1939-1945) represented a turning point in human history for the changes, or more precisely, for the giant destruction it brought. Britain, like many other countries during this period, faced a number of serious issues that appeared within different economic and social fields among which was education. A great number of children were forced to stop their education because of the destruction of their schools or their evacuation. In January 1940, about half a million children in Britain received no education (Lerner 12-13). Therefore, the British government started planning for organizing education.

The process of post-war educational reformation started with the publication of the Beveridge Report in December 1942. Although this Report did not receive a great reaction right after its publication, it was later recognized as the basis of the British prosperity program (Middleton 189). The Report figured out five major issues or Five Giants as its author, the Liberal Economist William Beveridge, named it. Among these issues was ignorance. It was considered as a main threat to the children's future and to the society as a whole. The Beveridge report later presented education as a successful solution for ignorance, and this set the ground for introducing the 1944 education Act (Hirakata 1).

2.1.1. The 1944 Education Act

The Beveridge Report influenced Richard Austen Butler...then President of the Board of Education to plan for a new educational system that would help in restructuring the war time education. Although Butler's initiative was not appreciated by his own Conservative Party whose main concern was planning for World War II, he was able to progress with his plans as Labor Party supported him since it was part of the War Coalition government. In July 1943,

Butler, the Board of Education's leader, passed a White Paper entitled *Educational Reconstruction* which included some measures to form the post-war education (Middleton 90).

The 1944 Education Act or the Butler Act was an important piece of legislation that characterized the British education system during the 1940s. This Act introduced a number of changes related to provision and organization of schools in Britain, mainly, England and Wales. Before the 1944 Education Act, children's education was linked to their social class. While children of poor families joined elementary schools from the age of 5 to 14, rich ones went to independent schools (Smith 115). This indicates that there were two groups of pupils belonging to different schools. Therefore, Butler targeted to exclude this imbalance and provide fair educational opportunities. Despite the fact that the Butler Act did not bring changes related only to service provision, it introduced several changes that organized the process of education. The Act abolished the traditional elementary system and implemented instead a system of three stages. The tripartite system was a new educational structure that started as a result of the Butler's Act. Under the Education Act of 1944, the Ministry of Education formed as a new institution for the purpose of planning for educational matters and guiding the procedure of organizing education. In addition, it granted the Ministry of Education a powerful position that helped it dealing with educational matters through the Local Educational Authorities (LEAs). The Act also indicated that through the tripartite system, each LEA ought to provide all the adequate conditions to make the learning process easy (Taysum 58). Indeed, the LEAs had full authority of controlling, organizing and managing all stateschools' matters (Hirakata 7).

Butler Act of 1944 was an important reform in the British educational system. However, the Act introduced a new structure to direct the process of reconstructing education and it

represented some changes such as the tripartite system that was rejected and thus came as a debate that led to the creation of a new alternative. Therefore, the comprehensive system of education emerged.

Inequality was one of the main issues that provoked the educational reconstruction of the 1940's. Actually, after the introduction of free education for all children, it was expected that the concern of inequality would end. In fact, this act reinforced inequality through introducing the idea of selection and three different types of schools. However, the situation did not change even after the 1944 Act's introduction. As a result, a new educational system was urged to bring equality.

After its electoral victory in 1964, the Labor government under the premiership of the Harold Wilson attempted to eliminate the idea of selection and bring social justice. However, the idea of selection was banned only after the Education Act of 1976 (Chan and East 10).

3. The Crisis of the Education Policy of the Post-War Period.

Following the crucial events of World War II that undermined the educational system in Britain, the 1944 Education Act was introduced to rebuild and establish a better education for children. The Act stretched education to all children and brought a new structure in which education was to be organized. During the 1960's, the comprehensive system of education emerged. However, the progression of the post-war education system was condemned.

During the 1970's, the British economy was weak and in a declining situation that resulted from the poor educational system which was unsuccessful in meeting markets' demands. In other words, the future employees were not granted professional teachings that would help them dealing with economic matters within the post-war educational system (Verger et al. 46; McLean, Voskresenskaya 72-73; Brown 71).

After the post-war period, LEAs organized the British educational system according to a specific plan. However, such a structure created a barrier that hindered the evolution of education. Consequently, state schools provide inefficient services and this brought educational standard down (Verger et al. 47). Furthermore, the comprehensive system of education was condemned for reducing the quality of education (Hirakata 8).

Therefore, the education standards urged to be improved through well arranged ratifications. In fact, fundamental reforms were introduced during the 1980's for the enhancement of the quality of education.

4. Margaret Thatcher's Educational Reforms

Margaret Thatcher's electoral victory represented a period of change in many of British social and economic sides. Following her leadership, Thatcher introduced a new ideology to manage the country's institutions and services and to direct the policy making. Education, as an example, underwent significant changes which abolished the traditional post-war educational features.

During the 1980s, the newly elected Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher contributed in the creation of a new era of education. Importantly, It is worthy to figure out Thatcher's previous experience with education before dealing with her reforms as Prime Minister in education. During Edward Heath's premiership, Thatcher was designated as Secretary of State for Education from 1970 till 1974. Thatcher excluded one of the points brought by the Education Act of 1944. In 1971, children over seven years old were stopped from receiving free milk (Hadley, Ho 4). She also rejected and refused to apply the 1960's comprehensive system of education (Hirakata 8). Though Thatcher, as a Secretary of State for Education, made few

changes, she was able to introduce and reorganize a modern framework for the 1980's education.

Margaret Thatcher encouraged the education provision process; however, she adapted a completely different approach. She favored private institutions instead of public schools (59). In other words, she was convinced that public schools that were under state and control provided inefficient services and poor performance. This led to the emergence of a number of educational policies to restrict the state control over education and support private education.

4.1. Introducing Market Mechanisms to Education (1988 Educational Reform Act)

Thatcher government was concerned with developing the educational standards and achieving efficiency in state schools. Therefore, the government introduced competition into public schools in order to support these institutions providing efficient services. Actually, competition was introduced into these schools in order to make them compete with each other for education standards' amelioration. However, competition could not be implemented in public schools; these schools had to be changed into private ones.

Privatization in some cases refers to the process of changing the control over an industry or a specific service from public to private sector. However, Thatcher had maintained a different strategy of privatizing public education. Such process was carried out through introducing a number of techniques and practices so as to transform public schools into private ones (Ball, Youdell 13). Accordingly, the government planned some reforms to liberate schools and make them function as markets.

4.1.1. The Creation of Grant-Maintained Schools

Before privatization was introduced into public education, setting the appropriate environment for such mechanism was important. This led to the creation of schools that are independent in controlling their own responsibilities.

Under the 1944 Education Act, several educational concerns were under the local educational authorities' control and management. However, such role came to an end when Thatcher government reduced the LAEs' influence upon education so as to support market principles (choice and competition) into schools.

Actually, the great initiative to reduce the dominance of the LEAs came with the 1988 Education Reform Act. The Act stated that all schools controlled by the LEAs could be liberated from the LEAs control and have their own autonomy. Therefore, a new type of schools called the grant-maintained schools emerged. These independent schools received their budget according to the number of their pupils. In other words, every pupil was sponsored by the central government (Verger et al 48; Bolick 543). The grant-maintained schools managed also concerns related to admissions through giving the schools the opportunity to register any number of pupils based on their capacity (Bolick 543).

The grant-maintained schools were among Margaret Thatcher's educational reforms against the Butler Act which gave the LEAs the right to control over all schools. Following the 1988 Act, many schools decided to opt out the LEAs' control and take the charge of managing their own affairs. As a result, a great number of LEAs were eliminated among which was the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) (Aldrich 1-2). These changes paved the way for schools to compete over parents' choice.

4.1.2. ParentalChoice

After the post-war period, most of the educational decisions were made by several agencies among which were the Ministry of Education and the LEAs without parents' interference. However, the situation changed during Thatcher's era. Parents were given the choice to decide and select their children's schools.

Parental choice was one of the major principles of market mechanisms policy introduced in the 1980s to education. Throughout the 1980s, there was an attempt to reduce the supremacy of LEAs in deciding pupils' schools and to give parents the opportunity to choose schools for their children. But, the 1980 Education Act did not succeed to reduce the power of the LEAs whose impact on planning for schools' admission was still powerful (Whitty, Menter 46). In contrast with the previous Act of 1980, parents were once again granted the right to decide and choose their children's schools under the 1988 Reform Act. This act proved successfully its efficiency and strengthened the position of parental choice.

The league-tables was another measure that was introduced and applied to reinforce parental choice through providing parents with information about the efficiency of different schools. After the exams, the media broadcasted the achievements schools to give a clear idea of the position of the different schools through the league-tables (Hadley 11). After having a good idea about schools' results, parents had the choice to register their children at the top classified schools.

Under the 1988 Education Reform Act, the grant-maintained schools emerged as independent schools that enjoyed self autonomy. This change enabled schools to compete with each other over the best positions to attract a great number of pupils. As a consequence, each school would work hard to offer the best education services. This would surely result in an increase in the standards of education.

The Thatcher government launched the previously mentioned reforms in order to enhance the quality of education that had been at a weak position owing to the state's dominance during the post-war period.

Accordingly, the 1988 Education Act granted schools their self-autonomy in order to enable them to vie and provide their best so that to increase the schools standards. So, schools

began to behave like private institutions. Unlike private schools, state schools remained under the control of the central government as they had to follow the national curriculum.

4.2. Introducing the National Curriculum

The 1988 Education Reform Act reshaped the structure of British education organization. While introducing this Act, many schools under the LEAs' control were liberated and started functioning independently. The Act treated parents as an essential factor in the schools' fate. It also directed the content of the learning process according to a new approach via the introduction of the national curriculum.

The national curriculum was introduced to guide the learning process for all pupils starting from the age of 5 till 16 years for both primary and secondary schools (Colwill 57). The curriculum included ten subjects: three core subjects (English, science and mathematics), six foundation ones (history, geography, art, technology, music, and physical education) and a tenth subject of modern foreign language (Lofty 243).

After the introduction of the national curriculum, all state-funded schools as well as independent ones had to apply the guidelines of the national curriculum. Whereas, the Thatcher government introduced the 1988 Education reform Act in order to liberate schools from state intervention and this was achieved after the emergence of the grant-maintained schools. Yet, the fact that these schools were submissive to the state national curriculum indicated that they were still under the state's dominance and control. This point agreeably created a kind of contradiction within the Act.

Thatcher government supported subject-based curriculum as an alternative to the 1960s child-centered curriculum which was condemned for its inefficiency. The subject-based curriculum was known as a useful tool through which the government could preserve the

nation's culture and preserve traditional approaches to knowledge (Crawford 438; Aldrich 13).

The creation of national curriculum paved the way for the emergence of the national assessment. The 1988 Education Reform Act allowed the Secretary of State for Education to plan for national tests with the assistance of the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) whose members were elected by the Secretary of State (Black 194; Khalki 193).

The national curriculum and the national assessment were important criteria conducted by Thatcher's government to facilitate the process of selection for parents to choose the appropriate schools for their children (Black 194). In other words, since all schools shared the same curriculum and type of assessment, parents could evaluate and choose the most suitable schools for their children with total freedom.

Religious education (RE) was another crucial measure included within the national curriculum that was carried out by the 1988 Reform Act (Khalki 191). Thatcher gave much emphasis and special attention to religious education, particularly, Christianity. She considered Christianity as an essential mechanism to bring moral values. Therefore, Thatcher agreed on the amendments that secured Christianity as part of the 1988 Reform Act (Jackson, Saunders 89-90).

Thatcher's 1988 Education Reform Act introduced and brought numerous changes to the previous educational framework. While the 1944 Education Act brought all state schools under the control of LEAs and left the curriculum free, the 1988 Reform Act liberated the state schools from LEAs' dominance and control and brought the curriculum under the state's control. However, other aspects like the leaving age and the three stages system continued to exist in Thatcher's educational reforms.

Margaret Thatcher was one of the successful female leaders in the world. She succeeded not only in being a Prime Minister, ideologist, and thinker but also as an educational reformer who brought massive change to the British educational system. Because of her educational policies, the British educational system witnessed dramatic transformation and great impact. Her interest and passion for politics increased her success, popularity, strong will for significant change, development and power. Ultimately, her relationships were strengthened nationally and internationally with her colleagues, politicians and the educational staff.

Chapter Two

Evaluating Margaret Thatcher's Educational Reforms

Margaret Thatcher is among the extraordinary, brave female politicians in the history of Britain and the whole world. She gained popularity, attention and admiration from her colleagues, politicians and her beloved ones. The reputation of such politician was due to her introduction of reforms that changed largely Britain and the field of education as one of the main components of the governmental system. In fact, the implications of such educational policies guaranteed to British citizens their educational rights therefore succeeding educationally and socially. Additionally, Margaret Thatcher was known by her ideology of Neoliberalism as a philosophy that she developed during her time of governing Great Britain to achieve political prosperity and education progression. So, in this chapter, key essential terms like Neoliberalism will be defined and highlighted with reference to Thatcher's educational policies in the 1980s. Moreover, there are concrete examples of the implications

of educational policies in schools and their influential impact in reshaping the educational system of Britain. More importantly, different reactions from politicians, teachers and parents who expressed their views towards such policies positively and negatively will be truly revealed.

1. Neoliberalism as a Political Ideology in Margret's Thatcher Policies

Before explaining Neoliberalism as an ideology developed by the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, there must be a focus on the origins and the meaning of the key term Neoliberalism.

1.1. The Meaning of Neoliberalism

There were many definitions concerning the concept of Neoliberalism. While liberalism is considered as a political ideology, Neo-liberalism is on the other hand regarded to be an economic ideology that started during the 20th century aiming at reviving the liberal ideas and the ancient classical ones of the 19th century (Robison 33). According to Robison, Neoliberalism was basically based on economy to give birth again to the old liberal thoughts.

The concept of Neoliberalism dated back to 1938 declaring that the state's role and sole mission is as a controller or a guide of free markets. In other words, Neoliberalism emphasized on competition as one principle of privatization. In fact, it was originated and created by the French philosopher Louis Rougier in his meeting with his colleagues in Paris (Birch, Mykhnenko 3).

David Small in his article *Neoliberalism's Fate: Implications for Education* had explained well the concept of Neoliberalism and its great impact on education and society. According to David, he considered that Neoliberalism emerged in all the countries of the world in order to arrange economy, society and foreign policy of these countries (Small 2).

Actually, the emergence of Neoliberalism was in different places of the world among which US and UK. Noticeably, politicians won their elections through implementing Neoliberal policies (2).

1.2 Neoliberalism as a Political and Economic Ideology

Since Neoliberalism emerged as an economic and a political ideology to enhance societies and their well-being. Margaret Thatcher was considered to be one of the leaders who developed and implemented neoliberal policies in her career as a Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1979-1990.

In fact, Neoliberalism was introduced and known largely in both US and UK mostly within the general elections of Margaret Thatcher as a Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ronald Regan as a president of USA. Eventually, Margaret Thatcher imitated Neoliberalism as a doctrine that she evolved and applied as set of principles and ideas which lead to economic thought and management (Harvey 2).

David Harvey in his book "*A Brief History of Neoliberalism*" had mentioned in details the rise of Neoliberalism and its implications in some parts of the world mainly US and UK into theory and practice. He defined Neoliberalism as the following: "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (2).

So, in this regard Neoliberalism is seen as set or group of political and economic practices that humans deserve and merit. It assures their individual liberties, fundamental freedoms and privatization.

2. The Implications of Margaret Thatcher's Educational Reforms

Following the 1970s, British education's situation had changed after many discussions and debates. The Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher introduced a set of educational reforms to ameliorate the English education. These reforms were applied with the objective of improving the performance of students in state schools.

2.1 The Process of Implementation

Under the 1988 Education Reform Act, a number of educational policies were introduced to reorganize the process of education in both primary and secondary state schools. The process of implementing these reforms started first with modifying its content.

2.1.1 The Curriculum

After the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act, a number of changes among which was the national curriculum emerged within state schools. The establishment of the curriculum considered as an attempt to provide a national unified form of knowledge. Actually, the curriculum was designed to guide the learning process throughout all schools in Britain.

The national curriculum included ten subjects that specified the content of study. These subjects, in fact, were not introduced and applied at once. The process of implementing them was gradually performed. Just after the establishment of the 1988 Act, a number of subjects were introduced while others remained until the year of 1993. The process of introducing the ten subjects lasted for almost six years. Science and mathematics were the first two subjects to be introduced in 1988. In 1989, English was introduced followed by technology in 1990. History and geography became a part of the curriculum in 1991. The subject of modern foreign languages was added in 1992. The three remaining subjects, music, art and physical education were introduced in 1993 (Colwill 57).

During the administration of the Conservative Prime Minister John Major in 1993, the curriculum's length was a major concern to be discussed especially among teachers who considered it to be overcharged. There was also a disagreement between them about the assessment process (Pierson 136). The Secretary of State for Education John Patten reviewed the national curriculum so as to solve the existing problem (Colwill 57-58).

Actionally, the task of reviewing the curriculum was the responsibility of Ron Dearing who was appointed as the Chairman of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA). Dearing proposed 'slimming down the curriculum'. He also suggested reducing the assessment by limiting national assessment to three subjects, namely English, science and mathematics (Colwill 58). The government concurred on Dearing's suggestions and the review of the national curriculum started by the SCAA in 1984. Finally, The Secretary of State accepted the revised curriculum in November 1994 after a long process of meetings and consultations. The application of the newly revised curriculum, which was directed to pupils aged between 5 and 14 years, started in 1995. The following year, the revised curriculum for students aged between 14 and 16 years was introduced (Colwill 59; Aldrich 17).

2.1.2. The Grant-Maintained Schools

Through the 1988 Education Reform Act, the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher introduced her principles into the British education. Thatcher was a great advocator of the values of free market (privatization) and competition within education. The creation of the grant-maintained following the 1988 Reform Act was a significant sign of her support to such principles. This type of schools was free from the LEAs 'dominance over its financial and admission matters.

Parents were the first members to start the process of achieving the grant-maintained school status. Parents, belonging to the same schools, had to form a secret ballot so as to decide whether these schools to be independent from LEAs' control or to leave them under its dominance. If the majority vote for the decision to withdraw, then, the parents' application

would be presented to the Department for Education (DFE) where the Secretary of State would decide whether the school could opt out or not (Campbell 247). However, the suggestion sometimes to pull out might get rejected as the LEA had already marked the school for either reorganization or closure (Clark 749).

Margaret Thatcher was a supporter of the adaptation of the policy of the grant-maintained schools that most schools seek to follow (Judge 816). Campbell et al who argued that during the first six months of the Reform Act, there were over 50 ballot declarations to opt out the LEAs dominance (248). Hence, the grant-maintained policy gained an increasing interest during the years 1991 and 1992 owing to its success in primary grant-maintained schools (Campbell et al 248; Pierson 137). Two years later, the interest in the policy decreased as the numbers of votes decreased. During the period of the 1994-95, votes against the policy reached 50% which was the policy's worst times (Campbell et al 248). Many reasons were behind the low percentage of votes in favor of the grant-maintained policy. Many schools were unsatisfied with their LEA and the plans of reorganization or closure. While few other schools adopt the policy in order to enjoy self-governance and manage their educational matters without the LEA interference (Halpin et al 411).

The grant-maintained policy was recognized by the LEAs schools as a resolution to avoid reorganization or closure, yet, the grant-maintained status was not also safe status. Indeed, the open recruitment policy that permits schools to sign up as many students as possible in relation to the school capacity emerged in a number of issues. "Under-subscribed" or less popular schools received small budget. So, these schools were unable to bring sufficient and correct tools that could improve schools' conditions. The most well-known schools also suffer from over-crowding which was a main obstacle faced by them (Ruotanen 42). Thus, most parents rejected this kind of schools.

In spite of the different points of views and the variety of interests related to the grant-maintained schools' policy, many schools adopt this strategy. For instance, in England there were 644 grant-maintained secondary schools (16 % of secondary schools) and 454 grant-maintained primary schools (2% of primary schools in 1996) (Campbell et al 248).

The grant-maintained schools policy made Margaret Thatcher's reforms different from other educational reforms in Britain. Contrary to the previous tripartite system and the comprehensive system which were imposed on schools, the grant-maintained policy fortified the principle of free adoption for schools which made the policy greatly successful.

3. Reactions to the 1988 Education Reform Act

Under the 1988 Education Reform Act, many changes about organization occurred in state schools following the process of implementing the educational policies. There were various reactions toward these reforms from the part of politicians, parents and teachers.

3.1. Politicians' Reaction

The educational reforms that were introduced by Margaret Thatcher perceived differently by politicians mainly the Secretaries of State for Education who expressed either their acceptance or rejection of these reforms. Among these reforms was the grant-maintained policy that was initiated for improving education in state schools. The Secretary of State for Education Kenneth Baker was one of the advocates of this reform who supported this policy stating that: "grant-maintained schools will be a threat to the complacent and the second best" (Halpin et al 416).

John MacGregor, the Conservative Secretary of State for Education and Science from 1989-1990, supported Kenneth Baker's opinion. According to MacGregor, the grant-

maintained status enhances education through promoting parents' choice. MacGregor regarded this policy as "the Jewel in the Crown of parental power" (Power et al 210).

The adversary of these reforms expressed a different view points. Jack Straw, who was a Shadow Education Minister during the period of introducing the Education Reform Bill, disapproved with MacGregor's opinion about the grant-maintained school policy. Jack argued that this policy just partly end the comprehensive system of education through selection. Additionally, he stated that such type of schools would rather create different educational ranks instead of justice in education (211).

The Labor politician Hillary Armstrong expressed a similar stand. According to her, the 1988 Education Reform Act did not care about the needs of learners. The Act's main focus was on the concern of selection which favored an elitist system (Armstrong 572). Moreover, Armstrong criticized this Act declaring that parents were given the right of interfering in schools' financial or administrative affairs rather than being engaged in their children's educational matters of (575-76).

Noticeably, the supporters of Thatcher's educational reforms were mainly from the conservative party whereas her opponents were from the opposition party, Labor party. Even though Keith Joseph was a conservative party politician, he was against some of Thatcher's educational reforms. He criticized the policy of national curriculum as being neo-liberal and he rejected the curriculum foundation before its initiation. Instead, he favored a vocational curriculum that would enhance a culture of choice and enterprise (Crawford 438). In 1988, he also condemned the curriculum stating that it was too prescriptive (Aldrich 16).

3.2. Parents' Reaction

Thatcher's educational reforms put parents in the center of the learning process. In fact, parents were given the authority to free their children's schools from the LEAs' dominance and make them independent schools under the 1988 Educational Reform Act. Many parents

were expected to appreciate such a change. But, they expressed a different reaction toward this privilege.

Parents advocated the grant-maintained policy through voting for its implementation. In fact, parents were in favor of this policy because of many reasons which vary from one parent to another. Among these reasons was protecting these schools from LEAs's plan of reorganization and closure. The grant-maintained schools policy was a new program that many parents sponsored as they expected it to succeed (Power et al 213). While those parents welcomed and appreciated the grant-maintained schools policy, others rejected the policy via voting against it (Pierson 137).

3.3. Teachers' Reaction

As there were restrictions on the national curriculum, the teachers' reaction toward the 1980's educational reforms was partly linked with the content of the learning process. Passing of the national curriculum was an educational reform that changed the post-war tradition over the curriculum (Ruotanen 14). The earlier educational reforms, mainly the 1944 Education Act, left the curriculum free from discussion. Therefore, the teachers were responsible of curriculum design to fit their learners. However, after the establishment of the national curriculum this privilege terminated. Consequently, the teachers react against this policy.

The teachers criticized mainly the amount of subjects that were set by the national curriculum. Many teachers stated that the designed curriculum hindered their relationship with their learners since it was overloaded. Pollard claimed that personal relations with students would make them content and, thus, would improve the learning process (Ruotanen 43). Nevertheless, the curriculum determined many attainment objectives to be realized by the teachers. Consequently this led them to concentrate more on this activity and ignored their learners' personal interests (43).

In addition, the system of assessment was condemned by teachers after its introduction following the 1988 Education Reform Act. In 1993, the assessment process was criticized as this policy was banned. However, this situation ended after “the slimming down” of the assessment process (Pierson 136).

4. The Impact of the Educational Reform Act on State Schools and Learners’ Performance

Margaret Thatcher had done great change for the British government, education and society. Owing to her influential policies, the British society witnessed dramatic prosperity in many fields, satisfaction of parents and fruitful results of the educational system that lasted for years. Such policies impacted largely the educational system especially schools thus society. One of the main interests of Margaret Thatcher is to change the field of education to the best and to improve it largely starting by state schools. Also, moving to the performance and accomplishments of learners was another interesting factor that Margaret Thatcher worked on enhancing it.

4.1. Social Separation in Schools (Segregation of Learners according to the Social Classes)

It is worthwhile to mention that the Educational Reform Act of 1988 has a positive impact on schools since it eradicated several serious problems that the British schools were suffering from. Noticeably, it is known that there are many schools in the world which separate learners and students according to their social background and social classes. That is, rich and wealthy students attend directly high, prestigious and well –known schools with high standards and qualities whereas poor and lower class students attend normal and regular schools. This was exactly the case in the British Educational schools.

Under the Educational Reform Act of 1988, many accomplishments were achieved to abolish social segregation in schools. In this regard, the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher

had introduced efficient policies such as parental choice in schools and the concept of competition. In other words, parents and their children were given the total freedom and chance to choose the school they want their children to attend. In this case, all children or learners with different backgrounds and social classes could be in the same classroom without any discrimination (Gorard, Fitz 369). So, all parents were given the same opportunity for their children to study in their chosen schools.

Another proof that showed the influence of the Educational Reform Act on schools was a research that was conducted by Gorard and Fitz. The two researchers had made a study in several English high schools in order to see whether social segregation still existed like before or it was decreased. In fact, the two researchers found out in their findings that social segregation in schools had dramatically went down especially in the era from 1991 to 1997 (Levačić, Woods 210).

4.2. The Impact of Competition in Enhancing the Schools and Learners' Performance

Since the previous educational systems were based on segregation, social class and ethnic groups, they were weak and even their quality was poor with fruitless results. Therefore, The Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher devoted time, energy and expertise in order to heighten the field of education and to improve the quality of the British Educational System via introducing and implementing various educational reforms.

By 1980, The British government had introduced such reforms to increase the performance of schools and motivate learners towards success and high accomplishments. Competition was one way that helped greatly in improving the quality of schools and raising their performance. It is an efficient factor that shows the best learners in the best schools. Actually,

schools which did not use to compete with other schools did not achieve any kind of improvement and did not provide their students opportunities to perform well (Hirakata 8). As a result, Margaret Thatcher had to focus on competition among schools to fundamentally better their services and build strong learners with high scores.

Many people declared that the educational policies of Margaret Thatcher had developed largely the domain of education and increased the performance of many schools. Among those professionals the two authors Machin and Vignoles. In fact, they said that competition between schools allowed schools to do their best at the level of teaching and educating to be better than the other schools. Such method uplifted the quality and the principles of education tremendously (Machin, Vignoles 4).

Besides that, there are other researchers who supported the educational policies of the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the way she applied them in schools. Halpin and Clark saw that the foundation of Grant Maintained Schools, the national curriculum and parental choice encourage schools to compete with each other thus empower performance and competence in Grant Maintained schools and the other British Schools.(Halpin et al 416, Clark 746).

Another international figure who supported and discussed the great impact of educational policies of the Iron Lady was John Marks. He devoted his time to study and analyze the educational policies in British schools. He finally concluded that the Thatcher's educational systems were applicable and useful than the previous ones. Such reforms had established a sort of accountability in public schools with success and efficiency (82).

Margaret Thatcher had achieved massive accomplishments in the domain of politics and most importantly education. She considered education as a fundamental and valuable domain that needed radical change, development and awareness. Such positive and radical change

was through instilling and implementing educational reforms that brought up such satisfactory results and increased performance of state schools. Despite the criticism and the drawbacks of her opponents who rejected her policies, she proved to British society and the whole world that she nobly had done great job and her mission was completed honestly and fairly.

Chapter Three

Thatcher's Political Position after the Implementation of the 1988 Education Reform Act

Margaret Thatcher was a worldwide political figure who had done great achievements to Great Britain. Owing to her educational and political policies, she was considered as one of the impressive, influential and charismatic female personalities in the world. The Prime Minister's excellent mindset, thinking and relationships with her peers of politicians and presidents had enabled her to create huge changes in the period between 1979 to 1990. Consequently, she left unforgettable trace. Margaret Thatcher's fame did not expand only

nationally but even internationally in USA, Europe and even the Arab World like Saudi-Arabia. That is, the iron lady developed serious, formal and beneficial relationships with her peers of politicians and even presidents. In the bottom line, the implications of such educational policies paved the way for Margaret Thatcher to gain more power, victory, fame and importantly gaining more elections in short periods of time.

1. Gaining Strength from the National and the International Sides

Any politician seeks power, victory and fame. He or she actually has privileges that make him or her control, guide and introduce new reforms, policies and change them according to peoples' needs and interests. Despite the fact that the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had enemies and haters, there were many political figures and supporters who were with her policies.

1.1. Gaining Power from the National Side

In fact, there were many strong relationships between The Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and well-known political personalities in Great Britain among which was the queen Elizabeth 2. The two powerful women appeared many times in different meetings and formal occasions. Dean Palmer in his book "*The Queen and Mrs. Thatcher*" revealed top secrets of the complicated relationship between the English Rose and the Iron lady as two female political leaders with high powers and authority. Actually, the meetings gathered them together in the palace to discuss particular rights every Tuesday at 6:30 a.m .The meetings of the queen were indeed full of wisdom, political knowledge and experience that she shared with the prime minister (Palmer 11).

Despite the fact that the relationship between the two was too formal, the queen was extremely fond by Margaret Thatcher's predecessor (14). The contributions of Margaret

Thatcher to Great Britain are massively revealed and shown. Palmer again focused on the significance of the prime minister and her Thatcherism as she nurtured the legend. She devoted her youth in studying business, economy and politics to form principles that shaped her world view (25). Palmer stated: “She made the queen and her family look out of step with reality” (25). In truth, the prime minister left unforgettable trace in the royal family and the British society. Palmer sincerely proclaimed that Thatcherism was inevitable since it ended very sensitive period of deference and slavery in the British history. Due to Thatcherism, The British people turned to be more democratic, powerful and unwilling to bow to their masters and the superior ones.

According to Margaret Thatcher, Palmer added “Europe was created by history, America was created by philosophy” (25). In this regard, Palmer revealed the famous words said by the prime minister when she compared between the two powers USA and UK that the British leaders who developed and made Britain the way it was. She finally stated that Britain was the heritage.

Lauren Puckett –pope in his article *The Queen Elizabeth 2 and Margaret Thatcher Were Always at Odds* had also shown the nature of the relationship between the two political female icons. Lauren provided the example of Michael Shea a palace spokesman who announced that with all the preceded prime ministers, the queen had a close and confidential relationship with Margaret Thatcher and the queen enjoyed such relationship. Lauren also mentioned important facts about The Prime minister’s personality in loving and addicting hard work, made constantly both her and those around her happy. Additionally, Margaret Thatcher was too rigid and formal and such rigidity frustrated the queen. Lauren had provided the example of the author John Campbell in his book *The Iron Lady, From Grocer’s Daughter to Prime Minister* who wrote that “the queen was said to dread her weekly audience with her Prime

Minister because Mrs. Thatcher was so sniff and formal". So, even though the queen and the prime minister were from various and different backgrounds, they held respect and great admiration for one another.

Margaret Thatcher had furthermore developed a strong relationship and connection with Rupert Murdoch. In fact, the prime minister gave him the yield to control the nation's media and in return she received political support from his newspapers editors during her three general elections (Palmer 127). Since the prime minister rewarded him with money, Rupert Murdoch had supported her excessively to held her political office. He was a real supporter who enjoyed that forceful position within the circle of Margaret Thatcher (127). Such powerful alliance between the two helped Margaret Thatcher and gave her more influence and strength.

1.2. Gaining Power from the International Side

Margaret Thatcher did not only develop strong relationships and connections inside Great Britain but her fame expanded even overseas with many political leaders whom she shared thoughts, ideas, political ideologies. Moreover, they were suggesting ways, strategies and solutions to overcome conflicts and solve problems.

One of the political leaders that Margaret Thatcher benefited and enjoyed his company was the American president Ronald Reagan. Both enjoyed such humble friendship and their shared role in reshaping and changing the world. The prime minister was considered one of the Reagan's best foreign leaders. She had a close relationship with the president Reagan. Many articles, journals and even books had tackled the powerful alliance that was between the American president and the Prime Minister. Archie Brown in his book *The Human Factor:*

Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and The end of the Cold war had presented in details the deep relationship between the three political leaders in ending the cold war. There was also an interesting article in CNN Politics by Halimah Abdullah entitled *Reagan and Thatcher: Political Soulmates* which displayed the closest friendship between the two famous figures in the history of Great Britain and USA. In fact, the president Reagan shared Thatcher several national and international issues and matters. He found her that leader who had a conservative voice, powerful personality with high vision towards the future. Their relationship was described as more than politicians but as political Soulmates in the conservative world. In the same article, Halimah mentioned that the biographer Geoffrey Smith, the author of *Reagan and Thatcher* declared that Even the president Reagan provided help and encouragement to Margaret Thatcher more than any other American president concerning big issues like terrorism in the north of Ireland.

Margaret Thatcher dealt with the American president in big issues and big problems to save their beloved countries. One of them was that she saw good things in Mikhail Gorbachev and she tried to persuade Reagan that he was a trustworthy leader and he could do business with as Halimah explained in her article. Additionally, she stated some sayings of the prime minister in December 1984 when she stated “I like Mr.Gorbachev .We can do business together”. And in return, Gorbachev said that “Thatcher was a politician who had a strong voice”. That is, Margaret Thatcher had developed a powerful relationship even with the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in gaining fame, power and changing the world positively. He ended the quote in the article by saying “At the end, we were able to reach an understanding, and it was a contribution to the change in atmosphere between our country and the west and to the end of the cold war”. Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev indeed believed in nationalism, individual rights and communism in changing the world map.

2. The Long Lasting Impact of the Educational Reforms of Margaret Thatcher

It was previously mentioned that Margaret Thatcher was supported profoundly by Rupert Murdoch who clearly helped the prime minister with political encouragement during her three general elections. Besides that, she allowed him to take control of the media. So, the media played an important role in promoting for the Iron lady's elections especially to the newspaper the Sun. It helped her during her elections and Mrs. Margaret Thatcher was grateful for such support (Palmer 136). In addition to the media and press, Margaret Thatcher was supported by her citizens due to her reforms that changed the British educational system.

The legacy of Thatcher in education became apparent only during the two decades following her resignation as a prime minister in the 1990. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the radical reforms of education initiated by Thatcher government were only launched during the last two years of her governorship. The principles and objectives of these reforms formed the foundation of all education reforms enacted by successive governments.

To start with, the market mechanism continued as a result of the paradigm shift to neo-liberalism supported by Thatcher. The principles, practices and processes of the private sector extended to include different economic and social spheres. The process of marketisation also developed the growing engagement of the private sector in funding and sponsoring educational services. This process held by Tony Blair governments from 1997 onward. As Ken Jones has stated, "New Labour aimed not only to relate public-sector activity more closely to the expressed needs of business, but also to involve private interests more actively in the delivery of social services...including education"(Jones 145). In this regard, it has been proposed that marketisation has embraced both the advancement of choice within state sector through competition between schools (Dale 9-10).

Thatcher's marketisation policies were effective in emphasizing the importance of educational achievement and providing rewards and impulses for an ability-based outlook on schooling. As a consequence many subsequent governments, especially-New Labour, extended and strengthened the reforms which were first introduced by the 1987-1990 Thatcher government.

Margaret Thatcher had successfully left a remarkable trace in Great Britain and the whole world. Her educational policies paved the way for Margaret to win elections in short periods of time, gain victory and power. Additionally, she seized the opportunity to develop productive and useful relationships with other influential political leaders in the world. As a result, she was considered as the most powerful and inspiring female leaders in the history of Britain who left remarkable and significant reforms that Britain still acknowledge them up to the present time.

Conclusion

Britain was regarded as “a nation at risk”, mainly because of the situation of its public educational system. Thus, the country’s educational reformers were planning for radical changes that their respective “educational establishments” did not make. Among those reformers was Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990 who was one of the most influential and powerful female figures in the history of Great Britain. While being in office, she worked hard and devoted time, money and efforts to work on education. Therefore, she implemented massive reforms that profoundly changed the educational system in Britain through neoliberal policies and consequently reshaped the British schools and the British society.

Before the 1980s, the British educational system was accomplished in a framework that was established by the 1944 Education Act. Under this Act, free secondary education was assumed for all children and the traditional elementary system was replaced by three successive stages (the tripartite system). Additionally, the Butler Act granted the LEAs the control over state schools. Thus, they became responsible for all matters related to schools organization. Whereas, the only thing that was not under the LEAs authority was the curriculum which was the responsibility of teachers.

During the mid 1960s, the comprehensive system of education emerged as a result to Butler’s Education Act of 1944. This system ended the idea of selection under the 1976 Education Act. Moreover, the tripartite system was replaced by a comprehensive system that did not differentiate between pupils’ abilities and talents.

In the 1970s, the post-war educational system was criticized for being inefficient and inappropriate for bringing schools’ standards down. This indeed provided the argument for the Thatcher government to reform the educational system.

At the end of the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher was helped by her government initiated a series of educational reforms that were influenced by neo-liberal ideas. The 1988 Education Reform Act was a fundamental reform passed by Thatcher in the third term of her premiership. This Act introduced the concept of marketisation to British schools through league tables and open enrollment. It was actually based on the principles of making schools more competitive and giving parents' choice (parentocracy) as a means of improving and boosting education. Under this Act, a prescribed national curriculum of ten subjects was created for all state-funded schools. More importantly, the Act was regarded as an attempt to lessen and weaken power of local education authorities and aimed to achieve the objective of raising standards; ensuring efficiency in education.

Despite the previously mentioned changes, some aspects of Butler Act were unchanged by Thatcher government. The three successive stages of education remained the same and public finance for education continued to exist in Thatcher's era with a different approach, particularly in grant-maintained schools which received their budget according to the number of their students.

Under Thatcher's educational reforms, schools were organized upon different levels owing to the emergence of the grant-maintained independent schools. The level of attainment also changed. While carrying out these reforms, there was an increase in the exams achievements and high improvements that were considered as fruitful results and great impact of these changes.

Thatcher's educational reforms were regarded as a dominant period of education. These reforms represented Thatcher's legacy and contribution to the educational system in Britain. These reforms came as a link between her government and John Major. It was the Thatcher government that launched these changes but the reforms were carried out and implemented by John Major's government. Despite the fact that the latter revised some features of these reforms, the result of this procedure was the same as the original reforms. This could be recognized as an advantage to support Thatcher's educational reforms.

These educational policies tremendously influenced the British Educational system and granted the British citizens individual rights such as: the right to study and choose their schools. Due to such political and educational reforms, Margaret Thatcher won the respect, admiration and the power of her citizens. She was elected for three times successively in 1979, 1983 and 1987. In fact, she drew not only the attention of her citizens, but also gained extreme concern from the media as the first British female prime minister in Great Britain and the whole Europe.

The prime minister was not only well known in Great Britain and Europe but her popularity was also broadly extended in other foreign countries and the Atlantic. She was interested in foreign policies with other political leaders and presidents to work with them on different political affairs. She successfully established respectful, productive and active relationships with the American president Ronald Reagan and also the soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. They indeed relied on Margaret Thatcher in their business. Such powerful alliance and close relationships unquestionably made the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher unquestionably more powerful, victorious and recognizable politician in the whole world.

Works cited

- Abdullah, Halimah. "Reagan and Thatcher: Political Soulmates." *CNN Politics*, 9 Apr. 2013, edition.cnn.com/2013/04/08/politics/thatcher-reagan/index.html.
- Aldous, Richard. *Reagan and Thatcher: The Difficult Relationship*. Illustrated, W. W. Norton and Company, 2012.
- Aldrich, Richard. "Educational Reform and Curriculum Implementation in England: An Historical Perspective." *ERIC*, 1994.
- Armstrong, Hillary. "The British Education Act of 1988: A Critique From the Labour." *Journal of Education Finance*, vol. 15, no. 1990, pp. 572–76, www.jstor.org/stable40703844. Accessed 7 Jun. 2022.
- Ball, Stephen, and Deborah Youdell. *Hidden Privatization in Public Education*. Education International, 2008.
- Black, Paul J. "Performance Assessment and Accountability: The Experience in England and Wales." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1994, pp. 191–203. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737016002191>.
- Bolick, Clint. "Thatcher's Revolution: Deregulation and Political Transformation." *Thatcher's Revolution: Deregulation and Political Transformation*, vol. 12:527, yale journal on regulation, 1995, pp. 528–46.
- Brich, Kean, and VladMykhnenko. *Rise And Fall Of Neo-Liberalism: The Collapse Of An Economic Order?* Books for Change, 2011.
- Brown, Archie. *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher and the End of the Cold War*. OUP Oxford, 2022.
- Campbell, John. *The Iron Lady Margaret Thatcher Fro Grocers Daughter to Prime Minister*. David freeman, 2009.

- Campbell, Jim, et al. "Primary Schools and Opting out: Some Policy Implications." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 44, no. 3, 1996, pp. 246–59. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.1996.9974073>.
- Chan, Sui-Mee, and East Pat. "A Recent History of Primary and Secondary Education in England Part 1: 1944 to 1985." *Cala Journal*, vol. 15, no.no, 2008, pp. 5–15, www.cilt.org.uk.
- Chan, Sui-Mee, and East Pat. "A Recent History of Primary and Secondary Education in England Part 1: 1944 to 1985." *Cala Journal*, vol. 15, no. no, 2008, pp. 5–15, www.cilt.org.uk.
- Clark, Damon. "The Performance and Competitive Effects of School Autonomy." *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 117, no. 4, 2009, pp. 745–83. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1086/605604>.
- Colwill, Ian, and Nick Peacey. "Planning, Teaching and Assessing the Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties: Curriculum Guidelines to Support the Revised National Curriculum." *British Journal of Special Education*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2001, pp. 120–22. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8527.00209>.
- Crawford, Keith. "A History of the Right: The Battle for Control of National Curriculum History 1989–1994." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 43, no. 4, 1995, pp. 433–56. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.1995.9974049>.
- Dale, Roger. "The Thatcherite Project in Education: The Case of the City Technology Colleges." *Critical Social Policy*, vol. 9, no. 27, 1989, pp. 4–19. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/026101838900902701>.

- Edwards, A. D., and Harry Judge. "A Generation of Schooling: English Secondary Schools since 1944." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 34, no. 3, 1986, p. 281. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3121014>.
- Evans, Stephen. "Thatcher and the Victorians: A Suitable Case for Comparison?" *History*, vol. 82, no. 268, 1997, pp. 601–20. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229x.00053>.
- Freeman, David, and John Campbell. *The Iron Lady: Margaret Thatcher, from Grocer's Daughter to Prime Minister*. Abridged, Penguin Books, 2011.
- Gorard, Stephen, and John Fitz. "The More Things Change ... The Missing Impact of Marketisation?" *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1998, pp. 365–76. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569980190306>.
- Hadley, Louisa. *Responding to Margaret Thatcher Death*. Dawson College Canada, Palgrave Pivot, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137428257.0001>.
- Hadley, Louisa and Ho, Elizabeth, ed. *Thatcher & After: Margaret Thatcher and Her After life in Contemporary Culture*. England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.
- Halpin, David, et al. "Grant-maintained Schools: Making a Difference Without Being Really Different¹." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1991, pp. 409–24. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.1991.9973901>.
- Halpin, David, Sally Power and John Fitz "Grant-maintained Schools: Making a Difference without Being Really Different¹." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1991, pp. 409–24. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.1991.9973901>.
- Hirakata, Yasuhisa. *Education Reform Under the Thatcher Government and Hayek's Thought on Welfare State: Market Mechanism and Managed Competition*. Kyushu Sangyo., Kyushu Sangyo University, 2016.

- Hugo, Young. "Young, Hugo. 'Margaret Thatcher.' Encyclopedia Britannica, 9 Oct. 2020." *BRITANNICA*, 9 July 2020.
- Jackson, Ben, and Robert Saunders. *Making Thatcher's Britain*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Jones, Ken. *Education in Britain: 1944 to the Present*. 2nd ed. Polity, 2016.
- Khalki, Smaine. *State Intervention in British Education*. Oran, Université d'Oran, 2016.
- Larner, Wendy. "A Brief History of Neoliberalism. By David Harvey." *Economic Geography*, vol. 82, no. 4, 2009, pp. 449–51. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-8287.2006.tb00327.x>.
- Lerner, et al. *Wartime and the Nature of Compromise: An Analysis of British Educational Reform during World War II*. University of Michigan History Honors, 2015.
- Levačić, Rosalind, and Philip A. Woods. "Raising School Performance in the League Tables (Part 1): Disentangling the Effects of Social Disadvantage." *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2002, pp. 207–26. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920120122158>.
- Lofty, John S. *News From England: Coming Home to the National Curriculum*. English Education, 1990.
- Machin, Stephen, and Anna Vignoles. *What's the Good of Education? The Economics of Education in the UK (Princeton Paperbacks)*. Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Marks, John. *The Betrayed Generations: Standards in British Schools*. London, Centre for Policy Studies, 2000.
- McLean, Martin, and Natalia Voskresenskaya. "Educational Revolution from above: Thatcher's Britain and Gorbachev's Soviet Union." *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 36, no. 1, 1992, pp. 71–90. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1086/447082>.

- Middleton, Nigel. "Lord Butler and the Education Act of 1944." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1972, pp. 178–91. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.1972.9973344>.
- Moore, Charles. *Margaret Thatcher: The Authorized Biography: Volume I: From Grantham to the Falklands*. Reprint, Vintage, 2015.
- Moskin, Marietta. *Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain*. Julian Messner, 1990.
- Palmer, Dean. *The Queen and Mrs Thatcher: An Inconvenient Relationship*. 1st ed., The History Press, 2015.
- Pierson, Chris. "The New Governance of Education: The Conservatives and Education 1988-1997." *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 24, no. 1, 1998, pp. 131–42. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498980240110>.
- Power, Sally, et al. "Parents, Pupils and Grant-maintained Schools." *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1994, pp. 209–25. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141192940200206>.
- Puckett-Pope, Lauren. "Queen Elizabeth II and Margaret Thatcher Were Always at Odds." *Harper's BAZAAR*, 20 Nov. 2020, www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/film-tv/a34717212/queen-elizabeth-margaret-thatcher-relationship.
- Reitan, Earl. *The Thatcher Revolution: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair, and the Transformation of Modern Britain*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002.
- Robison, Richard, ed. *The Neoliberal Revolution: Forging the Market State (International Political Economy Series)*. 1st ed. 2006, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Ruotanen, TuomoKalevi. . . "a Bright Child...He Just Burst Into Tears and Said... I Can't Do It!»: *The 1988 Education Reform Act and Its Consequences on Child-Centeredness in Teaching in English Primary Schools*. University of Joensuu, 2001.

Small, David. *Neoliberalism 'S Fate; Implications for Education*. Australia, University of Canterbury. School of Educational Studies and Human Development, 2009.

Smith, Anne. "Reflections on Secondary Education Policy in England and Wales Since the 1944 Act." *Education Research and Perspectives*, vol. 24, 2007, pp. 115–35.

Taysum, Alison. "A Critical Historiographical Analysis of England's Educational Policies." *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education 1*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 54–87.

Verger, Antoni, et al. *The Privatization of Education: A Political Economy of Global Education Reform (International Perspectives on Educational Reform Series)*. Teachers College Press, 2016.

Whitty, Geoff, and Ian Menter. "Lessons of Thatcherism: Education Policy in England and Wales 1979–88." *Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 16, no. 1, 1988, p. 42. *Crossref*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1409976>.