ОБЩАЯ ПЕДАГОГИКА **GENERAL PEDAGOGY**



UDC 378.1

https://doi.org/10.23947/2658-7165-2024-7-5-75-82



ZPFIHE

Problems and Prospects of Higher Education Management in Iraq

Elena A. Makarova¹, Elena L. Makarova²,

Duha Taha Ismail Al-Mashhdani³

¹ Don State Technical University, Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation ² Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation ³ Al- Iraqia University College of Administration and Economics, Baghdad, Iraq ⊠makarova.h@gmail.com

Abstract

Introduction. Thanks to the government support and the innovative management system, the Iraqi education system has become not just educational institutions, but a modern hierarchical structure that meets the needs of modernity, directly related to the growth and development of the nation. Studying the problems and prospects of higher education management in Iraq will help young people entering a student exchange program decide on their choice of educational institution and professional direction. To identify the main challenges that most universities and institutes in Iraq have faced over the past few years, we used three different metaphors to view them: as machines, as organisms, and finally as cultures. This is due to the fact that any theory for studying an organization, although it can provide valuable information, is biased and incomplete.

Objective. Analyze the current educational system to see the problems and foresee the prospects of higher education in Iraq. *Universities as machines.* Using this metaphor, it was found that the Iraqi higher education system has a problem of violation of hierarchy by its superiors in the case of management. Also, the problem of lack of encouragement of initiative was found to be present, which hinders the development of students' critical thinking. In addition, the problems of internal coordination of colleges, imbalance between authority and responsibility, lack of educational programs, and efficiency were found.

Universities as organisms. According to this metaphor, the review of universities takes into account the external environment and possible patterns of change. At this stage of the review, problems such as degradation of the higher education system due to harsh conditions in the country and government interference were identified, the inapplicability of the classical approach to universities in Iraq, the lack of support for teachers from the administration, a high degree of centralization, and the influence of political parties and religious groups on higher education in the country.

Universities as cultures. At this stage of the review, culturally based problems such as conservatism, consequently, and resistance to change, survival orientation, and ineffective fight against corruption were identified.

Discussion. In the subject field overview, there is much conflicting evidence on individual problems specific to higher education in Iraq. However, its presence is undeniable and the result of this review is a comprehensive list of growth areas of Iraqi higher education.

Keywords: Iraqi education, hierarchy, education management, assessment, higher education, curriculum, international standards, deficiency

For Citation, Makarova, E. A., Makarova, E. L., & Al-Mashhdani, D. T. I. (2024). Problems and prospects of development of higher education management in Iraq. Innovative Science: psychology, pedagogy, defectology, 7(5), 75-82. https://doi.org/10.23947/2658-7165-2024-7-5-75-82

Обзор предметного поля

Проблемы и перспективы управления высшим образованием в Ираке

Елена А. Макарова¹ © Д. Елена Л. Макарова² D. Духа Таха Исмаил Аль-Машдани³

1 Донской государственный технический университет, Ростов-на-Дону, Российская Федерация

² Южный федеральный университет, Ростов-на-Дону, Российская Федерация

³ Колледж администрации и экономики Университета Аль-Иракия, Багдад, Ирак ⊠makarova.h@gmail.com

Аннотация

Введение. Благодаря поддержке правительства и инновационной системе управления иракская система образования стала не просто учебно-воспитательными учреждениями, но и современной иерархической структурой, отвечающей потребностям современности, напрямую связанной с ростом и развитием нации. Изучение проблем и перспектив управления высшим образованием в Ираке поможет молодым людям, поступающим по программе студенческого обмена, определиться с выбором учебного заведения и профессионального направления. Чтобы определить основные проблемы, с которыми сталкивается большинство университетов и институтов Ирака в течение последних нескольких лет, мы использовали три разных метафоры для их рассмотрения: как машин, как организмов и, наконец, как культур. Это связано с тем фактом, что любая теория для изучения организации, хотя и может дать ценную информацию, является предвзятой и неполной.

Цель. Анализ текущей системы образования позволяет увидеть проблемы и предвидеть перспективы развития высшего образования в Ираке.

Университемы как машины. С помощью данной метафоры было выявлено, что в иракской системе высшего образования присутствует проблема нарушения иерархии вышестоящими ее звеньями в случае менеджмента. Также была обнаружена проблема отсутствия поощрения инициативы, что препятствует развитию критического мышления студентов. Кроме того, выявлены проблемы внутренней координации колледжей, дисбаланса между полномочиями и ответственностью, недостатка образовательных программ и эффективности.

Университеты как организмы. Согласно данной метафоре, рассмотрение университетов происходит с учетом внешней среды и возможных закономерностей ее изменения. На данном этапе обзора были выявлены такие проблемы, как деградация системы высшего образования в силу тяжелых условий в стране и вмешательства правительства, неприменимость классического подхода к университетам Ирака, недостаточность поддержки преподавателей со стороны администрации, высокая степень централизации, влияние политических партий и религиозных групп на высшее образование в стране.

Университемы как культуры. На данном этапе обзора были выявлены культурно обусловленные проблемы, такие как консервативность, следовательно и сопротивление изменениям, направленность на выживание, неэффективная борьба с коррупцией.

Обсуждение результатов. В рассматриваемом предметном поле много противоречивых данных относительно отдельных проблем, характерных для высшего образования Ирака. Однако их наличие неоспоримо и результатом данного обзора является комплексный перечень зон роста Иракского высшего образования.

Ключевые слова: образование Ирака, иерархия, управление образованием, оценка, высшее образование, учебная программа, международные стандарты, дефицит

Для цитирования. Макарова, Е. А., Макарова, Е. Л., Ал-Машхадани, Д. Т. И. (2024). Проблемы и перспективы развития управления высшим образованием в Ираке. *Инновационная наука: психология, педагогика, дефектология, 7*(5), 75–82. https://doi.org/10.23947/2658-7165-2024-7-5-75-82

Introduction

Iraq is an Arab state located in the Middle East. This colourful country is one of the most ancient and important cultural centres in the Islamic world, with its centuries-old history, interesting culture, monumental mosques, ancient ruins and impressive holy places. Nowadays, Iraq is not only on most people's list of tourist destinations, but the country where many foreigners are willing to come to study. About a third of the students at Iraqi universities are foreigners, which gives the universities an attractive and multicultural character. Foreign students who want to study in Iraq would like to know more about the specifics, so different recent studies are devoted to Iraqi education academic reputation (Al-Rubaie, 2024), development and sustainability of educational system (Abad-Segura et al., 2020; Al-Rubaie et al., 2021), cross-cultural differences (Machácˇek & Srholec, 2022), employers and international faculty (Jameel & Ahmad, 2020), international students (Jawad, Al-Assaf, 2019), exchange student-to-faculty ratio (Makarova et al., 2021), gender roles in education (Boldyreva et al., 2023), high school management (Makarova & Makarova, 2018) and international research network (Asiedu et al., 2020).

Education System in Iraq is quite complicated, higher education institutions are divided into universities and technical institutes. In a technical institute, a student can study in two main educational programs. To obtain a bachelor's degree,

a student must complete a 4-year course of study. To obtain a technician's diploma, it is enough to study for two years. There are almost three times more technical institutes in the country than universities. The state provides its citizens with free education at all stages of study, and also provides scholarships to its students. In general, it is possible to describe the hierarchy of a higher education system to be composed of three main levels. At the centre is the technical core of the whole system where professors are teaching and students are learning in their classrooms and laboratories. The second and middle level is the managerial level where administrators (such as department Heads, college Deans, etc.) are buffering and bridging between the other two levels. Finally, the outer level is the institutional level where administrators like university presidents and their support staff are dealing with the external institutional environment (Murray et al., 2020).

The typical case in higher education is that the core loosely-coupled with the outer levels. This has many advantages, and it is often helpful maintaining the right goals for the whole education process. However, this loose-coupling also sometimes has disadvantages, e. g., faculty can resist pressures to update to more modern teaching techniques. It is of crucial importance for all universities and schools to have well-trained lecturers and teachers for delivering courses to students. In order to achieve that goal, those lecturers and teachers must be enrolled in high quality training courses focusing on modern theories and techniques in education. This also needs to be accompanied by giving an increasing consideration by administrators for teachers' continued professional development for promotion. In general, it is quite desirable for universities to reach some balance between teaching and research requirements. If universities want to give a priority to teaching, then they must reflect this priority in their tenure and promotion standards. An emphasis on teaching does not preclude a subsequent emphasis on high quality research; in fact, high quality teaching is a requirement and introduction into high quality research. There are three main dimensions of focus in a classroom. These are (Falvey 1995):

- 1. Curriculum: This dimension is concerned with answering the "What?" of teaching. In this dimension, there are three main areas to be highlighted, which are:
- Knowledge (the cognitive aspects of the material, and the ability of the student to understand and correctly recall them),
 - Skills (the practical, experimental, and behavioural side of the course); and
- Attitudes (the affective side of the course). Note: Teachers need to be able to create as positive motivational feelings as they can for their students during course delivery. Also, it is quite desirable for these emotions to continue after the end of the course.
- 2. Instruction: This dimension is concerned with the "How?" of teaching. In this dimension, the lecturer considers various teaching methods and techniques in order to maximize the learning for all students.
- 3. Assessment: This dimension addresses the "How much?" of teaching. In other words, it addresses the degree to which the instructional methods helped students achieve the curricular goals. Assessment should include:
 - Formative assessment (which is done during the period of course delivery); and
 - Summative assessment (which is the assessment to be done for "gatekeeping purposes.

One important aim of formative assessment is to help students check their understanding of the required material. Another aim is informing the teacher as to how she/he should modify their instruction.

Higher education system in Iraq. When discussing an issue like higher education in a certain country, it is quite important to take into account the relevant peculiarities of that country such as history and culture. In this sense, we must establish some specific facets of Iraqi culture. Iraq is a nation with a history of several thousand years. About one thousand years ago, Baghdad was arguably the greatest city in the world. Given this history, it is not surprising that Iraq was a signatory country to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the 1970 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the 1989 Convention of the Rights of the Child; and the 1990 Education for All Declaration. Moreover, it is difficult to find another country that faced more severe circumstances of wars, sanctions, and occupation similar as Iraq over the last three decades.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the first modern colleges were established in Iraq. The first was the College of Law and then the College of Medicine in Baghdad. In the early 1970s, and in order to fulfil the country's developmental objectives, Iraq endeavoured to reorganize and improve its educational system. In 1975 the government established the right to free education from primary to university level, although only primary education was made compulsory (Iraq: Law on Compulsory Education, 11 October 1976, https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/1976/en/122524). As a result, education was provided free of charge at all levels, and there was an increase in higher education students of 52 % between 1975 and 1988. By the end of 1980s, there was nearly one university in each large or middle-sized Iraqi governorate (18 in all), with five universities in Baghdad, the capital. According to the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Iraq had one of the best education systems in the Arab world at the beginning of the 1980s. The Higher Education system, especially the scientific and technological institutions, met the highest international standards (UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (2024). https://iraq.un.org/en).

Unfortunately, a dramatic shift started in 1990 just after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait when the United Nations Security Council imposed economic sanctions on Iraq. These sanctions included an almost complete trade embargo, barring all imports from and exports to Iraq. These sanctions did not just affect the education system. They affected all

aspects of Iraqi life: infrastructure, employment, health, and the social fabric. Consequently, the general national decline had a profound effect on the lives of students and teachers who have been overwhelmed by events and have been living under highly stressed conditions for years. For the present time, governmental universities and institutions constitute about 85 % of higher education in Iraq. There are now about 25 universities and a similar number of two-year technical institutes. The other HE institutions consist of various "private universities and colleges". These universities, institutes, and colleges are distributed throughout the Iraqi governorates, with Baghdad having the largest number of them. In Iraq, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) is responsible for the management, administration, and supervision of all universities and most of the technical institutions, while all elementary and secondary schools altogether with some mid-level institutions are managed by another ministry, the Ministry of Education (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2018).

In 2024 Iraq achieves distinction in the number of universities participating in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. Confirming the educational services index in Iraqi universities and their various academic programs and their connection to the path of sustainable development and its goals, facing challenges, keeping pace with changes, contributing to awareness-raising and providing scientific solutions, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research announces that Iraq has achieved the first rank in the Arab world and seventh globally in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024 in terms of the number of universities participating in the 2024 edition, which witnessed the competition of 2152 from 125 countries around the world. The official website of the ranking (QS World University Rankings 2025: Top global universities (2024). https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings?countries=iq) showed that Iraqi universities achieved competitive ranks, with the University of Baghdad coming in at (801–850), followed by Al-Mustansiriya University (1001–1200), Babylon University (1201–1400), Basra University (1201–1400).

Table 1 *QS World University Rankings 2025: Top global universities of Iraq: comparative analysis*

No.	University name	Research and discovery		Learning experience	Emplo	oyability	Global engagement		Sustainability	
		Acade- mic Reputa- tion	Citations per Faculty	Faculty Student Ratio	Emp- loyer Reputa- tion	Employ- ment Outcomes	International Student Ratio	Interna- tional Research Network	International Faculty Ratio	
1	University of Baghdad	11.0	1.5	24.6	16.9	72.7	1.1	63.5	2.4	3.1
2	Mustan- siriyah University	5.0	1.3	51.2	8.4	4.2	3.6	14.0	35.7	1.1
3	University of Babylon	4.6	2.0	14.5	9.8	4.3	1.0	29.9	1.1	1.2
4	University of Basrah	5.5	1.4	18.4	9.3	10.0	1.1	33.7	1.3	1.0
5	University of Kufa	4.4	1.4	29.0	12.8	4.2	1.1	16.4	4.4	1.0

The QS rankings are based on academic reputation (30 %), employers (15 %), student-to-faculty ratio (10 %), citations (20 %), international faculty (5 %), international students (5 %), international research network (5 %), employability (5 %) and sustainability (5 %). Based on the results achieved that showed Iraq in a distinguished ranking, Iraqi higher education and scientific research institutions are proceeding with full confidence in improving the quality of university performance and providing a positive educational environment that meets the requirements of scientific knowledge and technical skills required to serve society and the standards of good education and academic accreditation that are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The scientific review is presented by a systematic analysis of the problems and perspectives of higher education development in Iraq. Due to the fact that Iraqi higher education system is getting more attractive to foreign students, it is nice to know more about universities in Iraq. Researchers from different countries investigate on the specifics of education, their studies help people choose from plethora of choices. The material for this review was based on articles from English-language journals, as well as publications in Russian. **The purpose** of this article is to analyse the current education system in Iraq and identify the challenges and opportunities for the future development of higher education in this country.

Main Problems in Iraqi Higher Education. It is quite acceptable now to notify that all theories of management are based on implicit metaphors or images that enable us to understand and manage our organizations in distinctive and

partial ways. However, whenever we use the metaphor in order to read or understand organizational life, we have to be careful of the fact that it always produces some kind of one-sided insight. Thus, any theory for studying organization or management, while can create valuable insights, it is also biased and incomplete. Giving this inherently paradoxical aspect in recognizing theory as metaphor, we can simply conclude that no single theory may give us a perfect understanding of such organizational issues. The only way is to explore the implications of different metaphors for situations that we want to organize and manage.

In order to define the major problems that most of Iraqi universities and institutions have been suffering during the last few years and till this moment, we will use three different images to examine these universities: as machines, as organisms, and finally as cultures (Bearman et al., 2023). This would hopefully help us in defining some basic needs for these universities and also the expected barriers that we need to deal with when we try to achieve the required change.

Universities as Machines

This is the classical way of looking to organizations (universities) by imagining them as machines. Despite the fact that this view now is largely criticized to be so misleading especially in modern management, it still has some non-negligible strengths in some situations. Many people now are refusing to imagine universities as machines because this tends to underplay the so human aspects of a university. Universities simply are not rational and they need not to be so. However, the mechanical way of thinking is so ingrained in many people conceptions of universities such that they are not able organize or manage in any other way.

The strengths this mechanical view can only be appreciated in certain environments stable enough to ensure that university products (the graduates) are always appropriate in a straightforward manner and that the "machine" parts (faculty, staff, and students) are compliant and behave in the same way they have been designed to do. In fact, such environments are so far from being a reality in many places and especially in a country like Iraq though most managers there cannot imagine universities or colleges in any different style. Away from all these limitations, using the metaphor of machine can enable us to define the following problems in Iraqi universities:

- Unity of command principle is violated in a usual manner by higher authorities. For example, many university presidents sometimes try to be involved in doing some dean's or even department head's jobs whenever they have any conflict with that dean or department head. This weakens the performance of the whole institution by making people uncertain who they-should obey. Such behaviour also causes a direct violation to the scalar chain principle.
- Some colleges (indeed some universities) might have a large number of diverse departments and units such that they face many coordinating problems. This violates the principle of span of control in the classical management theory.
- Initiative is practically discouraged most of the time at all levels of the higher education system in Iraq. This can be noticed in all levels of the higher education hierarchy. For example, in the core level, it is noticeable that most teachers are lecturing most of the time and spoon-feeding is the dominant teaching methodology where students need to highly depend on memorization. Actually, this one of the most serious pre-college problems where spoon feeding is also dominant in primary and secondary schools.
- It is quite possible to find many situations of unbalance between authority and responsibility. While higher level administrators are trying to decrease the authorities of lower levels, they are at the same time try to push more responsibilities on those.
- There is a big efficiency concern in most public organizations in Iraq. Universities are no exception. There is no accurate design for work tasks especially at the managerial and institutional levels. Yet worst, some significant jobs are not assigned to the best qualified persons. They rather usually assigned to people with good connections to administrators. In the core level, there are concerns related to old and inconsistent curricula, lack of modern lab apparatus, and poor libraries. These represent a deficiency in both task design and offering the required support for (teachers) task success.
- There is a deficiency in training programs in all levels. However, the most sever is the one in the core. Many faculty and staff members especially at some quickly changing disciplines such as ICT need continuous training on newer technologies and techniques. Despite that there are some training centres in Iraqi universities, but there are more than one concern about the quality and completeness of their programs.

Universities as Organisms

Using the image of organizations as organisms has had an enormous impact on the way we become looking and thinking about organization and organizational life during the last several decades. This metaphor brings attention on understanding and dealing with organizational needs and environmental relations. According to this point of view, we can no longer continue to treat our universities as being closed systems. We should understand the outer environments and the possible patterns of their change in order to identify the needs of our universities to stay healthy and to survive. Inspired by this metaphor we can notice the following concerns in Iraqi universities:

• More than thirty years ago, Iraq had a very good higher education system. Unfortunately, that system have been continuously degraded during all these years by Iraq sever circumstances and by not-well studied modifications mainly for political purposes by higher authorities. The system has been declining all these years and it can possibly reach to the death state if we could not fix it again. This obviously needs people with high quality leadership skills to be in the most significant positions. For the time being, it is so hard to claim that this is the case in Iraqi universities.

- There were many dramatic changes in the environment in Iraq during the last several years, so it could be meaningless to keep trying to satisfy some goals that were inspired by the classical machine-look view of universities. The primary orientation should be given to survival in this competing world. Issues like international accreditation and quality assurance, work market, and the globalization of education must be considered in a more serious manner.
- Universities can be seen as interacting processes that have to be balanced internally as well as externally in relation to outer environment. However, here we can find another concern in most Iraqi universities where most of the faculty and students believe that administrators do not give enough attention to their actual needs. For example, the MOHESR (MOHESR Issues List of Accredited Academic Programs (2024). https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/archive/mohesr/news/Pages/MOHESR-Issues-List-of-Accredited-Academic-Programs.aspx) in the last several years has been continuously asking faculty members to publish their research papers in internationally recognized journal and/or present their work at international conferences. Meanwhile, it is still difficult for most faculty members to obtain enough financial support from universities to do that.
- Viewing universities as organisms implies that different types of universities are needed in different types of environments. This also implies that different approaches to management may be necessary to perform different tasks within the same university. Thus, giving the noticeable differences between different Iraqi regions, we can conclude that there two required steps in this direction. The first is to modify the Iraqi highly centralized higher education system to offer more flexibility and decentralization. Secondly, we should concentrate on designing more specialized universities that take into consideration the actual needs and diversity of the close outer environment. It is important to notice that most Iraqi universities now tend to be similar copies of each other with very similar colleges and scientific departments.
- One dangerous effect from outer environment in Iraq that must be buffered in some way is that many political parties and religious groups think that universities should be managed in a way that is beneficial to their ideologies and interests. Thus, they are affecting the selection of people for significant administrative positions (Jawad & Al-Assaf, 2019).

Universities as Cultures

This metaphor brings focus on the values, ideas, beliefs, assumptions, and other patterns of shared meaning that influence organizational life. Every aspect of organizational life embodies social constructions and meanings which are necessary to understand organization operation. The culture metaphor emphasizes the fact that it is possible to create or shape universities by influencing the ideologies, beliefs, values, assumptions, and other social practices that guide and affects people. This is very crucial to our understanding of change in universities. Inspired by this image for universities, we can notice the following in the Iraqi case:

- Despite the fact that we can find some unqualified teachers and a minority of some other corrupted teachers in Iraqi universities, it is important to keep in mind that the Iraqi culture is very sensitive to the issue of reputation and hence most people do not accept to be connected in any way to corrupted people. However, we can notice that the MOHESR instead of identifying such corrupted teachers and take the required legal actions against them, it continuously stress (usually before the final examinations every year) that all faculty members should submit three groups of questions with their sample answers per each class to their department. Then, the department randomly selects one group of them for assessing students and ignores the other two groups. MOHESR thinks that in this way they prevent corruption. However, it is obvious for everyone (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) (2024). https://mohesr.gov.eg/en-us/Pages/home.aspx) that this solution practically has no value. More seriously, this causes implicit negative reactions by many other faculty members. This is just one example of many actions that do not consider the culture issue in an appropriate manner.
- Due to the sever circumstances that Iraq have passed during the last years, many people in universities and other organizations have developed some kind of culture of survival behaviour. This culture is based on reflecting the good picture of everything to higher levels by burying any existent problems. Thus, many reports that are submitted to administrators are showing the picture they want to see even if it is not real. Yet worst, some administrators are even not willing to see the real picture. Thus, and with many years of such behaviour, many people reach to a state of even not seeing system problems. In accordance, they do not believe in the necessity of change. Indeed, many people are afraid for supporting any change because they believe this can be dangerous to their positions and jobs.
- One should arguably assume that there will be a resistant to any change in all the core, managerial, and institutional levels. This basically due to the fact that the required change do not only challenge actions and behaviours, but it also challenges people believes and assumptions. So, it is quite expected that the response to outer environment adaptation requirements such as international accreditation will be minimal as to fulfil reporting requirements. Thus, the cultural and social issue must be considered as significant in any plan for change.
- Considering the culture issue, there has been an important cultural change occurring during the last several years happening especially to students and other young people. They suddenly moved from a situation of semi-isolation from other countries in the world just before 2003 into much open environment with internet, mobile phones, and satellite TVs. They are now capable to compare the facilities and education programs offered by their universities to the facilities and programs offered in other universities around the world (Hiali et al., 2023). Thus, most of them are disappointed in some

way or another as a result of this comparison. Unfortunately, they have very limited freedom to express themselves in a correct way. Therefore, we can notice some aggressive behaviour of some of them against universities and available facilities. Many of them are keeping feel uncomfortable and unsatisfied. This represents an inherent internal resistance to faculty and administration actions and limits success possibilities all the time. This notice can also be inspired by the organism metaphor. However, it is quite possible to make a great benefit from these deep feelings stored by students if we could convince them that we are serious in doing noticeable enhancements in our programs, teaching methods, labs, and other facilities (Anastasiadou & Taraza, 2020).

Discussion

It is also possible to roughly describe all the above-mentioned problems by relating them to every one of the three levels of higher education hierarchy (the core, managerial, and institutional levels) (Eropoba μ Μακαροβα, 2020). It is obvious that some of these problems can be related to more than one level at the same time. In this case, we need solutions that approach such problems in all related levels. Indeed, considering the general situation in most Iraqi universities in the recent few years, it is not difficult to notice that in most curricula there is an amplified concentration on knowledge aspects upon other issues of skills and attitudes (Μακαροβα μ Μακαροβα, 2018). This concern is directly reflected on the instructional side in classrooms so that lectures are usually delivered in a spoon-feeding way with minimal student interaction. However, A. L. Abdulqader and L. N. Yampolskaya, in their research, on the contrary, concluded that the higher education system in Iraq is based not only on the development of society, but also on the development of personality, providing the study of many topics at an "advanced level" (Αδαμπαρερ μ Яμπιοπρέκα, 2022). Of course, a similar remark can be noted for assessment where most of the overall mark percentage depends solely recalling of theoretical aspects (Al-Rubaie, 2024). The concern of insufficient focusing on the development of student skills might be partially justified by the lack of modern laboratory apparatus in most scientific departments and the difficulty of arranging high quality off-campus training due to the general unstable situation in Iraq. However, it seems that there is no acceptable way to justify that so many teachers are giving just a little focus onto the issue of attitudes.

Comprehensive quality education for Iraqi citizens is currently available through migration, including educational migration. R. M. Zinatullin notes that "due to the ongoing deaths of civilians in Iraq, students and teachers have resorted to forced migration as a measure. Many of them continue their studies in neighbouring countries like Jordan and Egypt" (Зинатуллин, 2022, с. 34). A good educational system is essential for revitalizing the Iraqi social, economic and political life, and is the key factor to security and the development of a unified, cohesive community. There is an urgent need for a more comprehensive reconstruction effort than solely compassionate assistance or physical rehabilitation of social facilities which ought to be centred on systems of reform processes.

References

Al-Rubaie, M. D. S. (2024). Updating Curricula of Iraqi Higher Education Institutions & SDGs Achievement. *Middle East Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences*, 4(1), 87–78. https://doi.org/10.56961/mejeps.v4i1.569

Abdulkader, A. L., & Yampolskaya, L. N. (2022). The modern system of higher education in Iraq: problems and prospects. In *Orientalism. Actuality and prospects. Materials of the III International Scientific and Methodological Conference* (P. 73–75). HNPU is named after G. S. Skovoroda. (In Russ.)

Abad-Segura, E., González-Zamar, M.-D., Infante-Moro, J. C., & Ruipérez García, G. (2020). Sustainable management of digital transformation in higher education: Global research trends. *Sustainability*, *12*(5), 2107. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12052107

Al Hiali, T. (2023). The role of digitalization and research and development on higher education institutions performance in Iraq with government support. *ArtsEduca*, 35, 224–234.

Al-Husseini, S., & Elbeltagi, I. (2018). The role of knowledge sharing in enhancing innovation: a comparative study of public and private higher education institutions in Iraq. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *55*(1), 23–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2 015.1122544

Al-Rubaie, M. D., & Majdi, H. S. (2021). *Education for Achieving Sustainable Development*. Al-Zawayafor Publication. Anastasiadou, S., & Taraza, E. (2020). Resistance to Change as an Obstacle Regarding Quality in Higher Education Institutions (HEIS). In *14th International Technology, Education and Development Conference* (P. 396–401). IATED. https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2020.0168

Asiedu, M. A., Anyigba, H., Ofori, K. S., Ampong, G. O. A., & Addae, J. A. (2020). Factors Influencing Innovation Performance in Higher Education Institutions. *The Learning Organization*, 27(4), 365–378. https://doi.org/10.1108/TLO-12-2018-0205

Bearman, M., Ryan, J., & Ajjawi, R. (2023). Discourses of artificial intelligence in higher education: A critical literature review. *Higher Education*, 86(2), 369–385. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00937-2

Boldyreva, E. V., Elagina, M. Yu., & Korochentseva, A. V. (2023). Characteristics of women's careers: international studies review. *Innovative Science: psychology, pedagogy, defectology, 6*(2), 59–69. https://doi.org/10.23947/2658-7165-2023-6-2-59-69

Egorova, I. A., & Makarova, E. L. (2020). Management of international education: a review of basic concepts. *Bulletin of Taganrog Institute of Management and Economics*, 1(31), 102–106. (In Russ.)

Falvey, M. A. (1995). *Inclusive and Heterogeneous Schooling: Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction*. Paul H Brookes Publishing.

Jameel, A. S., & Ahmad, A. R. (2020). The mediating role of job satisfaction between leadership style and performance of academic staff. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(04), 2399–2414. https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I4/PR201349

Jawad, S. N., & Al-Assaf, S. I. (2019). The Higher Education System in Iraq and Its Future. *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, 8(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.1386/ijcis.8.1.55 1

Machác ek, V., & Srholec, M. (2022). Predatory publishing in Scopus: Evidence on cross-country differences. *Quantitative Science Studies*, 3(3), 859–887. https://doi.org/10.1162/qss a 00213

Makarova, E. A., & Makarova, E. L. (2018). Application of systemic approach in the field of educational technology. "Systemic" model of the educational process. *Informatics, Computer Science and Engineering Education, 2*(33), 23–27. (In Russ.) Makarova, E. A., Makarova, E. L., & Egorova, I. A. (2021). International Student Exchange Management as Factor of Educational Services Development. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education, 9*(1), 75–90. https://doi.org/10.23947/2334-8496-2021-9-1-75-90

Murray, D., Boothby, C., Zhao, H., Minik, V., Bérubé, N., Larivière, V. & Sugimoto, C. R. (2020). Exploring the personal and professional factors associated with student evaluations of tenure-track faculty. *PLoS One 15*(6). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0233515

Zinatullin, R. M. (2022). Problems of realization of the right to education in the Republic of Iraq. *Ocean Management, 1C*(14), 32–37. (In Russ.)

About the Authors:

Duha Taha Ismail Al-Mashhadani, Master of International Business Program, Management and Innovative Technologies Department, Southern Federal University (105/42, Bolshaya Sadovaya St., Rostov-on-Don, 344006, Russian Federation), Management and Economics Department, Al-Iraqiya University (Baghdad, Iraq), duhaalmashhdani@gmail.com

Elena Aleksandrovna Makarova, Dr. Sc. (Psychology), Professor of the General and Consultative Psychology Department, Don State Technical University (1, Gagarin Square, Rostov-on-Don, 344003, Russian Federation), ORCID, SPIN-code, makarova.h@gmail.com

Elena Lvovna Makarova, Cand. Sc. (Psychology), associate professor of the Management and Innovative Technologies Department, Southern Federal University (105/42, Bolshaya Sadovaya St., Rostov-on-Don, 344006, Russian Federation), ORCID, SPIN-code, elmakarova@sfedu.ru

Conflict of interest: The authors do not have any conflict of interest.

The authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Recieved / Поступила в редакцию 14.06.2024 Revised / Поступила после рецензирования 17.09.2024 Accepted / Принята к публикации 18.09.2024