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Challenges Facing Educational Research and Proposed Mechanisms for its Implementation in Reality

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Abstract:

In light of the challenges facing specialised research in educational sciences in the academic and field settings in Algeria, this article aims to assess the current state of educational research in Algeria, including the obstacles and problems that hinder its implementation or the use of its results and recommendations in reality. In addition, it presents several proposals to address these issues and enable educational research to contribute to the improvement of the educational landscape.

Keywords: Education, Educational research, Scientific research

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Introduction:

Educational research is one of the fields of scientific research that aims to identify problems related to the educational sector and find effective solutions to them using a scientific and objective methodology. Its aim is to make the field of education a fundamental pillar for achieving comprehensive development in various fields. With the rapid changes that the world is witnessing in various fields, educational research has become a pressing social need. Institutes, universities and colleges specialising in educational sciences are committed to utilising various material and human resources to expand the scope of educational research and make it comprehensive and inclusive of various problems that hinder the field of education in its noble mission of contributing to development and social progress in various fields. This is particularly important when the results of studies and research are implemented and applied in reality. However, the current challenge in Algeria is that, for various reasons, those in charge of the education sector do not attach the greatest importance to the results of educational research. As a result, most of the efforts invested in research go to waste without being used to make sound educational decisions.

In recent years, the number of researchers in the field of education has increased due to the growing number of students enrolled in postgraduate studies with the aim of obtaining a doctoral degree. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of academic studies and educational research carried out in research laboratories in various universities and colleges of education. This can be seen from a quick glance at the overwhelming amount of research published in peer-reviewed journals and academic periodicals in the field of education, as well as in the humanities and social sciences in general. However, despite the abundance of these journals and publications, they have

become unable to accommodate and contain this vast amount of research. Many researchers complain about the lack of sufficient opportunities to publish their research. From this perspective, the increasing number of research studies in different areas of educational science can be seen as a commendable and encouraging phenomenon. Such research has the potential to contribute to finding solutions to various problems in education, ultimately enabling the education sector to actively participate in achieving sustainable development¹.

In addition to the above, educational research is seen as a bridge that leads to the achievement of positive changes not only in the field of education, but in society as a whole. Every new input we introduce into the field of education, based on the recommendations of educational research, contributes to the formation of an effective and positive individual in various fields. This, in turn, helps to move the wheel of development towards progress and advancement in the respective field. If education and learning are an investment in human capital, providing all sectors of society with a qualified workforce to improve their performance and overall output, then this task is not easy unless the education sector relies on scientific research. Such research helps to correct its course and evaluate its progress within the framework of the integrated education system. This can be achieved by translating the results of educational research into reality, taking into account the recommendations of various studies and research carried out in this field. However, the apparent reality is that the impact of this research on the field of education is hardly noticeable in practice. It is rare to find an education official who pays attention to scientific studies that could help overcome certain educational problems². These and other reasons have led me to prioritise this topic in this academic article, where we will discuss some of the reasons that hinder the implementation of educational research in reality, as well as some effective mechanisms to overcome these problems.

1- The reasons that hinder the implementation of educational research in reality are as follows:

There are several reasons that prevent the use of educational research findings in the advancement of the education sector and its contribution to achieving comprehensive development. Some of these reasons are:

1. Educational research in the Arab world in general, and in Algeria in particular, still relies mainly on the application of knowledge derived from foreign research. There is often a lack of emphasis on knowledge production. The research activities carried out by researchers in our universities are generally linked to personal goals rather than to a comprehensive and coordinated research policy with defined objectives, interests and public good. In other words, they are not linked to objectives related to both educational and social realities. Most researchers carry out research primarily in order to obtain academic degrees, with the aim of enhancing their curriculum vitae in order to secure positions and progress in their professional careers. Once the researcher has completed the thesis and obtained the desired degree, the purpose of educational research often

¹- Ahmed Abdel-Moneim Hassan, "Principles of Scientific Research", Part One, Academic Library, Cairo, undated, p. 08.

²- Shihata Hassan, "Scientific and Educational Research between Theory and Application", 1st edition, Cairo, Arab Publishing House, 2000, p. 09.

ceases. This has led to a complete divergence of research topics from the attempt to bring about positive changes in educational reality¹.

1-2 Lack of interest in the results of educational research on the part of relevant stakeholders and authorities in the educational sector. These educational administrators often base their decisions and actions on their previous experiences, disregarding the findings of these research studies. This factor has led to a decline in the credibility of scientific research in the eyes of researchers, as their studies are not used to guide and improve the education system. Researchers recognise the importance and value of research as a basis for finding solutions to various problems in the education sector. However, if the opposite happens and the results of their studies are not taken into account, the researcher considers it useless to investigate real problems in the field of education, as the study and its recommendations will ultimately be disregarded².

1-3 Insufficient availability of reputable scientific journals and publications to present and disseminate the findings and recommendations of various completed educational research studies. With the rapid accumulation of educational research, these journals have become unable to accommodate the large number of studies queuing for publication. Some of these studies may be of significant scientific value and provide useful insights for addressing educational problems, thereby contributing to the development of school performance as a means of implementing educational plans aimed at advancing the sector and achieving comprehensive development. In such cases, researchers may be tempted not to publish the results of their studies because of the limited alternatives available to them in terms of journals. Research studies that remain unpublished or whose results are unknown will not have the desired impact when implemented in reality, thus losing their research and scientific value³.

1-4 Limited budget for scientific research in general and educational research in particular. While advanced countries allocate substantial budgets to support educational research as a long-term investment, we find that our country allocates a meagre budget that does not fulfil the purpose of conducting useful and beneficial research, especially experimental research. Experimental research is characterised by its ability to control facts based on the potential to predict and anticipate educational reality. As a result, educational research has become descriptive in nature, focusing on identifying problems rather than finding deep and comprehensive solutions. Even if these research studies are implemented in the field, their contribution to the advancement of the education sector is insufficient in terms of effectiveness and feasibility due to the lack of long-term experimental research. Such research requires substantial funding, which individual researchers cannot provide from their own resources. As a result, researchers refrain from tackling problems that are already hindering the progress of the education system and fail to give it a leading position in achieving comprehensive development through the human services provided to various areas of social activity⁴.

¹- Zaitoun Aayesh, "University Teaching Methods", Cairo, Dar El Shorouk, 1995, p. 122.

²- Hamli Asia, "Educational Research and How to Understand it from the Readings of the Centre for Educational Documents", Algeria, National Centre for Educational Documents, 2010, p. 126.

³- Ahmed Suleimans Return, "Problems of Educational Research as Perceived by Faculty Members at Yarmouk and Emirates Universities", Faculty of Education Journal, Issue Six, Faculty of Education at the United Arab Emirates University, 1991, pp. 153-154.

⁴- Khawaldeh Reda Shibli, "Investment in Scientific Research", Amman, Jordanian Association for Scientific Research, (undated), pp. 3-4.

1-5 The lack of authenticity in educational research in our country is another challenge. Research should originate from our reality and seek to generate new ideas that contribute to our educational context by addressing observed problems in the field. However, most of the research studies in this field are mere replicas, discussing issues that are irrelevant to our lived educational reality. This has resulted in a complete disconnect between educational research and the actual context. When studies and research are not driven by the researcher's awareness of the problems facing the educational sector, the attempt to apply their findings and recommendations to our educational and social reality faces several obstacles due to the lack of alignment with the educational context. As these studies are not based on actual lived experience, they become useless in any evaluation process that aims to influence the educational system in general and the educational process in particular¹.

The above factors therefore represent the various obstacles to educational research. These barriers take different forms, including those related to the educational environment, the financial resources allocated to funding educational research, the social perception of scientific and educational research, as well as challenges and issues related to the researcher and their objectives in conducting educational research.

2. Proposed mechanisms for putting educational research into practice:

After reviewing some of the obstacles that hinder the use of educational research in the field of education, including the failure of the education sector to play a leading role in achieving sustainable development, it is necessary to propose solutions that enable the implementation of research in practice. These solutions include

2.1 Focusing on research topics that contribute to the production of knowledge and provide added value to the education sector and the scientific knowledge sector in the field of educational sciences, based on lived reality. Instead of relying on foreign ideas and studies that may not be relevant to our educational reality, educational research should address problems inherent in our educational context. This approach allows for the production of new knowledge and ideas that are in line with the urgent needs and requirements for the improvement of the educational sector and, ultimately, to give the educational process a leading role in economic, social and cultural development.

2.2 As serious scientific journals are no longer able to accommodate the vast amount of accumulated educational studies, it is necessary to look for better and more effective alternatives for the dissemination of these studies. One possible solution is to use the National Institute for Educational Research as a platform for the promotion and implementation of educational research, providing the opportunity for its recommendations to be applied in practice. In this way, the study can reach a wide range of people working in the education sector, such as teachers and school administrators, and thus have a much better impact in reality than if it were published in a scientific journal to which only academic researchers in educational sciences would have access.

On the other hand, these studies can also be submitted to the National Centre for Educational Documentation or the National Institute for the Training and Improvement of Educational

¹- Khudair Abdul Fattah, "Crisis of Scientific Research in the Arab World", 3rd edition, Riyadh, Salah Al-Hajilan Office, 1992, p. 69.

Personnel, if we really want the studies and educational research to be useful and contribute to reforming aspects of the educational process, improving the performance of the educational system as a whole and making it responsive to comprehensive development plans and needs.

2.3 Following the government's decision in April 2011 to open up the audio-visual media to the creation of private channels with diverse content, albeit belatedly, we can propose to the authorities responsible for higher education and scientific research that a television channel be created specifically for higher education. This channel would focus on highlighting the results of academic studies and scientific research, not only in the field of education, but also in various disciplines. Undoubtedly, the impact that audio-visual media can have on the attitudes and behaviours of various stakeholders in the educational environment would be greater and more effective. This medium can disseminate the results of educational research to a wide audience in a short period of time.

Instead of relying solely on their own experience to improve certain aspects of educational work, stakeholders in the educational environment can draw ideas and recommendations from these studies to improve their performance. This approach is based on an objective view of the various issues and problems related to the educational environment. For example, an inspector may seek to implement certain ideas derived from a particular study in order to improve pupils' academic performance. Similarly, a teacher may improve his or her teaching methods based on effective approaches identified in a particular study. School administrators can also use research findings in school management to overcome various educational problems in different aspects. As a result, the performance of educational institutions and the education system as a whole improves, enabling them to play a leading role in achieving overall development.

The effectiveness of this idea can be seen in the Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese experiences, where television channels dedicated to higher education exist and have proven successful in promoting educational issues.

Conclusion:

Based on the above, it can be said that the above mechanisms could be of the highest value and effectiveness in implementing the results of educational studies in the field. Focusing on the authenticity of addressing educational problems through objective scientific studies, using research centres directly related to the field of education to review and incorporate the results of studies as much as possible, in addition to using audio-visual media as a powerful tool in presenting and disseminating the results of educational studies that stem from inherent educational problems that address an existing educational reality. These are effective mechanisms for activating educational research in practice, if used to their full potential. Their benefits extend not only to the research conducted, but also to the future nature and dimensions of educational research. This enables us to enhance the educational process, which is the real investment, to achieve comprehensive development in various fields. Ultimately, this leads to progress and advancement in various fields.

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Challenges Facing Educational Research and Proposed Mechanisms for its Implementation in Reality

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