The Changing Patterns of Universities in Middle East
Recognition, Internationalisation, Strategies and Challenges

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Quality and relevance in higher education have become a benchmark for recognition in capacity building for Arab countries to excel in an interdependent competitive marketplace of the world economy.

Mobility of students, recognition of degrees & certificates and internationalisation will never be achieved without a quality of inputs – processes – outputs of higher education. Market forces for quality of graduates to fuel the knowledge economy through innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship become crucial in brain-intensive industrialization, and no compromise for Arab countries, particularly Jordan to undermine, since human resources form the human capital, the main force of knowledge economy.
• *The Arab World is spending* 5.4% of its GDP on public and private education as compared to:
  * 5% of industrialized countries.
  * 3.8% of developing countries.

• *Tertiary education students represent* 25% of eligible population, higher than other developing countries.

• *Quality and relevance* of delivery of higher education is low and not competitive. It lacks creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. It is reflected in the turn-key technological projects, still going on in the Arab region, and so far business as usual. Endogenous capacity in science and technology is absent.

• *Expenditure average*, on R&D has not risen above 0.4% of GDP as compared to world average of 1.7%.

• *Arab scientific papers total* 1.5% of world, and 90% of it is done by public sector.

• *Private sector*, almost is absent and thrive on R&D outputs done by others.
I. Recognition:

Students started to look for quality and relevant education. Simply, a university degree will not find them a job unless it is competitive.

With life-long education and informal education, new system of recognition and certification is required outside the higher education degree context.

There is a changing landscape of higher education in the Arab world, where mobility of students used to be traditionally to Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, but nowadays has shifted to Gulf states particularly, Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain in addition to Jordan.

Although Jordan has created 28 public and private universities accommodating 350,000 students, mobility of Jordanian students aboard still one of the highest among Arab countries, of cohort students.
1. Changing Landscape:

- Global tertiary enrollment reached 170 million in 2009 (UNESCO institute for statistics), by 2025 it will be expected to reach 200 million,
- Representing 5% annual growth. China, India, US & Russia have a combined share of 45% of total world tertiary enrollment.
- Other emerging economies as:
  - Brazil (6.2 million),
  - Indonesia (4.9 million),
  - Iran (3.4 million),
  - South Korea (3.2 million),
  - Turkey (3.0 million),
- The Arab region stands at 3.2 million tertiary enrollment.
Tertiary enrolment growth
(2002–2009, 000’s)

2. **Students mobility:**

- Forcasts of **OUTBOUND** number of students is lead by:
  - China, (585,000),
  - India (296,000)
  - South Korea (134,000),
  - followed by Nigeria, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Saudia Arabia & Turkey.

- Global students studying aboard is:
  - rising in 2015: 5.5 million,
  - expected in 2025 to reach 8 million (according to OECD).

- **INBOUND** international students flow toward the U.S 600,000, UK 380,000, Australia 260,000, France 250,000. It is expected that China, Singapore, Malaysia and some Gulf States will be the fastest growing study destinations for International students.
Global Tertiary OUTBOUND Mobility Ratio by Origin Market (2009)

Source: UNESCO, OECD, Oxford Economics
Global Tertiary INBOUND Mobility Ratio by Destination Market (2009)

Source: UNESCO, Oxford Economics
Global INBOUND and OUTBOUND Mobile Tertiary Students (2009)

Source: UNESCO, Oxford Economics
The flow of international students will be motivated by:

a. **Democracy & stability** of target countries.

b. **Flow of students** from high to low tuition fees.

c. **Economy and quality** of life.

d. **Quality & relevance** of education.

e. **Adoption of latest trends** in technology of education.

f. **University Website**; 77% responded that the university website made the difference in their perception in joining institution.

g. **Digital Strategy** attracting international students: e-mails, e-learning online & social media to communicate, smart classrooms & smart campuses.
3. What to do to expand recognition:

1. **Access to higher education** should be **merit – based**, to assure competitiveness and equal opportunity building on excellence.

2. **Scholarship**, should be built on excellence.

3. **Sustainability** of financing higher education.

4. **Abolishing Quotas for lower grader**, than their peers.

5. **Abolishing Quotas for limiting international** students and professors.

6. **Scholarly Graduates**, to be nurtured by pursuing their higher education.

7. **Standardization and quality assurance**.

8. **Accreditation of academic programs**.

9. **An effective website**, to reflect quality of research, teaching, outreach programs.
3. **What to do to expand recognition Continue:**

10. **Homepage**, can make or break assessment decision.

11. **Blended learning**, online, e-learning, virtual, lectures from Star universities.

12. **Flipped classroom**, new pedagogical approach overlaps blended Learning, problem-solving.

13. **Output of peer reviewed research papers** patents, citations, awards.
Internationalisation:

**Standardization** has been prompted by European accreditation, transfer of credits study programs and mobility of students across borders (the Bologna process). It brings **quality assurance** in higher education, through **curriculum development** and **assessment of teaching-learning process**.

**Internationalisation** is designed to promote **international mobility** and achieve **intercultural skills**. It aims at **compatibility** of degrees, **transfer** of teaching credits and educational achievement, **and the internationalisation of the curriculum** to ensure **competitiveness** of both institutions and graduates.
• **How to promote internationalisation:**

1. *Language center at the university* is an important and effective setup for internationalisation to attract students from abroad.

2. *Exchange of students* will enrich the learning process by exposing students to other cultures.

3. *Collaborative research partnership*; nationals who studied abroad tend to maintain links to former colleagues.

4. *Visiting* professors and joint graduate programs as 1 + 1 university of Petra with Leeds university, on joint master program in English translation.

5. *Joining* international awards as IT students from university of Petra winning the Microsoft award in N.Y.C.
UOP students with Bill Gates, receiving Microsoft awards. N.Y.C, 2011.
III. Strategy and Challenges:

1. **Career development**, where co-op training and graduation projects become crucial for career development. Training should become an integral part of the curriculum. Graduation projects allow students to interact with real life through innovative projects. Spending one year abroad as is done by the Jordanian-German University is one successful example in broadening the horizon of graduates.

2. **Accelerate R&D in collaboration** with others to widen the international profile joint research, (Scopus, Thomson Reuters) peer reviewed journals, patents, links with industry.

3. **Accreditation, standardization and ranking**, the university should have a strategy toward national and international accreditation and ranking. Quality and relevance should prevail on all its academic programs.
III. **Strategy and Challenges continue:**

4. **Introduce partnership** in research and teaching with star universities at the national and international levels. Consortium on graduate programs would provide the critical mass and strengthen the research and teaching of master and Ph.D. candidates. Introduce 1 + 1 in master program and 2 + 1 in Ph.D. program.

5. **Financing higher education** should be built on pay-cost of an individual student, students funds should provide scholarship for scholastic excellence and needy students (partial or total), whom were admitted on merits and cannot afford paying tuitions.

6. **Strengthen autonomy** of the university by keeping it away of political pressure groups so as to be maintained on merits.

7. **Create good governance** of the university system and processes, to reduce waste and increase efficiency in utilizing the human and financial resources. Create a trimmed efficient dynamic university, and lay off extra weight.
III. **Strategy and Challenges continue:**

8. **Access to higher education** should be on merits, abolish degrading quotas in university admission.

9. **Create an inducing environment** for research innovation and entrepreneurship.

10. **Introduce blended** learning, e-learning and on-line learning life-long education. There is a need to train faculty members on technology of education utilizing new pedagogical multimedia tools.

11. **Ease regulation particularly** residence regulation for international staff & students.

12. **Create consortium** to reduce cost and create the critical mass.
Top UK collaborative research partners (2010)

Source: Thomson Reuters Web of Knowledge data, extracted December 2011
Thank you,