
SITUATION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AT COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN THE ARAB UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study was to arrive at answering the main general question: What is the situation of educational research at colleges of education in the Arab universities? For that purpose, the descriptive / Analytic method was used. For collecting the required data, the authors depended heavily on comparing and analyzing of data obtained from publications and literature on the topic of the study. The study has finally come up with the following main results: Arab countries come at the bottom of the list of world countries with regard to educational research. The absence of the role of private sectors in research and development processes in the Arab world and their less participation in funding research. There is a loose link between colleges of education and development in Arab countries. The absence of a clear- cut policies and scientific strategies that can control aims and priorities of research.

المستخلص

هدفت الدراسة إلى الوصول للإجابة عن السؤال العام الرئيس: ما واقع البحث التربوي في كليات التربية بالجامعات العربية. لذلك الغرض استخدم المنهج العلمي الوصفي التحليلي. اعتمدت الدراسة على المعلومات المجموعة من المنشورات والأدبيات في مجال الدراسة ومن ثم مقارنتها وتحليلها. من أهم النتائج التي تم الوصول إليها ما يلي: تحتل الدول العربية المرتبة الأخيرة بين الدول في الانفاق على البحث التربوي. غياب دور القطاع الخاص في عمليات البحث والتطوير في الوطن العربي وعدم مشاركته في الانفاق على البحث التربوي. الصلة ضعيفة جداً أو مفقودة بين خطط البحث العلمي في كليات التربية بالجامعات العربية ومتطلبات التنمية في المجالات المختلفة. غياب السياسات والاستراتيجيات العلمية الواضحة حيث تقتصر معظم الدول العربية إلى سياسات واضحة للبحث التربوي، والتي تتضمن تحديد الأهداف والأولويات والمراكز البحثية اللازمة وتوفير الامكانيات المادية الضرورية. عدم الارتباط بين كليات التربية والتنمية في البلدان العربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: البحث التربوي، كليات التربية، الجامعات العربية.

INTRODUCTION

Excellence in educational research is considered to be one of the genuine indicators of progress in all countries, worldwide. It is considered to be one of the striking characteristics in countries of the developed world. Scientific research is no longer regarded as a luxury. It is progressively seen as a demanding necessity for attaining sustainable development in every field of life, in that, it constitutes an integral part of human resources development. This is being so, it has become of an at most necessity that countries should revise and improve on their development systems, plans, and policies. If at all economic and social development is to take place, there should be a deep understanding of educational research methods, procedures, and tools in its all operational periods. Educational research, as generally conceived of, is a real attempt to show problems that face human being in all cycles of life. Educational research is generated and perfected due to curiosity, which is always fed with continuous longing for acquiring knowledge and uncovering of truth, beside, possessing the right tools for affecting proper treatments of all issues⁽¹⁾.

Educational research is also and innovation of new methods and tools that can be used within the contexts of a specific referenced knowledge that allows for more analysis and interpretation. As far as colleges of education in the Arab world are concerned,



educational research is considered to be one of its main functions, particularly in the world of today and the huge revolution of knowledge expansion and information. This applies very much to the developing world, including the Arab countries, as consuming knowledge produced in the West, can never ever solve their problems relating to education and consequently to social and economic development in the future.

The problem of the Study:

Generally speaking, (ER) aims at the production of new and genuine knowledge, be it a diagnostic or applied sort. Assuming that every that is known is not in need of research, most of research carried out in the Arab world can said to be pointless and of less value. If we are attaining new and genuine knowledge, we should abandon all old and traditional methods of research. Otherwise there is no way to fully analyze that present in ways that can help in predictive the future. Along there are lines of thought, the problem of the present study can be summarized in the following general question: What is the situation of educational research at Colleges of education in the Arab Universities?

From this general question stem the following subsidiary questions:

1. What is the situation at Colleges of education in the Arab universities?
2. What are the bases and requirements to be made available for applying (ER)?

3. What are the obstacles and problems that constrain educational research implementation?

Objectives of the Study:

The study aims at realizing the following:

1. The situation of the educational research in the colleges of education in the Arab Universities.
2. The bases and requirements to be made available for applying educational research.
3. Obstacles and problems that constrain educational research.

Significance of the Study:

The study, it is hoped to solve some of the most annoying problems facing (ER), particularly in the Arab Colleges of education. It may also furnish information and enrich knowledge that can be of some help for decision takers and makers responsible for educational planning and management. The proposed results of the study may open new avenues for educational change and reform. Such results may also be of great help in using new knowledge to show problems relating to scientific research in general, and educational research in particular.

Methodology:

The descriptive/ analytical method was used by authors as it is theoretically and analytically relevant to the study. A considerable number of researches and studies being carried out in a numbers of colleges of education in the Arab Universities were consulted and critically analyzed.

Definitions of Terms:

Educational Research (ER):

It is one of scientific research fields that deals with educational issues and problems for the sake of finding out proper and appropriate solutions for them. It is equally concerned with educational policy design, besides making available all necessary information and data for the purpose of right decision making ⁽²⁾.

Operationally, the term is used by both authors to stand for the study of the realities of (ER) in colleges of educational (CE) in Arab Universities, beside, highlighting the main obstacles facing educational research in general. It is assumed that it obstacles and problems have been closely analyzed and diagnosed, chances of solutions and improvement may increase.

Theoretical framework and previous Studies:

Having explored a considerable number of Arab researches and studies, some weaknesses can be pointed out, as far as the Arab educational research is concerned:

1. The complete absent of a national research map. There is no a clear- cut policy for educational research that can enable research centres and universities to tabulize research fields to control their implementation. There are no strategies that can control research priorities according to the needs, problems, and demands of the society. In addition to that, there is the problem of research repetition, because the choice of research is left to researcher`s personal moods ⁽³⁾.
2. The lack of originally and creativity in Arab educational researches, although, Arab countries vary here in some way or another. Done researches may be described as a repetition of other`s with same minor alterations. They add very little to knowledge, for the simple reason that researchers may be not able to give complete interpretation of their research results, or even its main indicators. It, for this reason, remains less significant and limited in scope ⁽⁴⁾.
3. Many master and ph.D dissertations and theses can be described as sheer reptition of foreign research tools which are in fact in variance with Arab faiths and values.



Research, therefore, is completely cut off and alienated from the history, philosophy, and sociology of the Arab society ⁽⁵⁾.

4. Most of educational researches are not related to specific schools of thought, no deep enough, their results are not sufficiently documented or properly interpreted. They are scattered and not related to specific schools of thought ⁽⁶⁾.

5. (ER) is far from studying the real and existing problem in the field of education. They are more academic than to be realistic. Researchers in the Arab world are not able to free themselves from the Western influence in respect of sources and methodology of research. Assuming that educational research can have the means to treat concrete societal problems, that will only take place in a partial and disconnected context or framework. Thus, the role of research will be the reconstruction of society rather than its change and development ⁽⁷⁾.

6. Most concern and attention are given to quantitative research, whereas qualitative research is neglected most of the time. University staff members consider their published research a personal matter regardless of societal needs and development. Research for many is just a means of promotion. Published research, being a requirement of promotion, staff members tend to divide a single research into different sections and be submitted as different research papers. For the university staff

members to do real and useful research, he or she has to affiliate himself of herself to a particular school of thought that can control his or her objectives and lines of research⁽⁸⁾.

7. University staff members are not cooperative enough, and for that reason there is a lack of collective or collaborative research. This applies to levels of universities, country or the whole region. There is a necessity for collaborative research as many of the educational problems require integration of efforts, cooperation and coordination between different disciplines. This is also the problem of excessive use of statistics in analyzing data and information. Statistical analysis of data alone is not enough unless it is coupled with the researcher's own knowledge in the domain of study, beside, the philosophy and foundations of education. This may be of great help to the researcher with regard to results analysis and interpretation ⁽⁶⁾.

Obstacles of Educational research:

1. Under estimating the value of educational research: Some Arab countries have not come up yet to realize the real value of educational research. Therefore, they do not do enough to empower and facilitate whatever it needs. It is degraded by some countries as a waste of money and time. Such situation results in adverse consequences on research.

2. Poor funding: Even in cases where there is a concern about educational research, there is also the problem of financing and funding for research projects. Funds allocated for research do not exceed in better conditions 2% of the budget of the unit concerned. Such situation led some researchers to seek financing from non-academic sectors, which had a sizable and damaging effect on research quality and credibility.
3. Administrative Corruption: it is continuously observed that there is a widespread administrative corruption in many official sectors. That is to say, the researcher seeking funding of his research from such agencies is compelled to engage some personnel's of these agencies into his research activities, despite he does not need that, in order to ensure the required funds to carry out his research. Administrative corruption may also take the form of bribery. In some cases, the researchers is abed to submit his or her research proposal with an estimation of funds required, but after a while the researcher will be surprised to know that his ideas were given to a particular researcher or a group. Such practice s undoubtedly considered an act of bias and far from the principles of transparency.
4. Confidentiality of statistics: In some cases, researcher does not have access to some official data or statistics for the so – called "Security reasons". This is not in any way

- justified as long as the research can have such information from foreign agencies such as the international bank or any other international organizations.
5. Difficulties of getting information: Such problems are more obvious in some governmental units which internationally disable researchers to get the right information they need. Some other units tend to censor or hide some internet sites.
 6. Difficulties of field works: There are a lot of difficulties that holds up field research such mistrust and doubt of gate keepers of prisons or hospitals.
 7. Lack of scientific sources: Some researchers considerably suffer from the lack and scarcity of scientific sources like books, references and scientific essays, this is beside, the disability of some researchers to make use of the electronic sources, either they do know how to benefit from them, or these sources are not made available.
 8. Researchers are not serious enough: The topics treated by some researchers do not touch on crucial uses due to their fear from security authorities.
 9. Purposes of Research: Most of universities staff members at colleges of education carry out research for promotions purposes regardless of its scientific importance or societal needs for it.

10. Research papers on the shelf: Most of the research, particularly academic ones, is not properly made use of, and instead it remains useless on library shelves. This is considered to be a waste of time and money.
11. Frustration of the researcher: Some researchers, either to their being not serious enough, or become of frustration and pressure on their part for various reasons. For these reasons, they do care much about the quality of research on one hand, or leave it to be carried out by others from within. Such difficulties and hindrances need to be seriously dealt with on the part of those who are responsible for research for the sake of more developments in research producers in addition to making research funds available as it is the care in the developed countries⁽⁹⁾.

Al-Ibraheemi ⁽¹⁰⁾: asserts that the Arab countries come at the bottom of countries in respect of financing education research. A great share of financing in higher education is also directed towards infrastructures rather than to scientific research itself. Most of the efforts exerted are only limited to governmental research centres, universities, and research centres. It is distinctively obvious that the role of private sectors in financing research is far less than expected. Universities, on the other hand, concentrate much on teaching rather than on research. Staff members spend most of their time on teaching, and never have time to spare on research, and, in addition to teaching huge members



of students. For such reasons, it is no supervising to observe that the link between research plans in the universities and development requirements is very weak and fragile. Research is completely alienated from the producing units in private sectors. That is the reason shy researchers are seldomly deprived from private sectors` funding ⁽¹¹⁾. University libraries are desperately poor, and therefore, the researcher does not have access to references and periodals he needs. This also leads to the absence of coordination and cooperation between universities even in the same country, leave alone other Arabian Universities. Numbers of researchers are low and less than expected. There are only 2.0% researches in comparison with every 10 thousand of population. Such percentage is extremely low if compared with the number of researcher in other developed countries to all that there is a number of other factors that affect and hinder research in colleges of education. In particular and universities in general such as: Poor funding, irrehabilitated libraries, laboratories, unviability of skilled human cadres, insufficiency of computer services, miscommunication between universities in the Arab world, the lack of innovative research and technology, and the weak link between universities and the producing sectors in the Arab world, which in turn leads to reliance on foreign assistance and consequently to technological dependence ⁽¹²⁾.

Studies, done recently, show that in Jordan 238 master and ph.D dissertations and theses were executed. The number of master dissertation is estimated to higher than male ones. It has also been observed that the descriptive analytic method and its associated tools namely, the questionnaire has been widely used ⁽¹³⁾. Conducted a research on educational and psychological research in the Arab world. They both concluded and observed: The absence a clear-cut policy for educational research, unavailability of sufficient data bases, scarcity of research cadres, weak interaction between educational research and the educational system as a whole, poor research producers and consumers, ineffectiveness research results with regard to educational practice. The research also reveals all sorts of problems facing research in educational research in Qatar University namely the absence of a clear plans and policies that can manage and control research. It has also observed that research is only carried out for personal purposes sometimes. Above all, researchers generally abstain from doing research for the before mentioned reasons.

Al-Assaf ⁽¹⁴⁾: Research on "A suggested vision" for link between educational research and the Palestinian educational policy making: A way out of the ordinary. The study aimed at realizing the main factors that contribute to the gap between educational

research, and the Palestinian educational policy. The study also aimed at highlighting the adverse consequences of that gap. For this purpose, the researcher used the descriptive method ending with a suggested model to bridge that gap. The model was designed to include a number of strategies with clear and specific producers. The idea was to link educational research plans with development plans and social demands, besides forging link with the private sector. Moreover, attention to be paid to integration and coordination of efforts exerted by higher education institution. Development of financial resources which are necessary for supporting educational research in all higher education institutions. Attention and care should be given to human resources development and building a data base for more real research and development. Research and development outputs need to be measured in a way that reflects their interaction with the existing educational realities and situations. It is also recommended that research terms should be encouraged. Master and ph.D degree programmes need to be expanded.

Matanios ⁽¹⁵⁾: Carried out a study which aimed at realizing the obstacles facing social scientific research in the Arab world. The main results of the study are as follows:

The main problem facing staff members in colleges of education in Damascus and Halab is the acute shortage and scarcity of new references in both Arabic and English languages, beside the insufficiency of electronic services. There are no catalogues and indexes for educational research titles.

Haddad ⁽¹⁶⁾ : in his study tries to identify the common problems facing educational research in some Arab countries by reviewing and analyzing some researches and studies carried out in these countries. The study concludes with ten common problems facing educational research: difficulties of publication procedures, there is no clear policy guiding research, the weekly heavy teaching load. Poor research finding, lack of well-trained research cadres. In sufficient coordination between educational research institution in the same country and other countries. The absence of private sectors participation in joint research projects. Data bases are not available in most of Arab countries.

Deeraini Study ⁽¹⁷⁾ : aimed at identifying the realities of educational research in colleges of education and way in which it can be improved. The study has come up with main following results: 8 university staff member simply carry out research for the sake of academic promotion. The delay in publishing research at 86% percentage. 16.4% for

weak research skills of staff members. 83.19% of information see that the best way to encourage and promote research is to enhance publication procedures.

Results of the study:

1. Arab countries come at the bottom of world countries with regard to educational research.
2. A great deal of financing of higher education goes to infrastructures and not scientific research in general and education research in particular.
3. The absence of private sector role in research and development processes in the Arab world and its less participation in funding research.
4. Links between scientific research plans in (CE) in Arab universities and development requirements in all field is considerably weak or even do not exist.
5. Less care is given to the Arab researcher and his welfare.
6. A scientific atmosphere needs to be created in university environments which are free of bureaucracy and routine.
7. The absence of a clear-cut policies and scientific strategies that can control aims and priorities of research.
8. There are no clear modern trends for educated research in colleges of education in Arab countries.
9. There is no close link between colleges of education and development in Arab countries.
10. The absence of consultation in situations to implement of finding of educational research.

Recommendations:

1. There is a need for designing strategy for educational research that can be adapted to the development strategy in Arab countries.
2. More financial support for educational research institution in ways such as increasing the share of research in the national income of the state.
3. Efforts should be exerted to build a comprehensive data base for the benefit of researchers of all discoveries, and good quality research inside and outside universities.
4. Multi sector consultative committees should be delegated to specify research priorities in the light of present needs.
5. Performance indicators development is of utmost importance for researchers and research institutions. Such indicators also need to be reviewed and checked annually through reports sent regularly to the ministry of higher educations or the higher council of scientific research.
6. University policies also need to be reviewed with an aim of recruiting more graduates to fill in rare specializations according the requirements of social and economic development.
7. Universities should be the source of all consultations to the state regarding all research disciplines.
8. More attention and care for Arab researchers and improving their welfare to be fully involved in real research.

9. Colleges of education, being the key to the development of the whole society, environment of learning should be more attractive to ensure good and useful performance.
10. Arab states should do what they can to stop or at least to lessen immigration of "Brain" by providing the necessities of life for them.

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