

Evidence Based Policy in Higher Education: Current Practices and Future Trends in MENA

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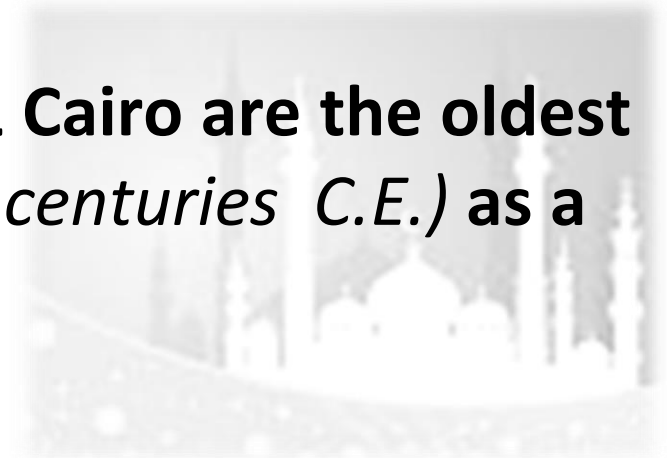
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Content

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- **Internationalization of Arab universities (in collaboration with EU)**
- **Euro-Arab cooperation for HE development: New Trends**
- **Supportive initiatives: where we are?**
- **Evidence-based Policy making in MENA HE**

Status of Arab Universities

- **Kairouan and Al-Azhar Universities in Tunisia & Cairo are the oldest universities in the world (*in the 8th and the 10th centuries C.E.*) as a centers for Islamic law studies and theology**
- **Modern HE in the Arab world traced back to colonial and missionary universities in the early 19th century, with limited access**
- **In the 20th century, HE in the region has grown dramatically and has experienced many changes**



Status of Arab Universities

Challenges of HE in the MENA region:

- **Finance, management and governance**
- **Brain drain** → *international careers abroad or rewarding activities locally*
- **Unemployment**
 - Mismatch between education systems and the skills/ competences & qualifications needed for the job market;
 - Outdated/ irrelevant curricula to job market needs
 - Poor quality programs with weak assessment
- **Numbers of students** → bringing down the quality of education ≠ governments' efforts for better infrastructures and funding
- **Availability and accessibility**
- **Lack of research, publication, and innovation**



Status of Arab Universities

Challenges of HE in the MENA region:

- Low levels of **student** with weak involvement and **scientific mobility**
- **Security** and **academic freedom** → Arab spring and the turbulent disrupted universities; causation or results?...
 - Promote HE → improve many issues related to the development and stability in ' country
- **Entrepreneurship** and **innovation** needed to be promoted in HE
- **ICT** in administration, teaching and research??
- More **new universities** to meet this ever-increasing demand/ increase the # of students in the available universities



Internationalization of Arab universities in collaboration with EU

New trends in HE are evident, including:

- **Steering forces of globalization;**
- **Increase access;**
- **Gender equality;**
- **Quality of education... *Only 5 Arab universities are among the top 500,***
Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), 2015
- **Accumulate focused improvements → high quality education to graduate citizens for the job market**
- **Top 2 fields in demand across the Middle East are health care, and information technology and telecommunications?!**
Monster Employment Index, March 2016



Internationalization of Arab universities in collaboration with EU

New trends in HE are evident, including:

- **Reform Universities in the region → to operate more soundly and effectively.**
 - **Private universities flourish → competition?!**
 - **New patterns and methods of education such as open and distance education in addition to education through the Internet and other new technologies...**
- Continuous evaluation of the educational system and methodologies.**

Internationalization of Arab universities in collaboration with EU

New trends in HE are evident, including:

- **New format for HEIs:**

- **BRANCH CAMPUSES: 55 in ' Arab countries:** United Arab Emirates (33), Qatar (11) *U.S. News and World Report Education*
- **New Private Universities in collaboration with EU universities:** GUC; BUE; UFE; RUE; IUE;
- **New Universities in PARTNERSHIP with EU universities:**
- **Dual (Joint/ Double) Degree programs:** e.g. 12 programs with German universities in Egypt



EU Initiatives

- Bologna & EHEA
- Erasmus +
- Tuning



By 2020, 20% of the European degree-holders → graduate with an international educational experience as part of their curriculum...

What is the set criteria in Africa and MENA region?!



Internationalization of Arab universities in collaboration with EU

- **Bologna process is the common platform at the EU side... With NO common ground at MENA side!**
- **Areas of collaborations including descriptions of the current developments and future possibilities in the areas of**
 - **Internationalization,**
 - **Mobility: Faculty mobility, student exchange and free moving students and international engagement**
 - **Comparability of educational systems,**
 - **Research,**
 - **Doctorial education and**
 - **employability.**

Evidence-based Policy making in MENA HE

- The need to take **politics** out of universities, which should remain reservations of knowledge diffusion and research
- **Universities**: The role of the universities to be innovative and responsive to the economic and social needs of their countries and populations
- **Societies**: Universities should not be looked at as a separate entity but as part of larger system of innovation and knowledge diffusion. They should become a forefront to fully penetrate the knowledge economy



Evidence-based Policy making in MENA HE

- **Government:** funding, quality assurance, accessibility, graduates
- **Universities:** MENA university policy makers puts modernization HEI, internationalization and quality assurance reforms in the top 5 of the most important priorities
- **Scholars:**
 - Competence based Curricula;
 - Faculty Development
 - Assessments system (Student & Faculty);
 - Students engagement;



Evidence-based Policy making in MENA HE

Other Considerations:

- **Balanced in internationalization: sufficient opportunities to both incoming and outgoing students, maintaining high standards → innovative approaches!**
- **Mobility:**
 - South-South
 - North-South: Students & scholars
- **Sandwich courses allowing students to spend time in the workplace were needed, along with systems to evaluate lecturers and encourage them to update their knowledge**
- **financial support to students to access private institutions**





Thank YOU!

