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الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
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Centre for Lebanese Studies
مركز الدراسات اللبنانية
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Appel à contributions

دعوة لتقديم الأوراق الأكاديمية

Repenser le curriculum au Liban et dans le monde arabe
réconcilier les dimensions idéologiques et pédagogiques
6, 7 décembre 2019
Beyrouth - Liban

إعادة التفكير في المناهج
في لبنان والعالم العربي
التوفيق بين الايديولوجيا والبيداغوجيا
6 - 7 كانون الأوّل 2019
بيروت - لبنان

1. BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE

Curriculum reform in the Arab world has been a recurrent issue in the past two decades. It has been presented as a major means for improving students' educational outcomes and attainment. Despite numerous attempts at reform, the educational outcomes for children in the Arab world remain low particularly in the public sectors leading to a sharp increase in inequality, poverty and deprivation of large sectors of the society. This conference will unpack existing ideologies that inform current education policies in the Arab world and will engage the participants in a dialogue around the various philosophies that are driving curriculum reforms. It seeks to examine questions related to what should the next generation learn, why and how.

The conference aims to re-centre the debate around curriculum reform in the Arab world by addressing both the social, cultural, and political underpinnings of curriculum as well as the processes of curriculum development. It seeks to open a wider debate that goes beyond the technicalities of designing a curriculum to encompass normative and empirical questions that must be tackled when developing a new curriculum. At the same time, the conference will examine current debates that are subject- and discipline- specific and explore current developments from different countries around the globe.

Rationale

While the Arab world has been plagued by mounting inequalities, the debate on the curriculum reforms has been focused primarily on improving students' academic attainment thus steering away from issues related to social injustice, marginalisation, and deprivation (Apple, 2013). The prime concern of policy makers, education specialists and practitioners appears to be the process of developing a curriculum, the content to be selected or removed, and potential contribution to the economy and the job market. There is little discussion of the ideologies underpinning the curriculum (e.g. neo-liberal, socialist, or critical) or the theories of curriculum planning (e.g. content, product, process).

A quick review of the discourse on education and curriculum reform in the Arab world reveals an increasing influence of the neoliberal agenda, which sees the role of education as primarily focused on contributing to the achievement of economic prosperity by developing the skills required for the competitive job market. This has been dubbed the economisation of education (Ozga 2000). This objective of education has been criticized for widening inequalities and socio-economic injustice (Gewirtz 2000). An economy-driven education, which emphasizes standardization, assessment, a consumerist approach to young people and the private education sector, reduces education to an instrument of control, oppression and marginalization (Gewirtz 2000, 2007; Hughes and Lauder 1999; Whitty et al. 1998; Woods et al. 1997). The rigid standards emphasize an authoritarian, compliant, and technical culture in the school, which undermines democracy and participation as everyone in the school becomes controlled by the rigid and economic oriented

outcomes. This approach falls short of addressing the roots of the inequalities beset on most Arab countries.

While, the process of educational policies and curriculum making in the Arab world are highly politicized, efforts to depoliticize and sanction politics from the school and learning experiences is enormous. There is a global trend of reducing the educational discourse to mere literacy and content rather than being concerned with developing children's conceptual, critical and independent thinking. Debates concerning issues such as social justice, power dynamics, gender, decolonization of post-colonial curricula, the deconstruction of national curricula, and language are absent from the debates surrounding curriculum making and the curriculum itself. Instead one sees a fascination with various approaches to designing the curriculum, the subjects to be taught and the content.

The conference, hopes to widen the debate on curriculum reform. Its main objectives are the following:

1. Explore current debates concerning curriculum theories, ideologies and approaches.
2. Examine normative and empirical questions related to what to teach for future generations, why and how.
3. Reflect on the role of the various stakeholders in the process of curriculum development
4. Reflect on local practices, and on political, cultural, and social aspects of curriculum in Arab countries, with the purpose of developing an in-depth understanding of curriculum.
5. Facilitate and inform curriculum debates in the Arab Region

THEMES

The conference will cover the following themes:

- Curriculum theories and trends
- The politicization of curriculum making
- Equity, gender, diversity, and inclusion.
- The personal, the social and cultural in the curriculum.
- Teaching, learning and assessment.

The conference will cover all grade levels from (K to 12) and subjects (STEAM, languages, and social studies).

PRESENTATION FORMAT

Oral Presentation

Each presentation will last 15 minutes and may be supported by power-point slides, and/or video footage.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Eligibility
Academics, researchers, graduate students, teachers, principals, policy makers and curriculum specialists are invited to submit abstracts of 300 to 500 words on the aforementioned themes. Theoretical, empirical and action research studies are welcomed.

Abstracts guidelines
The presentation abstracts should be between 300 to 500 words, excluding references.
Submitted abstracts should comply with acceptable academic standards for inclusion in the conference program.

The abstract should include the following information:

- Title
- Name
- Institutional Affiliation
- Email Address
- Mobile Number
- Title of Proposed Paper
- Selected theme(s)
- Purpose and rationale
- Research question(s)
- Theoretical/ conceptual framework
- Approach or methodology and methods
- Analyses and findings
- Conclusions, contribution and implications
- References

Language
Languages of the conference are Arabic, English, and French

Submission procedure
Abstracts can be submitted to the following email address starting 15 March 2019
info@lebanesestudies.com

KEY DATES

Launching of the Call for papers	1 April, 2019
Deadline for the submission of abstracts	15 June, 2019
Notification of Acceptance	15 July 2019
Registration deadline	20 November 2019
Conference	6 and 7 December 2019

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Abstracts will be blind reviewed by the conference academic committee and included in the Book of Abstracts. Authors of selected papers will be contacted at a later stage for possibly including their papers in a conference publication that will be released.

Academic Committee
- Hagop A. Yacoubian, Associate professor, Department of Education, Lebanese American University
- Maha Shuayb, Director of the Centre for, Lebanese Studies at Lebanese American University
- Nayla Hamadeh, President of the Lebanese Association for History
- Rima Bahous, Associate professor, Department of Education, Lebanese American University
- Scarlet Sarraf, Professor, Faculty of Education, Lebanese University, and Lebanese Association for Educational Sciences.

QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

For further clarification, feel free to send an email to info@lebanesestudies.com or contact the following number 01-786456 ext. 1528