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**Firas Kadhim Hassooni**  
Lecturer, Directorate General  
of Education in Najaf,  
Ministry of Education, Iraq

## Enhancing the effectiveness of the Iraqi educational system and the possibility of benefiting from pioneering experiences

**Firas Kadhim Hassooni**

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### Abstract

Education is the real key to renaissance and development, and it is the real solution to most of the problems that developing and underdeveloped countries suffer from. Education is the starting point on which advanced peoples have relied to achieve their renaissance. Among the leading models in the field of educational renaissance in the world today is the Swiss, Singaporean, and Finnish experience, which has become global models for adopting a quality system in education. According to local and international studies, research, and reports, the educational and learning reality in public education in Iraq faces many challenges and problems in the various educational and learning components. The most notable of these are the lack of school buildings, the requirement that curricula be reviewed on a regular basis, the inadequate preparation of educational and teaching bodies, and the outdated nature of teaching methods. Apart from the necessity of examining educational laws and other issues and difficulties. The issue of school buildings is becoming more prevalent every year as a result of ongoing construction that is not keeping up with actual demand, rising population proportions, and an increase in the number of students enrolling in schools, which has led to the Ministry of Education's requirement for (9,000) buildings. Regarding the traditional nature of teaching methods, many of our schools still rely on the techniques of memorization, indoctrination, and retrieval of information upon request, in addition to another aspect that involves following the prevalent patterns in lessons, exams, etc. This is despite the tremendous advancements in technology, the digital revolution, educational strategies, the explosion of knowledge, and scientific transformations. In terms of the curriculum, which is regarded as one of the three pillars of the educational process along with the teacher and the student and requires ongoing review in accordance with a precise scientific system, we find that up until recently, the majority of educational institutions relied on the outdated concept of the curriculum, which was defined as the textbook's content alone. However, the current concept is based on adopting additional curriculum elements, such as objectives, teaching strategies, activities, and evaluation techniques, in addition to the textbook's content. Additionally, the current curricula must adapt to meet the needs of the industry. The study drew upon the experiences of Switzerland, Singapore, and Finland and profited from it to improve the efficacy of the Iraqi educational system.

**Keywords:** Enhancing the effectiveness, educational system, pioneering experiences

### Introduction

Educational institutions, especially university ones, are a cultural, intellectual and scientific center. The function of these institutions lies in behavioral and scientific-material aspects, such as building generations and developing scientific and cultural awareness in society. And before that, in teaching science and ways of thinking to students, providing research and studies, and developing science and technology in a way that contributes to the development of human life. That is why it was given the guise of being a safe sanctuary, and special attention was given to it.

### Research problem

#### The research raises the following questions

- Is the reason for the deterioration in education due to failure to apply quality standards, or failure to take into account market requirements the job?

**Corresponding Author:**  
**Firas Kadhim Hassooni**  
Lecturer, Directorate General  
of Education in Najaf,  
Ministry of Education, Iraq

- Are quality standards different from labor market standards and requirements? What is the relationship between quality management and taking into account labor market requirements in education?
- Is the education dilemma in Iraq a complex phenomenon?

These questions express the research problem that the research is trying to uncover in order to come up with proposals to overcome it, mitigate it, or direct attention towards it.

### Research objectives

Talking about the role of the university in serving society, and talking about the quality of education at a university, requires knowing two issues: the outcomes of university education, and the community's needs from the university. The criterion for whether there is a consistent relationship between the two issues is the extent to which universities apply agreed-upon standard specifications, which makes them competitive. A defect in this relationship indicates that there is a defect in one or more of the following: university work systems, a defect in university leadership, a defect in curricula... so that there is no consistent relationship. For example, the university develops specializations that society does not need or needs to a limited extent. This causes: waste and loss of available resources (financial, time, and human resources, including scientific competencies and smart students). Inability to gain the trust of those who benefit from university outcomes (research and development, scientific publishing, consulting, graduate students,). The research seeks to do the following:

- Diagnosing the role of each quality element and its impact on the other.
- Suggesting ways that are believed to reduce the effects of the phenomenon of education deviating from its goals and address it.

### Research hypothesis

To achieve this, the research assumes the following: The quality of education is the product of the balanced relationship between the curriculum and the requirements of the labor market, and the decline of education is a result of scientific corruption.

The research adopted an inductive approach to prove or refute its hypothesis.

### The first section the experiences of the leading educational systems in the world

#### First: Switzerland

Switzerland is a federal state, consisting of (26) semi-independent provinces (cantons) united by a federal union. Switzerland was a confederation between 1291-1848 and was transformed into a federation, although its official name remains (the Swiss Confederation). The capital of Switzerland is the city of Bern, but in practice Switzerland has three capitals: Bern is the federal capital, Geneva is the political capital, and Zurich is the economic capital, and it is a global economic capital.

Switzerland has paid attention to education and the scientific and cognitive aspects, due to the lack of natural resources it has. Both education and knowledge have become very important resources for it. So it claims to have one of the best education systems in the world. In its report on

education in 2012 - according to data from the Economy Information Unit - Pearson Educational Services ranked the Swiss education system ninth globally among the best educational systems in the world in terms of cognitive skills and educational attainment. Switzerland ranked first in the world in the field of creativity, according to the global Creativity Report issued by Cornell University, INSEAD Business School, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), an international organization affiliated with the United Nations, in 2013.

Swiss students also ranked eighth in the world in mathematics with 534 points in the International Student Assessment Program (PISA), which is conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development every three years, and also ranked fourteenth in reading with an average score of 501, and they ranked fifteenth in science. With 517 points, in the fourth session of the Pisa tests that took place in 2009.

The state bears responsibility for education from the beginning of its compulsory stage until the university level (higher institutes and higher vocational training). The Swiss Confederation and the cantons share competencies in this field. Since 2006, the two partners have been kept together, within the framework of their competences and based on the new constitutional basis, to ensure the high quality of education in Switzerland and the possibility of access to it (Article 61 (a) of the Constitution). Responsibility for post-compulsory education (general training, vocational training and higher education) is shared between the Swiss Confederation and the cantons, and each party has its own special competencies. In addition, in most cantons it is compulsory to attend pre-school institutions for one or two years. The public education system is free. The cantons and their municipalities finance (83) per cent of education expenses borne by public authorities.

Most students complete their compulsory education in public schools in the municipalities in which they reside. About 5 percent of them attend private schools (situation in 2015). Public schools play an essential role in integration, as the children who attend them belong to different social, linguistic or cultural backgrounds. After compulsory education, approximately two-thirds of young people choose vocational training that combines theoretical lessons with applied practice (dual initial training), it ends with obtaining a Federal Certificate of Proficiency or a Federal Vocational Training Certificate. Initial vocational training can also culminate in obtaining a vocational secondary education completion certificate. About a third of young people choose formal education (general knowledge school or secondary education school) that prepares them for postgraduate studies (specialized higher institutes, higher institutes of educational sciences, universities and multidisciplinary federal technical institutes). About 95 percent of young people obtain a certificate of completion of the second stage of education. Secondary. This certificate allows them to start their professional life directly or to join higher vocational institutes, or, in the event that they obtain a certificate of completion of general, specialized or vocational secondary education, the possibility of continuing their education in higher institutes. The overall passing rate for the secondary school leaving certificate (maturité) examination is above 37% (2015 situation). Obtaining this certificate is a generally required condition for studying at Swiss universities.

Higher education consists of higher institutes (specialized higher institutes, higher institutes of educational sciences, universities, and multidisciplinary federal technical institutes) as well as higher vocational training. This second essential component of higher education is aimed at experienced professionals and allows them to specialize or enhance their qualifications. It includes training courses in specialized higher institutes or passing a test organized at the federal level (the professional test or the higher professional test). The percentage of the population holding a postgraduate diploma is 52 percent, of which graduates of higher institutes constitute 35 percent, graduates of higher vocational training institutes constitute 14 percent, and graduates of both fields constitute 3 percent (the situation in 2015).

In addition, continuing training for professional purposes (non-formal training such as training courses, seminars, etc.) is available at every level of training and forms part of the lifelong learning path.

The Swiss education system is currently undergoing a large-scale development process, in addition to the implementation of the (Harmos) project, an agreement between the cantons to harmonize compulsory education - in some cantons - as the latter has worked to reform their educational systems beyond the compulsory education stage as well, as the scope of national structures has been expanded. The introduction of the graduation examination for the vocational secondary stage and colleges of applied sciences. It is noted that the demand for education has increased and the importance of general education schools has increased.

### **The most important features of the Swiss education system**

**Ease of joining:** There are several ways to join a college or a training program, or to transfer to one of them, or to attend a program, or to catch up with the students enrolled in it.

There is freedom of access to various types of education in Switzerland- In general, any person can enroll in any educational program he chooses, as long as he possesses the necessary qualifications, and has the freedom to choose the university he wants. Qualification and vocational training are subject to some restrictions, due to the restrictions imposed on the preparation of... Students in some professional fields, and there are also restrictions on access to medical degrees at the university to some extent.

**Languages:** The languages of instruction vary depending on the regions and the languages spoken in them. They may be German, French, Italian, or Romansh, although the Romansh-speaking communities constitute a special case. It is known that language learning plays an important role in Switzerland, as students in the compulsory education stage today learn at least two additional languages in most cantons, one of which is English and the other is one of the other languages spoken in Switzerland.

**Achieving harmony and harmony:** Thanks to the decentralized federal organization structure in compulsory education (including kindergarten), it was possible to find appropriate solutions to the issue of cultural differences in a country with multiple languages and school traditions according to the region. The Swiss Constitution guarantees harmony and harmony between all the cantons in terms of

the age at which the child begins attending school, the compulsory stage, the duration of the stages of education, their objectives, and the transition from one stage to another, as the basis on which the implementation of this constitutional obligation is based was laid by the cantons in the form of a new agreement between them. It is called (the Agreement on Consistency and Harmony in Compulsory Education).

**Focus on scientific research:** Research and development is an important factor for developing a national economy in Switzerland. Switzerland is classified among the countries most oriented towards research and development in the world, as it spends 2.87% of its gross domestic product in this field. Switzerland spent approximately 16.3 billion Swiss francs on research and development locally.

The stable and comfortable social situation in Switzerland and the strong demand for consumption helped advance scientific research in service fields, such as medicine, pharmacy, hospitality, and communications, and led to the systematic establishment of an education system.

It combines deep theoretical research with high-quality technical sciences. The educational system in Switzerland is famous, in addition to the above, for discipline, scientific accuracy, and excellence in specific specializations, such as pharmacy, chemistry, biology, biotechnology, and physics.

As a reminder, there are many medicines that were discovered and manufactured in Swiss laboratories equipped with the latest methods and are widely spread in public and private educational institutions and distributed throughout the country. Zurich, Basel, Lausanne, and Geneva are among the most important research centers.

One of the factors that attract foreign students is the unique flexibility in using languages, as the researcher can use any of the three national languages (German, French, and Italian) or English, in addition to the availability of training opportunities in many local and international institutions. Switzerland is home to the main headquarters of specialized international agencies and organizations, such as the World Trade Organization, the Intellectual Property Organization, the International Center for Wireless Communications, and the World Trade Center.

### **Second: Singapore**

Singapore has witnessed a tremendous transformation in less than 50 years from a poor island with no natural resources and inhabited by an illiterate majority to a country whose living standards are comparable to those of its counterparts in the major, most developed industrial countries. In the recently released 2014 Pearson report on the best education systems in the world in terms of cognitive skills and educational attainment, Singapore, with a population of 5.5 million, ranked third in the world, behind South Korea and Japan, after Singapore was fifth in the same Pearson classification in 2012.

Through its findings, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) confirmed that Singapore has a high-quality educational system, with advantages that other systems can learn from. These characteristics include: highly qualified teachers and managers and strong leaders who are daring with long-term visions. The strong link between education and economic development, as well as between policy and implementation. The curricula are well prepared with

standards consistent with modern teaching methods, measurement and evaluation. The organization pointed out the importance of measurement and evaluation values that support an educational system with a global orientation and future vision. The country's economic needs also played an important role in determining the features of education policy. Because improving education has been considered from the beginning a key strategy for achieving Singapore's ambitious economic goals.

Singapore's record has been full of achievements in international tests and assessments. In the TIMSS 2011 international tests to evaluate and measure global trends in the study of mathematics and science for students in the fourth and eighth grades of basic education, Singapore came in very advanced positions, as fourth-grade students came in first place globally in Mathematics with 606 points, and they won second place in science with an average score of 583 points. Eighth grade students came second in the world in mathematics with 611 points, and won first place in science with an average score of 590 points!

In the Pirls test (Pirls 2011) to measure the progress of fourth-grade students in reading in their mother tongue, Singaporean students ranked fourth in the world with an average score of 567 points. As for the famous Pisa tests of 2012, Singaporean students came second in mathematics with an average score of 573 points, third in science with 551 points, and came third in reading with 542 points globally.

These very advanced results at the world level reflect the progress and development of the level of education in Singapore, the success of its systems and curricula, and the extent of the progress of those responsible for education in this very advanced and developed country, which was reflected in all aspects of life, especially the economic and creative ones. Singapore ranked second in the world after Switzerland in terms of global economic competitiveness,

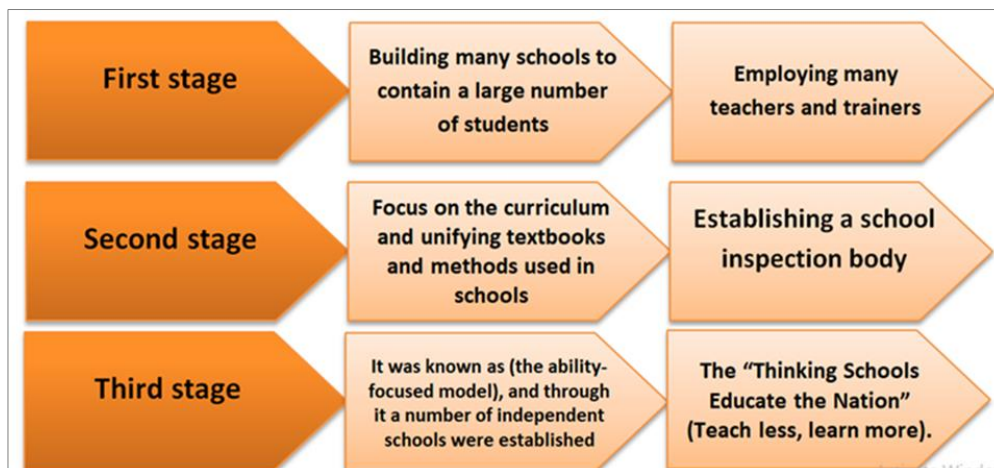
according to the Global Competitiveness Report issued by the World Economic Forum in 2013-2014.

In fact, the story of Singapore's education system is a "very successful" Asian development story. It is nothing short of a miracle. This began in the year of its independence in 1965, when illiteracy dominated a large portion of the citizens, which led to the Singapore government innovating and developing one of the best education systems in the world.

Singapore has succeeded resoundingly in its endeavor to reform and develop its education system, and it is worth mentioning some of the reasons that enabled Singapore to achieve this remarkable success in building a world-class educational system based on a fragile foundation in a short time, as follows:

1. Lee Kuan Yew, the well-known Prime Minister, chose many of the most competent figures in Singapore to work in the government, thus creating a successful, first-class work team to make and implement decisions (many of the civil servants in the Singapore government received their education in the most prestigious universities in the world, and they receive On salaries equivalent to those they could earn in the private sector.
2. Lee Kuan was keen to inform the government of a wide range of leading global experiences and benefit from them before starting to formulate his government's policies, so that Singapore's policy reflects those policies and practices that are the most effective in the world.
3. Lee Quan ensured that his country gave a similar degree of special care to developing wise policies and implementing them carefully and carefully at the same time. Singapore has persevered in these steps.

**The reform of the education system in Singapore went through several stages, which are as follows**



Perhaps there is another factor worth mentioning: Singapore is more cautious than most other countries when adopting new policies. This is to ensure that they are designed to integrate with policies in force on the ground, or that all relevant policies change, so that the effects of these policies and practices reinforce each other in any way, which generates strong and highly effective systems. This is remarkably realistic in the field of education.

When trying to understand Singapore's remarkable success, it is important to remember Singapore's small size; The national education system in Singapore is similar to the

education system in a small city or country, as the number of students does not exceed 522 thousand distributed in 360 schools. This is in addition to the government's ability, in adopting its policies, to allocate sufficient time to examine and evaluate their effects, thanks to stability and broad popular consensus on the purposes of the educational process. The degree of integration between various institutions in Singapore is at a level that is rare on the global level. Singapore is an example of a "tightly coupled" system where senior leaders in the ministry, the National Institute of Education and schools share the burden of

responsibility and accountability. Its unique strength lies in avoiding announcing any educational policy without a clear plan to build the appropriate capabilities for it, and the discrepancy between different schools is almost absent. However, there is variation in performance within one school. The high quality of Singapore's workforce today is the result of deliberate strategies, especially those dating back to the 1990s onwards. Since then, experienced school teachers and educational leaders have been the cornerstone of Singapore's education system and a major reason behind its high-level performance. Singapore selects its teachers from the best third of its school graduates, with only one in eight applicants being accepted into its teacher education programme! Singapore has also developed a comprehensive system for selecting, training, professionally developing, and compensating teachers and principals at the same time, which has contributed to generating tremendous capacity and efficiency in the practice of education. From the beginning, Singapore has viewed education as the cornerstone of nation-building and the national economy. It made it a fuel that feeds human capital to drive economic growth. The government's ability to successfully balance supply and demand for education and skills building is a major source of Singapore's competitive advantage.

A clear vision and deep belief in the critical importance of education for students and the nation alike. Persistent political leadership and alignment of policies and practices; Focusing on building teachers and their leadership capabilities to bring about reforms at the school level. ambitious assessments and standards; A culture built on continuous improvement, and a future vision that judges the success of educational practices by comparing them to the best in the world, are all factors that contributed to shaping Singapore's exceptional success story.

### **Third: Finland**

Finland is located on the outskirts of the European continent. In 1917 it declared its independence from Russia, and in 1995 it joined the European Union. Two languages are used there: Finnish and Swedish, but the first is more widespread and common.

The educational policies that were launched nearly four decades ago had a clear impact on improving the performance of the political system, as they constituted a driving force for Finland's renaissance, development, creativity, and economic success. Over the past decade, Finland has witnessed tremendous developments in the field of education, especially in reading, mathematics, and science. Finland is considered a model country in its educational system. Finnish students have achieved advanced ranks in (15) consecutive years in international studies and tests.

In 2009, the results of (PISA), the international test administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, were released, showing that Finnish students ranked second in science in the world with 544 points, third in reading with 536 points, and sixth in mathematics with 514 points, out of nearly half a million students in the world.

In the TIMES tests, international tests for assessing global trends, Finland ranked eighth, and Finnish students also came in the PEARLS tests, which is an international measurement test that shows the extent of students' progress

in reading in their mother tongue. Finland ranked third with an average of 568 points globally.

Therefore, Finland is considered one of the successful models in the education system, due to its distinguished results in international tests in the field of educational achievement, in addition to the nature of its high equality, as there are no major differences between the level of schools and the levels of their students.

### **The philosophy of the education system in Finland and the mechanism for working on the success of the Finnish experience**

1. The first and most important of these reasons is the child's psychological comfort in school, as it is the place where he spends most of his time. This education system is also available to all students in all regions of Finland for free in schools supported by the government sector. There is no doubt that there are some private schools that do not encourage The government does not give licenses to open them easily, and this confirms the government's interest in the quality of education for all and not investing in their students.
2. The education system in this pioneering country helps to bring the levels of students together by giving everyone opportunities to acquire skills in various subjects such as science, mathematics, reading, and languages, and even with differences in intelligence and skills, the education system has worked to bridge the gap that creates this difference by increasing the skills of all students. Where education begins at the age of seven.
3. The first six years of a child's life are the most important in school and in Finnish education, because it is the period of building knowledge and simple skills, getting used to a life of learning, and acquiring knowledge that will benefit them in the following stages.
4. Compulsory general education is completely free education. Books and stationery are free during this period, except for the secondary stage, where students must pay for the books and stationery. But their admission to universities is free without fees, despite the fact that the budget the state spends is considered average compared to what other countries spend on education.
5. Teachers in Finland maintain the application of the government standard to the curricula without adherence to a written curriculum. The beautiful thing is that the teacher has the right to divide the subject and choose the lessons he wants to teach and the method of teaching according to his desire and his conviction of the importance of the subjects, their comprehensiveness, depth, and preservation of the strong scientific content. This step, of course, can only be done. With the presence of an elite group of distinguished people with graduate studies, in certain stages they must have at least a master's degree, and in some stages they must have a doctorate degree, and the process of teachers choosing what they want to give increases the good, transparent and strong relationship with their students, because this method does not work. It is based on indoctrination, but it pushes the student to research, inquire and discover.

6. There is no academic anxiety in Finland, as there are no tests in the first nine years, but rather a performance evaluation by teachers, and thus the students' confidence in their abilities and themselves increases and does not allow for discrimination between them, and interest in those who fall short increases.
7. At certain stages, tests are conducted by the teachers themselves, and the results remain confidential until requested by the National Education Council, with the sole aim of improving the education mechanism. So, what matters most to them is improving the education process and strengthening its progress, and not grades, success, and university admission, as is the problem of Arab students at the various levels of public education.

**There are a number of reasons that make the education system in Finland the best in the world, which are**  
**Respect for education is part of identity**

The first secret to the strength of the education system in Finland is giving education great importance, respect, and value in society, so that it has become part of their culture since the nineteenth century. The former Minister of Education in Finland summarized this by saying: (This requires 150 years of consolidating respect for education and the teaching profession). Education is sacred in Finland and everyone must respect it.

Schools also enjoy some independence, as local authorities determine the amount of independence that schools enjoy, in terms of dividing students into groups, managing the budget, purchasing and hiring operations, vacations, and determining books and study materials in a way that does not conflict with education policy and its general objectives in Finland.

**It is not easy to be accepted to be a teacher in Finland**

The percentage of those accepted to become basic education teachers in Finland is only 10% of all applicants, due to the difficulty of the criteria set for selecting teachers, as anyone who wishes to become a teacher must have a master's degree in addition to a bachelor's degree.

He must also be characterized by a desire to help, activity, enthusiasm, and a strong desire to practice the teaching profession and to join the courses and training that the government provides to teachers while they practice the profession. This sacred profession needs the right person who will attain this status, sanctity, and professional independence as well.

**Fewer working hours and more rest**

This includes both students and teachers, as the number of teaching hours for a teacher is 4 hours a day and 20 a week, and students have about 75 minutes a day to play and rest during school hours, which reduces the burden of studying and increases their desire to come to school and receive knowledge comfortably. The curriculum in Finland also depends on content and understanding, as it is concerned with quality, not quantity, given to students.

It is worth noting that there are no national tests for students in the basic education stage, but rather assessment is carried out continuously during the academic year with the aim of guiding and assisting them in learning and not for the purpose of evaluation and classification.

**There is no discrimination between students based on educational level**

This means that low-achieving students are not isolated. On the contrary, they receive special attention by encouraging them, bringing them closer to the outstanding students, and receiving additional assistance from teachers to catch up with their outstanding classmates. The Foundation for Economic Cooperation and Development conducted a study that found that Finland is first in the world in terms of the small gap between the highest and lowest achieving students.

**The strength of the relationship between teacher and students**

The same teacher stays with his students for several years, and this strengthens the relationship between him and them, and enables him to know the personality, needs, and level of each student, and deal with him on this basis, especially since the number of students in the classroom does not exceed 20 students only, and thus each student receives care and attention. Caffeine.

**Equality among all students**

Equality is the most important word in education in Finland, as there is no difference in the quality of education between one school and another, or between a countryside and a city, or on the basis of class or political differences. Education is far from that, and it is also far from commercialization, as Funding for education is obtained from the public, from local authorities and municipal councils, and is then distributed equally among all schools in the various regions.

**Increase in the percentage of people entering the university**

Finland ranks first in Europe, and is superior to the United States of America in terms of the high percentage of people entering universities by up to 93%, even though this is not imposed on them.

**Therefore, the Finnish educational system aims to achieve a set of goals, the most prominent of which is**

- Making education a pleasure that every person aspires to attain, instead of it being a burden imposed on them.
- Giving every student his right to education, and taking into account individual differences among learners, so that students with special needs receive assistance and support that will enable them to catch up with other students.
- Preparing students and developing their ability to solve problems that they may face in their lives by teaching them the correct way of thinking.
- Providing students with the correct citizenship values and competencies.
- Providing students with a sense of responsibility, tolerance, and teamwork, and training them to respect different societies and cultures.
- Developing students' self-evaluation, so that each student is able to know what knowledge and skills he has learned, and how he can learn on his own.

**The second section**

**The effectiveness of education in Iraq, challenges and mechanisms**

The education climate is witnessing unprecedented changes in the era of the knowledge revolution in the third millennium, represented by the growing rates of demand for education services, the increasing academic mobility of students and professors, academic programs and their governance, and the diversity of patterns, methods and technology of teaching and learning. The process of transitioning to knowledge societies requires belief in the concept of lifelong learning and the necessity of constantly reconsidering educational materials, programs and university specializations to keep pace with the accelerating scientific breakthroughs in all specializations, with the current focus on communications and information technology programs as a support element for the rest of the sciences. Scientific research is considered the basic building block for innovation and economic and social development. Without it, knowledge and civilizational construction cannot be completed. It is the urgent need to build and develop societies and find solutions to their service and development problems.

The reality of the state of Arab education in general and Iraqi education in particular, in all its sectors, requires comprehensive reform, and must be dealt with scientifically, without favoritism or ignoring the truth. The current reality of higher education and its suffering is its inability to secure the appropriate human and cognitive capital for society and prepare it with qualified individuals who have high academic, professional and cultural skills in a way that is compatible with the needs of society and the labor market.

Its failure in the areas of innovation, inventions, scientific discoveries, and governance is due to the decline in scientific research programs, the weakness in the level of training and time management, as well as the decline in general culture and professional behavior.

The main tasks of Iraqi higher education were to prepare academic seats for post-preparatory stage, in various academic, vocational and technical specializations, taking into account the continuous annual increase due to population growth, which was considered a contribution to achieving cognitive, social, cultural and economic development.

Given the great demand for the higher education sector; Rapid horizontal and vertical growth has emerged in this sector over the past fifteen years, which is evident in the increasing number of governmental and private universities and colleges and in the number of academic specializations offered by these universities, which have now reached 35 governmental and 62 private non-educational institutions in the Kurdistan region .

The other growth indicator is the continuous increase in the number of students in higher education institutions, which in 2017 reached about 913,652 male and female students, at all levels of education, for primary and postgraduate studies, and for various public and private universities. But unfortunately, with many qualitative and quantitative challenges witnessed by higher education and scientific research, indicators of unemployment of those with university degrees, both primary and higher, have appeared. To be a negative factor added to many challenges related to scientific, financial, administrative and other axes. The quantitative, unplanned growth in student numbers has in many cases negatively affected the quality of higher education in general. Therefore, many calls have emerged to conduct diagnostic studies and studies examining the causes

of the problems and with the aim of finding solutions to the serious challenges that affect the system and outcomes of higher education.

### **First: The challenges facing the education system in Iraq**

Through monitoring the education system and its affiliated institutions, the challenges facing it were identified, which can be classified as follows:

**1. Increased demand for higher education:** The demand for higher education has increased significantly in the past sixteen years, which has led, on the one hand, to creating a burden on higher education institutions, especially on public universities, and on the other hand, has led to a call to allow the establishment of private universities. Accordingly, new public and private colleges and universities were created by the Ministry of Higher Education to meet these requirements. In addition, a parallel private government education program was implemented. To be a financial source added to government funding. To overcome the shortage in financial resources for universities and give them the authority to spend them within specific sections, leading to an increase in the absorptive capacity for admission to primary and postgraduate studies. The expansion of admission to private and parallel education will limit the tendency of middle school graduates to study outside Iraq.

**2. Lack of orientation towards technical education:** The labor market in Iraq suffers from a clear inflation in the number of graduates of academic universities and a shortage of skilled and competent technical personnel who hold diplomas. This problem has many developmental, economic and educational aspects that can be summarized as follows:

- A.** The absence of the primary goal of establishing the Technical Institutes Corporation, in 1969, or the Technical Institutes Corporation later, which became a technical education body and eventually technical universities, in supplying society and the labor market with a skilled human workforce required for the middle class of professions, at the employment level (electrical technicians, mechanical technicians, technicians Laboratories...etc.) or at the service level (accounting and administrative assistants, programmers, etc.).
- B.** The dominance of negative social values regarding vocational and technical education and the absence of incentives to properly guide students towards this type of education. Most technical institutes have become, for many of their students, a means of transition to university studies. Students who are not accepted into universities, due to their low grades in ministerial exams or because they are graduates of vocational schools, spend two years in one of the technical institutes, and then seek to change their studies to obtain university degrees related to their specialty.
- C.** Decrease in demand for vocational and technical education due to leniency in university admission requirements. This measure encouraged students who obtain low averages in middle school to resort to university studies instead of resorting to technical institutes.
- D.** Most technical institutes suffer from the poverty and obsolescence of their curricula and laboratories, due to

their failure to keep pace with scientific and technological progress, and the lack of coordination with market requirements and the inability to attract qualified teachers who are in touch with developments in the world of technology, and their limited independence, poor planning and management, limited financial resources, and their lack of understanding of the concepts of quality. .

Based on statistics from the Ministry of Higher Education; The number of students in the Technical Education Authority in the academic year 2005/2006 constituted only 17.7% of the total number of students in higher education institutions for morning study. Note that the percentage of students accepted into the body to the total number of students accepted into higher education institutions in the same year is 24.44%, which indicates that approximately 25% of those accepted are not directly employed.

**3. Lack of harmony between the outcomes of higher education and market requirements:** Many factors made it impossible for graduates to enter practical or applied life, or to think about creating a job opportunity, within their specialty, including the following:

- A. Lack of coherence and harmony between the curricula of academic programs and the skills of the outcomes of the educational process.
- B. The absence of an institutional methodology for coordination between higher education outcomes and the changing local and regional market requirements.
- C. Lack of correlation between curricula in certain fields and international accreditation standards such as engineering, information and communications technology, nursing, and accounting.
- D. The current curricula lack educational courses that help develop intellectual skills such as analytical thinking, communication, leadership, and institutional initiatives.
- E. Financial challenges.

### **Second: Mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of the education system in Iraq**

By reviewing several educational experiences in different countries, there are some mechanisms and ideas presented to those responsible for educational affairs that can contribute to the development of education in Iraq. Certainly, the development of education will be in the interest of economic and societal growth, as happened in the experiences of some countries. The most important mechanisms are:

1. Restructuring the basic education system in Iraq in line with the changes taking place in the world; Because the learning and teaching process is not a static process, but rather a dynamic, changing process characterized by flexibility. Changing the Iraqi system depends on giving independence to education directorates, which will contribute greatly to creating competition between the general directorates of education and schools. As well as building a new supervisory system based on the spirit of creativity, working to separate double and triple shifts, and increasing the number of working hours from 4 hours per day to at least 6 hours per day.
2. Retraining and rehabilitating teachers and school principals, provided that training programs in Iraqi universities are under the supervision of competent professors. Delegations of teachers should be sent for

training in South Korea, Japan, Singapore, and Finland instead of sending them to Egypt, Lebanon, and other useless countries. It is necessary for middle school teachers to have at least a master's degree instead of a bachelor's degree. This is due to the importance of this stage. In addition to urging all teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree instead of a diploma held by armies of them, the bachelor's degree should only be granted by Iraqi universities and not from the open colleges run by the Ministry of Education, which are of no use.

3. Establish a new incentive system that motivates teachers and principals; In order to make their best efforts during the education processes; For example: A teacher who achieves a high success rate in public exams receives a scholarship to study a master's degree in Iraqi universities or is given a sum of money. School principals whose schools achieve a high performance rate in exams are also rewarded with sums of money, as happens in America.
4. Shifting from the direct education system that relies on the teacher to present ideas and information to the indirect education system that is centered on the learner by providing him with individual learning, problem-solving, and teamwork skills; All countries that achieved advanced positions in international examinations and developed countries apply the indirect education system.
5. Abolition of the application of the biological and applied system; Because this system is ineffective and is not applied in many developed countries.
6. Canceling the current public exams because they are ineffective exams. Rather, they are exams that only measure the extent of students' ability to memorize content, while international systems have exam systems that measure students' higher skills, challenge their mental abilities, and measure the extent of the student's ability to understand, analyze, and apply study materials.
7. Making major changes in curricula that are no longer appropriate to the spirit of the current era, and focusing on building curricula that care about providing students with new information and ideas that challenge their mental abilities instead of just filling their minds with meaningless information. This is on the one hand, and on the other hand we need curricula. It focuses on ethics in order to build a virtuous society in which a spirit of respect and appreciation prevails among the people, especially after the society has gone through many crises, most notably sectarianism, and urges them to respect and obey systems and laws. We need these curricula because there is a real moral crisis that Iraqi society is suffering from, and these curricula should accompany students to the intermediate stage. The Ministry of Education must take its educational role in promoting correct and sound morals in the hearts of individuals.

### **Conclusion**

The educational and development experiences of these countries cannot be literally applied in Iraq. Because this is a kind of theoretical absurdity and an intellectual and methodological error, but rather a call to study those experiences. In order to stimulate questions and draw attention towards moving the wheel of reforms in Iraqi



education, while applying what is appropriate with our cultural, moral, value and civilizational heritage on the one hand. On the other hand, Iraq came in 20th place in the global intelligence test, superior to all countries in the Middle East. Here the question is: What would happen if this superiority in intelligence was invested in a modern and developed education system in Iraq?

### Suggestions

1. To be developed according to a logical, sequential plan with specific spatial, temporal, and thematic limits, after evaluating previous, and perhaps current, plans prepared in the field of this subject.
2. That the Parliamentary Education Committee develop a monitoring plan for the progress of these aforementioned options to consider the proportions of approaching their implementation, in implementation of the supervisory and legislative role of the Council.
3. Integration, coordination and cooperation of all concerned parties in achieving these methods and options in accordance with fully compatible programmes.
4. Providing all legislative and executive reasons for success.

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