

# Internal And External Challenges Facing Arab Educational Systems In Light Of Globalization

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**Abstract:** The current study aims to highlight the most significant internal and external challenges facing Arab educational systems in the era of globalization. In addressing this topic, the researcher presented information about the phenomenon of educational globalization, its dimensions, and challenges using a descriptive approach. In conclusion, the study provided a set of solutions to confront these challenges. The study also concluded with a set of recommendations, including the idea that there is no meaning to renew the curriculum without adaptation. Educational reform is meaningless without considering the specificity, culture, and values of the society. Additionally, facing these challenges is only possible by developing an educational philosophy derived from our Islamic law.

**Keywords:** internal challenges, external challenges, globalization, educational systems.

**Introduction:** Globalization is a worldwide phenomenon in its nature, comprehensive in its mechanisms, and specific in its goals. It has authority that it imposes on the countries of the world. It also has various aspects and dimensions that are interrelated, with the most important being educational globalization. The significance of this dimension lies in the strategic role played by education. It is both the problem and the solution at the same time. It is the problem if we fail to exploit and utilize it according to our specificities, and it is the solution if utilized positively for the development of values for our children. Globalization imposes a global level for distinguished human competencies, surpassing national borders. It also enforces the use of technology as a result of the knowledge acquired through learning. However, the Arab world and third-world countries still operate within a traditional educational system, resulting in marginalization and exclusion. While there seems to be a tendency to immerse in economic globalization, there is also an inclination to shrink from educational globalization. This has led these countries to face a set of internal and external challenges that are necessary to confront in order to catch up with the advanced nations. This is the subject of the current study.

**Problematic of the Article:** The new world order affects contemporary developments taking place in our current era, characterized as the new era of globalization. This influence is exerted through the utilization of advanced means of communication, information and technology. The clear manifestation of this impact is observed across various fields, especially in the educational field. On one hand, there is a call to exploit these means, and on the other hand, there is a call to direct educational policies globally, aiming to create what is known as comprehensive education, whose goal is the globalization of education and learning. The purpose of all these efforts is to change educational curricula and make them a mechanism for societal change (Mustapha, 2000, p. 93).

According to **Assad Watfa Ali**, globalization in the educational field is an attempt to dominate the educational field with the aim of reshaping tastes, values, and behaviors (2009, p. 126). In this context, KheiraTahlaiti (2018) addressed the cultural globalization and the requirements of the Algerian educational system in her study, that cultural globalization imposes various challenges

related to both formal and non-formal educational systems, such as the decline of the roles of family and school. Moreover, the importance of educational globalization is highlighted as a strategic dimension of globalization that educational systems represent a prominent field where the identity, authenticity, and cultural advancement of societies are manifested. Education is expected to prepare generations free from the complexes of backwardness, capable of putting an end to dependency in all its economic and cultural dimensions. This endeavor is closely linked to the issues of values and the ethical preparation of individuals; therefore, education must be a forward-looking and purposeful process that departs from the current reality (Sissani, 2022, p. 2). As a result of educational globalization, there is a clear trend towards planning for reform projects in central aspects of educational systems. This was emphasized in the educational seminar held in Germany in 1999, where there was agreement on the necessity for graduates of educational institutions to acquire various types of information, commonly referred to as intelligent knowledge. This knowledge should be expandable, practical, and include the ability to teach how to learn (Jaafari, 2001).

Educational methods, which aim to transfer knowledge from generation to generation through memorization and indoctrination, are no longer sufficient. The goal of education has shifted towards how students can learn on their own, through exploratory and creative education, emphasizing self-directed learning. The aim is to create a knowledgeable society that not only absorbs knowledge but also produces it. In a study titled "A Future Vision for Educational Systems in the Era of Globalization," BenzeroualFatiha and KehoulChafik pointed out the necessity of a new educational method in the era of globalization, known as the exploratory method.

All the countries strive to develop their educational systems according to this approach, including Arab countries that have sought to renew their educational systems through successive

educational reforms. This poses a significant challenge for them in the light of the social, economic, political, and security conditions these countries are experiencing. Therefore, the research problem is defined by the following questions:

- What are the internal challenges facing Arab educational systems in the era of globalization?
- What are the external challenges facing Arab educational systems in the era of globalization?
- What strategies should Arab countries adopt to address these challenges?

**Significance of the study:** The importance of the current study lies in the significance of the phenomenon of globalization and the resulting internal and external challenges facing Arab educational systems. This is considering that education plays a fundamental role in instilling national, religious, and cultural values, as well as reinforcing cultural identity. The significance of this study also lies in presenting a set of solutions to confront these challenges.

#### **Study Objectives:**

- To identify the internal challenges facing Arab educational systems in the light of globalization.
- To explore the external challenges confronting Arab educational systems in the light of globalization.
- To propose some solutions as means to confront these challenges.

**Study Methodology:** This study adopts a descriptive approach, aiming to describe the studied phenomenon, analyze its dimensions and aspects, and propose solutions by gathering information through relevant literature, including research, scientific studies, and articles related to the topic.

**Previous Studies:** In addressing this topic, a series of previous studies were analyzed, providing a background for the current study. Some of these studies include:

Study by Rabah Sissani, which aimed to uncover the requirements of Arab systems in the light of the challenges of globalization (2022). It concluded that Arab countries have no choice but to adapt their educational systems and curricula while considering their authentic values and not abandoning them.

In a study conducted by Mehdi Touati, which aimed to uncover "Methods for Activating the Information Revolution in the Educational Field" (2019). It concluded the necessity of clarifying how to activate globalization tools, including technology, and utilizing them appropriately in the educational field.

In a study conducted by Lam in 2011, the goal was to understand the impact of globalization on national education policies in Vietnam. The study used a qualitative research approach based on interviews, and the study sample consisted of thirty faculty members and 150 students. The findings revealed a significant impact of globalization on education policies in Vietnam.

In a study conducted by Al-Sharifin (2010), the aim was to explore the positive and negative effects of cultural globalization, as well as strategies to mitigate the negative impacts. The study employed both descriptive and deductive-analytical methodologies. The findings indicated that cultural globalization influences the Islamic identity of the nation, globalizes family structures, distorts the Arabic language, and interferes with elements of the educational process. The study recommended the necessity of establishing a single Islamic reference for the nation.

### **I - The Concept of Globalization:**

**Ronald Robertson** defines it as "facts, perceptions, and developments that are tangible and independent of individual awareness, with the goal of these developments being the goal of the entire society." (Al-Khatib, 2003, p. 12).

Additionally, Al-Ja'ab defines globalization as "the generalization of a single cultural pattern worldwide in matters of economy, politics, culture, and behavior, without significant consideration of the political boundaries of sovereign nations and

affiliation with a specific homeland or state, and without the need for governmental procedures." (2018, pp. 31-32).

Therefore, globalization, in its various forms, seeks to unify the world in its educational, cultural, economic, scientific, and political aspects, turning the world into a small village under one umbrella.

### **2- Concept of Educational Globalization:**

Educational globalization is defined as what major capitalist countries and international organizations aim in imposing their dominance on Arab educational systems, directing educational policies, and developing strategies that serve their interests. It is also defined as "creating a unified education in the boundless world" (Mohamed, 2011, p. 109), and "imposing a unified educational model that globalizes perception, awareness, and human thought patterns, leading to the prevalence of a common global culture shaping human life with shared values and beliefs" (Bradjel, p. 327).

### **3 - Dimensions of Educational Globalization:**

**3-1. Socio-Cultural Dimension:** Internet is considered the most important tool that undermines the cultures of nations, as it has become a significant means for transferring cultural ideas and information through images and films. Its task includes changing the cultural perspective of public opinion in countries. However, it cannot be denied that it has contributed to the exchange of cultures and interaction between different communities (Al-Khalalia, 2017, p. 594).

**3-2. Political Dimension:** One of the effects of political globalization on education is the strong countries' eagerness to control specialized international institutions, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and attempting to influence other organizations with an educational and cultural nature, such as the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Al-Khalayilah, 2017, p. 594).

**3-3. Media Dimension:** Media plays a significant role in influencing the educational aspect, whether it concerns educational institutions, families, or society in general. The media is a double-edged sword; if used ethically and humanely, it undoubtedly has a positive impact on education. Conversely, some media channels can be used for unethical purposes (Al-Khalayilah, 2018, p. 255).

**4 - Aspects of Educational Globalization:** One of the manifestations of educational globalization is the push for countries to adopt competency-based approaches as an alternative to their educational curricula. This reflects the interests of dominant countries to steer according to their separate plans and goals. Pedagogically, competency-based approaches draw inspiration from the constructivist school led by “**Jean Piaget**” and the pragmatist philosophy of American origin. The essence of this approach is that learners actively participate in constructing new knowledge based on their prior experiences, achieved by placing learners in problem-solving situations related to their daily lives (Dahmani, 2023, p. 126).

#### **5 - Characteristics of Educational Globalization:**

- The provision of institutions, individuals, funding, teacher training, curricula, teaching methods, and assessments has become subject to global standards. In recent years, UNESCO has emerged as the most powerful global educational institution in this field. Through successive programmatic initiatives, UNESCO has developed a teacher training program for curriculum development and assessment. This has become a model for achieving an internationally acceptable standard worldwide, forcing countries to adjust their standards to align with these global benchmarks.
- The phenomenon of establishing global educational standards has made it necessary to follow this approach, by setting common goals that align with international practices. This involves considering education as a right

and duty for citizens, which is the responsibility of states to ensure everyone has access to education, in addition to the significant similarity in most countries worldwide regarding the type of subjects taught and the time allocated for each subject.

- Teaching modern foreign languages, as well as introducing social studies in their global context, has led to the emergence of the concept of "Global Education." This concept has been incorporated into many educational systems to help students perceive global issues in a broader sense, as well as to realize and understand the interconnection and interdependence of economic, environmental, scientific, and social interests, issues, and problems among all peoples of the world.
- The widespread dissemination of democratic concepts and human rights, which includes all factions, women, and children, has been observed. International institutions have been tasked with monitoring the implementation of human rights worldwide. (Kaabar, p. 07-08).

#### **6- Challenges Facing Educational Systems in the Context of Globalization:**

**6-1 Challenges Facing Educational Systems in the Context of Globalization:** Our Arab-Islamic nation faces today a set of challenges on the educational aspect. One aspect of these challenges involves a struggle, resistance, and defense of independence against dependency, within a philosophy of national education that imposes barriers between theoretical knowledge and applied knowledge. This represents the first internal challenge that must be addressed, along with the following:

- Inequality in educational opportunities due to private lessons have created an educational duality between public education and elite education.
- Reluctance to attend classes from the part of students, and teachers' reluctance is due to this

fact as well as their, students, lack of motivation.

- Ineffectiveness of scientific research and its separation from scientific problems, resulting in low levels of graduates and scientific personnel, leading to a loss of society's trust in educational institutions.
- Lack of Arabization of sciences, outdated curricula and training methods, and the description of educational administration.
- Lack of an Islamic educational philosophy and reliance on Western philosophies, which is reflected in the educational objectives that are unclear and do not draw inspiration from the Quran and the honorable Sunnah. Instead of deriving their direction from these sources, we have settled for mere imitation and cultural and educational subordination to the West, resulting in the failure to prepare a generation capable of facing the challenges it faces.
- Absence of model teachers, overcrowded classrooms, the serious deterioration of teachers' working conditions, inadequate training, and failure to keep pace with advancements in education through multimedia, interactive, virtual, and distance learning methods.
- Financial budget shortages, resulting in an inability to meet the required needs.
- Decline in the quality of education due to the adoption of outdated and obsolete teaching methods, and the failure to embrace modern approaches that require creative abilities from both teachers and students.
- Contribution of educational deficiencies to the increase in educational problems and social issues, leading to student disengagement from studying due to factors such as poverty and unemployment, as well as educational challenges like dropout rates and academic failure, compounded by curriculum inadequacies and teaching methods not

aligned with students' capabilities. (Al-Sulmi, 2018, p. 103).

## **6-2 External Challenges Facing Educational Systems in Light of Globalization:**

### **6-2-1 External Interventions in Education Systems:**

External interventions in education systems are primarily carried out by organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The United States has attempted to influence regional educational organizations, such as the Arab Organization for Education, Science and Culture and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The manifestations of educational globalization increased after the September 11 attacks in the United States. Following these events, global financial organizations and institutions began to intervene in the local educational affairs of borrowing and non-borrowing countries (Stajata, 2004, p. 178). This intervention aimed to generalize an educational model associated with a singular dimension that eliminates the specificities of nations and peoples. This was influenced by the perception held by some in the United States that Islamic educational curricula contribute to terrorism.

The detailed memorandum of Colin Powell's initiative highlighted that the American education model is considered the primary pillar for combating terrorism. The report specified the following:

- ✓ Establishing American schools in various Arab countries covering all educational levels, designed to qualify students for admission to American universities. These schools would rely on American academic experts alongside Arab experts.
- ✓ Organizing joint training and qualification courses for those involved in the educational process in Arab countries or in the United

States, including programs would emphasize the ideal American image.

- ✓ The curricula will not be limited to academic subjects, but a significant portion will be allocated to encourage political and democratic participation.
- ✓ Establishing clubs within schools, called "American Freedom Clubs," to practice the principles of American democracy.
- ✓ Supporting the establishment of schools, including job opportunities for graduates of American universities with lucrative salaries. This project began in 2003, with actual studies commencing in 2005.
- ✓ Translating simplified books about American lifestyles, along with symbolic stories that summarize specific values, and integrating them into the educational curricula. The translation movement is supervised by the US Department of State. (Ammar, 2004, pp. 108-109).

It is evident from the above that the goal of the American program is clearly to shape Arab youth who believe in the American way of life. (Mansour, 2007, p. 205).

#### **6-2-2. Targeting Cultural Identity:**

This occurs through the old and renewed challenges (missionary activities, Orientalism, and Occidentalism), which constantly renew themselves in their forms, appearances, and methods, leading to challenges such as:

- The spread of missionary schools, which represents a challenge, as they silently and officially abduct Muslim children.
- The continuous infiltration of misconceptions, where Orientalism is considered the intellectual factory for Christianization and colonization. The works of Orientalists reached sixty thousand (60,000) books on doctrine, literature, Sufism, ethics, and

Quranic sciences, loaded with lies and defamation against Islam to produce Muslims carrying hostile ideas, and to use them as tools for destruction. (Al-Raqb, 2003, p. 56).

- Cultural admiration and Occidentalism, as British Orientalist "**Hamilton A. R. Gibb**" states that education is one of the greatest sources of Occidentalism. It can convey beautiful images such as the city and civilization, or social thought, modernization, and evolution. (Al-Raqb, 2003, p. 78).

#### **6-2-3. Incorporating Global Values in Inclusive Education Curricula:**

The UNESCO and UNICEF strive to integrate global values into values curricula and consolidate ideas advocating for the new world order, by establishing programs in the field of inclusive education in the Middle East and educational development programs for countries in the Mediterranean Basin. These programs encompass comprehensive education dimensions. In 1979, the constitution of a global organization sponsored by UNESCO, "The Organization of Islam and the West," chaired by "Lord Caradon," stated: "Authors of school textbooks should not pass judgments on values, whether explicitly or implicitly, nor should they evaluate religion as a criterion or goal." (Al-Ja'ab, 2018, pp. 103-110).

#### **6-2-4. The Role of Competitive Media in Opposition to the School Role:**

Globalization attempts to harness the media by diverting people away from ethics through the propagation of literature on sex, crime, and rebellion among generations. (Mabrouk et al., 1999, p. 139) warns of the dangers of the media, indicating that it acts as a substitute for brains, through which major powers seek to undermine identity and religion.

#### **6-2-5. The Materialism of Globalization Culture and Its Threat to Spiritual Construction:**

The culture of globalization is materialistic, devoid of spirituality, emotions, and virtuous values, thus modern education in science and technology has

been divided, neglecting proper conduct. (Mansour, 2007, p. 212).

The threat and dominance of cultural privacy through the Internet: Al-Soufi summarizes the dangers of the Internet as cultural subjugation, violence, crime, the decline of the Arabic language, addiction to pornographic sites, alienation, isolation, doctrinal and individual behavioral skepticism, alongside profound dangers. (2004, p. 909).

### **7- Ways to Confront the Challenges Facing Arab Educational Systems in the Era of Globalization:**

- To protect the emerging generations against the challenges posed by the globalization of education, independent Arab education must be characterized by the following:

- Openness to the revolutions of the era (technological communications and media) requires a culturally qualified personality capable of improving and mastering the use of contemporary tools, and the one who should be educated and technically competent.

- Current and future education should strive to reconcile individual needs with societal demands, taking into account the learner's age and stage of development.

- Arab education should incorporate various pedagogical approaches such as experiential, expressive, communicative, innovative, productive, exploratory, performance-based, cultural, open-minded, critical, and ethical dimensions.

- Emphasis should be placed on educational administration, which is considered fundamental to the renewal of learning.

- Reassessing the cornerstone of the educational process "the teacher", and how we should prepare him within the framework of an Islamic perspective on educational issues, considering the following:

- Highlighting the true essence of Islam and demonstrating the value of noble traits such as tolerance, mercy, and ease.

- The necessity for intellectuals and academics to rise up in exposing the falsehood inherent in the concept of globalization and revealing the colonial intentions behind it.

- Fortifying the youth with Islamic culture to form a robust barrier against all forms of hostile cultures, fostering an Islamic identity proud of its authenticity, and emphasizing the original values.

Emphasizing the inclusivity of Islam and its acceptance of the principle of openness and interaction with other cultures. (Dakhlallah, 2015, p. 118-119).

**Al-Khatib** adds a set of solutions, which are:

- Reconsidering the goals of education to achieve what individuals need in contemporary life.

- Strengthening the social functions of schools and families by building good social relationships and enhancing them with extracurricular activities that support social function.

- Providing counseling services in psychological and social aspects.

- Engaging in media and participating in it.

- Expanding the scope of educational covenants, caring for educators, and emphasizing faith-based education (2003, p. 133).

**Suggestions:** In light of the above, several proposals can be put forward to address the challenges of globalization:

- Formulating a renewable educational system.
- Understanding the relationship between educational inputs and outputs.
- Replacing the current management approach with a rational and planning one.
- Linking educational planning with economic and social development plans.
- Opening the market to private educational investments based on free and fair competition.

- Keeping pace with global trends in knowledge and technological forms in the educational field.
- Adopting a strategic vision specific to the Arab world on how to prepare and build the future generations in the era of technological advancements, which requires attention to educational curricula.
- Developing educational curricula to enable our children to possess concepts, values, and skills necessary for living in the era of globalization.
- The strength of faith is a fundamental matter that should be a guiding principle in curriculum planning and development, in order to reinforce values and understand the relationship between religion and life.
- Utilizing educational technology in implementing educational curricula.
- Training specialists and experts in educational fields.
- Providing financial resources for continuous development.
- Coordinating Arab efforts in educational research and mutual benefit, especially in curriculum development.
- Taking into consideration the preparation and development of curricula, especially for the new generation that we will prepare to face the future amidst the changes of globalization.
- Establishing systems for continuous monitoring and evaluation of educational curricula, sensing global educational developments, and investing in them for the benefit of the educational system.

### Summary:

Through this study, we concluded that globalization has positive implications in the technical dimension, and its positive impact on the educational process cannot be overlooked. On the other hand, there are negative repercussions on the cultural, educational, and psychological levels. The real danger lies in the educational pattern imposed on our children, which tends to lack national and patriotic values, promoting instead universal values aimed at producing a generation characterized by moral relativism and pragmatism as the basis for human relations. Therefore, what is required from

educational systems to confront this major challenge is to focus on the quality of education in all its components within the framework of authentic societal values. This entails not only focusing on raising academic standards but also striving to form a generation with the ability for self-learning, effectiveness, and self-competence, driven by a spirit of exploration and ambition. Achieving this requires concerted efforts between supervisors of the educational system, along with the alignment of political will towards every process of development and reform in the education system. Additionally, coordination among Arab countries in the educational field and the utilization of each other's experiences is crucial.

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