

Three Choices are better than One

Proposed Project of the Scholastic Average

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Introduction:

The educational innovation is considered an advanced step in the epistemic field as it engages all components of the society in its different levels, the planners of educational policy, researchers, parents, and the civil society organizations. education is a social act aims at social upbringing on the citizenship values, epistemic development and equipping with behavioral competence (Nige, 2009).

The educational operation which has been described as a developed innovational process, it needs to be checked constantly concerning accredited policies, styles and devices in providing a suitable learning environment, which aims to develop effective learning ability, productive outcomes and gaining of knowledge (Baquer & Al- Musawe, 1998 :385).

There should be real steps to develop the educational system in Iraq through reconsidering of a number of its qualitative joints, one of them is the way in calculating scholastic average for the student after completing the preparatory stage. The researcher would like to suggest a mechanism, as 'an innovational step' for calculating the mean score related to calculating ratio from the Ministerial Examinations of primary, intermediate and preparatory stages to form from its total the final average of the student. Al-Hamash (1973 :13)

demonstrates the Ministerial Examinations as those examinations which are run by the Ministry of Education for pupils completing the sixth primary year, the third intermediate year, and the sixth preparatory year, they are all paper-and-pencil examinations.

The scholastic average occupies considerable care. So, it is seen that there is an urgent need to reconsider such a big issue which has been regarded as a frightful incubus on the students and their parents, when time for accomplishing the school stages is due. In fact the accomplishing of general education should be done with full flexibility and without tension or complexity.

The whole society is pre-engaged with the worries of the public examinations. A large number of families are anxious whether their children at all three stages, will pass successfully or not. Indeed, they feel terrified of the idea that all the worries, efforts and money spent on their children would go in vain.

The Reasons behind the Suggested Project:

After deep and through investigation into results and rates of success and failure in the public examinations, it has been found that the reasons behind the fluctuations of results can be summarized as follows: 1) The results of the public examinations attained by pupils at, both the primary and intermediate stages are completely neglected by the educational system and even by parents. What counts are only the final results of the examinations at the sixth-secondary education stage. This is so because all the students are streamed to university on the basis of these results. 2) Teachers do not have clear role concerning the quality of their pupils' achievements. 3) Clear absence of high portion of the parents' efforts in following up their children at primary and intermediate stages. 4) Talented and interested students at both stages do not find enough concentration on their talent and

interest. 5) Exhilaration of private tutor phenomenon at the preparatory level places burden on the limited incomes families 6) Enormous number of students who complete preparatory stage suffer from retarding effect due to unaccepted average. All these reasons motivate any concerned person to think seriously toward reconsidering the method related to the calculation of students' average when completing their studies.

Hence, it is a must to build a new form regarding the final average and move toward a plan which is consistent with the soul of the era, and comprehend the international experiments concerning this issue despite that each state has its own circumstances.

Theoretical Review:

Changes in education often come about when the current practices are challenged and questions are being asked about the way things are done. The search for a more efficient way of achieving educational objectives may lead to proposals for either a new way of doing the same thing, or restructuring the current provisions to achieve the same set of goals.

Changes, however, do not normally come about just because someone decides s/he wants a change. There must be an event which informs those in charge of education that the present system is either not achieving or is incapable of enabling the achievement of developmental goals. Once that decision is made, what remains is the attempt to carefully identify not only why the old system can no longer be continued in its present form, but also how to provide a more acceptable alternative (Adamu, 1994 :6).

Innovation is a process of making improvements by introducing a new idea, method or device and its successful exploitation such that a change is brought about. The change then builds a new measurement of performance of persons or an organization (Rogers,1971, Zaltman, 1973, Altbach, 1985).

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The innovation might lead to either radical or small changes in outcomes, processes or structures but they usually emerge as a solution to a problem.

Any changes in a society have combined to construct needs for regular innovations and reforms in education. As Durkheim (1938:167) argued:

Educational transformations are always the result and the symptom of social transformations in terms of which they are to be explained. In order for people to feel at any particular moment in time the need to change its educational system, it is necessary that new ideas and needs have emerged in which the former system is no longer adequate.

Education is a key for moving societies along the development continuum, within this context, Adams (1977:299) affirms that "expanded and improved educational provision became a focus of development efforts, especially in developing countries as a means of acquiring new skills and increasing productivity".

Therefore, educational innovations are often introduced to make education more effective, and this has generated a whole theoretical field with a focus on how the innovations were initiated and how they achieve their effects.

Related attempts in this important area, according to the knowledge of the researcher, Ministry of Education in Jordan held a national conference at the end of 2009 about the examination system in the secondary school. Selected academics and specialists took part in the discussions. The conference discussed the negative practices which accompanied the examination system for the last ten years, as well as a proposed project concerning Ministerial Examinations. The project as an innovational act divides the secondary school examination into four semesters instead of two starts from 11th and 12th classes. (Al- Arab 2009).

Educational Innovations in Iraq:

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) referred to the educational innovations clearly during its conference held in 1970. One of its recommendations affirms that "due to the needs of the development which take different shapes, UNESCO should participate in the educational innovation which will help in progressing both societies and individuals".

The base which govern the educational innovational operation in Iraq was mentioned in the law of the Ministry of Education No.124 dated 1971 article No.3 as follows " Ministry of Education has the right to apply experiments in some schools regarding their administrations, curriculum, teaching aids, and the style of examinations to get benefit from extracted results and generalize them". Several experiments and projects have been implemented, some of them stopped after application for many years because of the finishing of experimenting period or they did not success. Other projects integrated within the educational system and became general state like school card, special needs education, and the educational guidance. While other projects are still in the implementing stage but not generalized till now because of some difficulties, these projects are:

1. Eclectic method in learning reading and writing (1972/1973).
2. Departments of vocational education in the intermediate schools (1976/77).
3. Manual workshop in the primary schools (1977/78).
4. Teaching foreign languages in the secondary stage (French, Russian, and Spanish (1980/81).
5. Integrated experience unit in the kindergarten (1981/82).
6. Using the computer in teaching and learning (1988/89).
7. Acceleration of preponderated students (1988/89).
8. School of distinguished students (1990/91).

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9. Affiliated schools to UNESCO (1996/97).

10. Basic education (1994/95). (Bqkir, 2001, p.15)

Description of the Project:

The project aims at revising the final scholastic average of the pupil. Instead of taking the average of preparatory stage only, the proposed average will be the summation of portion from the ratio of the primary stage Ministerial Examination average, portion from the ratio of the intermediate stage Ministerial Examination average, and portion from the ratio of the preparatory stage Ministerial Examination average. This means that the efforts of the students in getting final average is not exclusive to the preparatory stage, but it will be the collection of the three portions from the averages' ratio of the mentioned stages.

The following table explains the suggested ratio, there are three choices:

Primary stage	Intermediate stage	Preparatory stage	Average
20%	20%	60%	100%
10%	15%	75%	100%
10%	10%	80%	100%

Expectations:

The researcher expects that the implementation of the described project serves the educational process, because both teachers and parents as partners will reveal the enthusiasm and interplay with each other to achieve the common goals. Therefore, there will be an explicit attendance of the following expectations:

- 1- Paying high attention to primary and intermediate stages since they are the logical foundation in developing pupils' competences. These two stages will gain the interest of concerned people through improving teaching methods, curriculum, assessment practices, and so on.
- 2- Teachers in both stages will be encouraged to play a new role in concentrating on the outcome quality, and

this will give them animate push to graduate excellent pupils.

- 3- There will be a clear and substantial change of the parents' interest in both stages which paves the way to the preparatory stage.
- 4- Undertaking the right of the pursuant and interested pupils from the beginning which will build a stimulation base to other pupils to imitate their distinct colleagues and involve in the needed competition.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Through demonstrating related literature and ideas, it has become evident that there is a real need to consider our educational system of calculation the average of scores for the students at the final examinations of the sixth preparatory stage. To conclude, firstly, the educational system concerning the calculation of the sixth preparatory stage needs some modification to be valid and accurate. Building on the first conclusion, teachers as well as parents should pay equal attention to the achievement of our students at all the educational stages.

The researcher suggests that there should be real and serious discussions to the proposed project with the concerned people in the Ministry of Education (experts and specialists) as a first step. Then, hold discussion among experts, specialists and university professors in the Ministry of Higher Education as a second step. Then, offering a chance to the parents and the civil society organizations to take part in the discussion of the project. Finally, hold a conference to discuss themes and viewpoints of all interested people in order to put the proposal in its final formula.

At last, the researcher like to say, that the cooperation between both Ministries draws the future of our generations because a good outcome from Ministry of Education gives

good incomes to Ministry of Higher Education which in its turn gives good outcome to society, and vice versa is correct.

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