

Regional Conference

Graduate and Postgraduate Programs in Education in Arab Universities: Quality and Added Value

November 1-2, 2013

Beirut, Lebanon

Call for papers

Abstracts submission deadline extended

Conference Rationale

What colleges of education offer at the master and doctoral levels is judged basically upon what added value their programs contribute to the field. In order to make such a contribution, certain quality criteria should be met, such as: qualified faculty, academic resources, and curricula that provide thinking and communication skills, innovation and mastery of academic research methodologies, as well as keeping track of the latest developments in the field.

To what extent these criteria are met? What is the actual situation regarding graduate and post graduate programs in the Arab countries? What do these programs produce and what is the quality of the product? How the organizational framework explains the situation? Are any changes necessary?

Some issues relate to the status of graduate and postgraduate programs offered by universities in Arab countries.

Some other issues relate to the general structure of each program offered, both in its curricular requirements and organizational and administrative structure, whether as compared to other similar programs or in the possibility of reviewing it from a new perspective.

Further issues relate to routine guidelines that regulate the formatting and submission of theses and dissertations, such as documentation, style, referencing, abstracting, and language, among others.

Other issues may also be considered, as to what theses and dissertations have already been submitted, and whether these works are accessible to other researchers in the same institution or across institutions, locally, regionally, and internationally. This dimension includes all archiving aspects.

Moreover, there are issues that relate to research trends within each field of education, since each specialization is rich with its own terminology, developments, main authors, research approaches and methodologies.

Although quality has become complicated, one needs to consider as well issues of quality in Master and PhD in education. The researcher may choose some criteria and examine on the light of which certain number of theses and dissertations, in order to evaluate the quality of research in the field.

Graduate and Postgraduate Programs in Education in Arab Universities: Quality and Added Value

These and many other issues arise when one considers the preparation and submission of theses and dissertations in education in the Arab countries. Papers, presentations and deliberations at the Conference will hopefully shed some light on such issues.

This Conference was conceived in order to provide a platform for issues to be raised and for research papers to provide some answers. These papers will hopefully allow for better understanding of the quality aspects of Master and PhD education programs in the Arab countries and for elaborating perspectives that may help in improving the level of theses and dissertations in education.

Conference Objectives

The conference objectives are:

- To identify issues in scientific research in theses and dissertations.;
- To become acquainted with different models, experiences and approaches used by Arab and foreign universities;
- To determine perspectives on further developing research in education at the masters and doctoral levels;

Abstracts submission **new deadline**

Thursday, February 7, 2013

Participants

This Conference is open for researchers, teaching faculty members, education graduate and postgraduate students.

Organizers

- The Arab Educational Information Network ([Shamaa](#))

Shamaa provides free access to publications in education produced in the Arab countries for specialists and others interested in education, by making these publications available on the Internet. The database includes bibliographic information, abstracts and, when available, full texts, in three languages: Arabic, English and French.

- The Lebanese Association for Educational Studies ([LAES](#))

LAES is a professional, non-political, non-profit organization that aims at developing and disseminating educational knowledge that would contribute to the improvement of educational research in Lebanon and other Arab countries. LAES conducts and organizes research projects, regional and local seminars and conferences, documentation and publication, and networking with similar local, regional, and international associations.

Conference Themes and Topics

1. Graduate and Postgraduate Programs

This theme deals with the variety of graduate and postgraduate programs in colleges of education in the Arab countries. Each institution has its own approach, programs and curriculum. This raises many issues that need to be highlighted and discussed, but not limited to:

- *Admission and graduation requirements*: What are the requirements of admission, promotion and graduation? Who supervises theses and dissertations? What procedures are followed for supervision and defense? Are there any clear, properly documented guidelines about the programs easily available to candidates?
- *Curricula*: what curricula are offered? What are the major courses required for graduation? How often are they reviewed and updated? How do required courses prepare candidates for writing theses and dissertations? What are the teaching methods applied? What research methodologies are taught and applied during a candidate's course of studies? Are there any agreements among institutions for the exchange of resources to provide opportunities for candidates to complete better research?
- *Plagiarism*: Flagrant plagiarism can be detected in some theses and dissertation. Are there different kinds of plagiarism? How wide-spread is this phenomenon in Arab universities? How are plagiarism incidents detected, deterred and/or dealt with?

2. Candidates and Faculty

This theme deals with nature of the relationships between students and their advisors who guide them through the development of their theses and or dissertations. It highlights the qualifications and commitment required by both parties.

The main issues under this theme include:

- *Students*: What are the required qualifications and background of candidates accepted into graduate and postgraduate programs? How does candidate selection take place? How do teaching faculty think about students?
- *Supervisors/Advisors* (members of theses/dissertation defense committees): What qualifications are required from Masters and doctoral advisors and members of degree programs? What are the specific roles that each of the committee members has to play? What are the procedures that define proper supervision and advising? What do candidates/students think of the process of assigning committee members, of their styles of work, of their duties towards achieving quality supervision?
- *Financial aid*: what financial aid programs and forms are available for Master and PhD students? Are there special stipends to encourage needed research in certain areas? Are there opportunities for students to participate in ongoing research projects in their faculties? Do colleges of education and/or advisors arrange for financial assistance for candidates?

3. Trends in Educational Research

This theme aims to present major trends in educational research and whether they are portrayed in the theses and dissertations that are being produced. It includes the following:

- *Topics*: What topics and issues are selected to be researched and what are being neglected, and why?
- *Approaches*: What are the current research trends in the different fields of education i.e.: educational psychology, economics of education, teaching methodologies, education for all, citizenship education, gender studies, among others, knowing that each of these fields is characterized by its terminology, main authors and ever-changing trends and constant development? Do certain colleges of education concentrate on specific topics? Are some of these colleges known for their excellence in certain fields? Is the target audience local, regional, or global?
- *Language*: Is there any relation between the language in which the thesis and dissertation is produced and any of these research trends?

4. Format and Referencing

This theme deals with the various styles of formatting and referencing adopted by colleges of education, such as:

- *Abstracts and Executive Summaries*: What criteria and specifications are used for their content and formatting?
- *Outline*: What guidelines should students follow to present headings, tables of contents, titling, font type and size, tables and charts, etc.?
- *Citation and documentation*: Is the student required to follow certain styles used in colleges of education in Europe or the United States (e.g., MLA, APA)? Should Arab colleges of education adopt a foreign model, choose a selective system, or develop their own style? Is there a possibility of developing a system that suits Arab universities, and is there a need for such a system?

5. Quality of Research

- *Norms*: Are there, at colleges of education, well established and accessible norms and standards that clarify quality conditions of theses and dissertations?
- *Methodology*: What is the status of educational research regarding literature review, research methodology, data collection, data analysis, and producing results? Is there any quality in studies that aim at discovering significant differences between two or more variables?
- *Contribution*: What is the value of results reached by researchers in their theses or dissertations? Do they repeat other researchers' conclusions or contribute new findings in their research? Is the audience addressed other researchers in the field, the general public, or supervising committees?

6. Archiving

University libraries and documentation centers play a major role in archiving and disseminating theses or dissertations. Their main function is to preserve and make these works accessible to researchers. Many issues arise regarding the role that colleges of education offering graduate and postgraduate programs play:

- *Storage and Preservation*: In what format are theses and dissertations saved: print, digital, microfilm, scanned, etc?
- *Deposit and Retrieval*: What depository systems for organization and cataloging are followed? How effective and sustainable are these systems? Are there any centralized depository systems, whether in the whole Arab World or in single countries? What metadata is required to allow for effective and reliable retrieval?
- *Access*: What are the conditions and scope of accessibility? Are copyright rules and laws endorsed and protected?
- *Cooperation and coordination*: Is there any academic and service-oriented cooperation between universities (both public and private) within a country, within the Arab World, or internationally?
- *Databases*: What Arab or international databases are made available to be used by graduate and postgraduate students in Arab colleges of education.

Types of papers

Papers presented to the conference can vary in format, according to the following types:

- Case studies
- Comparative studies
- Analytical studies
- Theoretical studies
- Statistical studies
- Documentary studies
- Models (local or foreign)
- Testimonies

Acceptance of Abstracts and Paper sand Their Publication

- Abstracts and papers will be accepted based on at least two refereed reviews for each paper,
- Abstracts should be between 300 and 500 words; with a brief biography about the author.
- Authors of accepted abstracts will be provided by January 30, 2013 with “rules of publication” and rules of presentation” to be respected in preparing their papers and presenting them in the conference.
- Papers should be between 5000 and 8000 words;
- Accepted papers will be published in the Conference Proceedings after they have been presented and revised by the author based on conference discussions and comments from the Scientific Committee. **Papers presented will be subject to peer review process to be eligible for publication in the refereed conference proceedings.**

Important dates

Abstract submission deadline	Thursday, February 7, 2013
Notification of Abstract Acceptance	Thursday, February 28, 2013
Paper Submission Deadline	Thursday, May 30, 2013
Notification of Paper Acceptance	Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Scientific Committee

Adnan EL-Amine, Ph.D. in Sociology of Education,
Antoine Sayah, Ph.D. in Linguistics and Teaching Arabic,
Cendrella Habre, M.I.S. in Library and Information Science,
Diane Nauffal, Ph.D. in Education Administration and Policy,
Fadi El Hage, Ph.D in Building Scientific Knowledge: Didactic of Science,
Karma El Hasan, Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation,
Sami Samra, Ph.D, Educational Studies, Methodologies of Teaching,
Samir Jarrar, Ph.D. in Teaching Training and Instructional Technology,
Zeina Hajo, Ph.D. in Science Education.

Organizational Committee

Randa Chidiac, M.I.S. in Library and Information Science,
Rosette Fadel, B.A. in communication and Art,
Rania Kassab, B.A. in Elementary Education,
Rima Karami, Ph.D in Educational Administration and Supervision,
Rita Maalouf, M.I.S.in Library and Information Science.

Contact Information

To submit an abstract or for any further enquiries, please contact:

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**We welcome your participation,
Conference Committee**