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GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND COURSE DESIGN: TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND DOMESTIC REQUIREMENTS

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ABSTRACT

***Objective**: Among the best strategies affecting the improvement of higher learning institutions, curriculum development initiatives rank high as the most crucial props that support the structure of academic innovation. This study explores the globalization driven activities and their influence on curriculum formation in the Iraqi HEIs contingent upon the preservation of religious and moral values and absolutes.*

***Method**: Questionnaires administered on 160 faculty members who possess expertise and prowess in developing curriculum formed the data collection tool. This was succeeded by a quantitative analysis intended to explore the effects of globalization related factors on curriculum and course outlines. The results suggested that despite profound effects of globalization-oriented processes on curricular changes, it is also crucial to maintain ideological and cultural values which were found during the study in the phase of curriculum development.*

***Results**: The findings as postulated by the research study revealed that while the seven factors, which define the dimensions of globalisation driven initiatives, selected through the literature review, exert positive influence, on the curriculum development and course design. However, one of these criteria is cross-cultural competencies requirements, which has also influenced the process of curriculum development rather significantly, at the same time, this criterion has been recognized as one of the most important to adhere to in regard to ideological orientations and cultural values of society in Iraq.*

***Novelty**: this study reveals that contextual factors and socio-cultural features are critical in analysing globalization effects on education hence the multicultural approach to curriculum. In addition, the analysis of research on globalization and curriculum development in higher education revealed that these practices are far from forming in the context of the growing globalization and that cultural values' norm still plays a significant role in the curriculum development and course design processes.*

KEYWORDS: *Curriculum Development, Globalization-driven Initiatives, Preservation of social values and cultural heritage, Higher Education Institutions.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization as the process occurred in the development of interconnection between the states that generate dependency upon each other in different spheres, which enclose almost all spheres of social life including the economies, societies, and educational systems. For higher education institutions, curriculum internationalization, introduction of new approaches to education delivery and the promotion of cross-cultural skills are becoming equally important as training students to becoming effective players in the competitive and dynamic global economy. Therefore, many institutions desire to achieve international standards and to create partnerships with related international institutions, to plan to tend their positions within the international competition. However, the above trends are contrary to the needs and demands of national and cultural preservation in many countries and regions. Cultural and historical background, traditions, and characteristics are connected with the society's life way and the person's personality (Nakpodia, 2010).

The process of globalization and the desire of the peoples of the world to openness, have created a new level of the approach between those nations, which led to the application of theories have become a driving force towards the transformation of the economic, social, cultural and academic systems as are based on the interdependence between the countries of the world. Therefore, many higher education institutions have begun to involve themselves as actors in the process of constructing the curricula of their institutions to meet international standards, promoting change and incorporating effectiveness of various modes of teaching and learning, and forming trainings which equip learners for increase globalization of the job market. These institutions focus on attaining a competitive global status; internationally, they aim at embracing global standards and partnering with other premier academic institutions and universities in the global repute to attain the advanced ranks to popularize their names in the global society.

Thus, considering that despite the fact that we are living today in the age of globalization, many people still do not have

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enough preparation for this ongoing process and many countries and societies still do not have collective and national programs and agenda that can help to minimize the level of negative consequences and threats that exist based on globalization, it is crucial to protect cultural values and traditions, which are still of immense importance for many states and nations. Culturally acceptable behaviours, beliefs and values are part of the lives of people in any society and they help them make perception of life (Barsky, 2019).

In many countries with the depth of civilization, including Iraq, the preservation of cultural and ideological heritage has turned into a tool to legitimate their existence and claim state sovereignty and a focus of national pride and pride, and the depth of civilization and cultural heritage has become a protective shield against destructive globalization.

The issue about the ability of many countries with rich history and cultural diversity such as Iraq with civilization history of thousands of years challenges an important issue of the development of curricula in behalf of higher education institutions depending on the tension or intersection between globalization and its positive or negative impacts as well as the preservation of cultural identities.

Nowadays Iraqi higher education institutions have the mission of curriculum development, and this mission is in its essence a vital problem because while these institutions use international experiences in curriculum development, they are at the same time called to maintain own cultural identity provided that the application of these standards does intersect certain cultural and ideological imperatives.

Given this intersection, critical questions emerge concerning the possible ways of aligning the educational imperative, derived from global standards with advanced experiences in higher learning institutions with the imperative to sustain culture and religion. Therefore, the task of constructing curricula by applying the global standards of internationality along with and keeping up cultural and ideological orientation, has become the initial support, not only for Iraq but for many countries of the global village. Thus, the necessity of a balance between the establishment of global standards and the maintenance of cultural identity constitutes the goal of higher education institutions in these countries while developing curricula. This undoubtedly encourages the researchers and decision makers in the academic institutions to look beyond the rules, program and blue prints and to look at the international standards very closely before going for the process of curriculum development and course design as this would go a long way in applying the patterns identified at the international level in such a way that it does not cross or deviate from the local patterns identified.

While voices are rising and perceptions on the effects of globalization to curriculum development in higher learning institutions continue to gather momentum, a review of literature established that there is an emerging research agenda, which is associated with the interconnection of globalization to standards in curriculum development in higher learning institution, as well as the quest to preserve cultural and religious diversity.

This gap indicates the necessity for further investigation on the continuum of relationship between globalization and cultural sustainability, whether this relationship is antagonistic and negative or synergistic and utilitarian, and whether this process might enrich the procedure of curriculum improvement and course construction in higher education institutions and might never cross ideological and cultural imperatives.

Based on the above, the most important research questions that need to be answered can be formulated as follows:

- In what ways were curricula developed, and programs delivered in higher education institutions influenced by globalisation initiatives and internationalisation?
- In what extent and manners is cross cultural material embedded in higher education curricula? It is questioned whether this is an obstacle which also overlaps with reference standards that may be adopted as part of the process of curriculum and course construction.

This research therefore seeks to begin to unveil and analyse the complex norms and processes that comprise this framework in an effort to enhance et ac curriculum creation and course establishment in global universities, specifically for the theme of globalization and cultural sustainability.

In this regard, this research seeks to attempt to look at the new directions that may be attributed to rankings of global standards and academic accreditation of educational quality in the creativities concerning with curriculum development and course designing practices within the prevalence of global leadership and to explore how the means of integrating both adopting international standards and cultural competency necessities for the formation of curriculum and courses.

By reviewing the various indicators that have a relation to curriculum development, as well as the course creation process in higher learning institutions, this article casts further light at the international relationship between globalization and cultural preservation in curriculum development and course design and subsequently adopts and follows global trends in curriculum development and course design which are applicable to the international higher learning institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum development and course design programmes remain one of the most critical support bases for higher education institutions. Because it was merely an image of the unstable society needs, a vision that Windows 95 delivers the fact of cognitive development, the level of educational innovation. Consequently, the process of curriculum development and course design is a multifaceted and multilayered process, and associated with globalization, as most emerging universities are likely to make use of the blessed experience of the International Universities in this respect.

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In this literature review, key considerations affecting curriculum development and course design to integrate the dimensions of globalization and multiculturalism are presented.

2.1 Internationalisation Initiatives (IIs)

It also reveals the significant importance of IIs specifically for the curriculum and courses. According to Knight (2008) the purpose of internationalisation is to 'incorporate an international dimension, foster cross cultural sensitivity and increase the internationalization of tertiary education in institutions (Aslan & Aybek, 2020).

One of the most critical steps that enhance the higher education institutions' global competitiveness and enable students to construct a connected scientific global context, is to respond to the global standards through integration of international content, individual and/ or institutional experiences and perceptions into their academic programs.

In this regard, Knight & De Wit, (2018), Luxon & Peelo, (2009), and Fong, (2022) shares impressive findings on the outcomes of international cooperation in developing curricula and designing courses in higher education institutions while also highlighting the need for interinstitutional cooperation for improved curriculum that supports scientific advancements and the global competitiveness of the courses. This development in curricula and course design takes place without prejudice to the religious, ideological and cultural constants of society (Cantoni et. al., 2017).

Joint Curriculum Development and Course Design Projects (JCDCDPs) allow HEIs to use past experiences and a diverse set of experience and materials to improve the courses offered and build on international experiences (Schuerholz-Lehr et. al., 2007; Rusirawan et. al., 2023). Accordingly, the relationship between by Internationalization Initiatives (IIs) and curriculum development and course design is hypothesized as follows:

H1: *Internationalization Initiatives (IIs) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) procedures help enhance the integration of the global standards and perspectives into the curriculum development and course design and simultaneously preserve the religious, ideological, and cultural constants.*

2.2 Transnational Education Trends (TETs)

After the appearance of the Transnational Education Trends (TETs) such as distance campuses, joint degree programs, etc., curriculum development and course design at the higher education level has improved remarkably.

King et. al. (2011) pointed out that many institutions have engaged in the globalization of higher education and transnational educational initiatives; they have encouraged educational institutions to work under international standards associated with a curriculum relevant to different students' needs and course designs of higher education systems.

Aside from that, Lee et. al. (2020) and Caniglia et. al. (2018) note that other types of learning platforms have now been integrated noting that the advancement of online learning platforms has demonstrated a huge impact on serving the needs of learners online. Hence when curriculum is under development, curriculum developers must think of open or elastic curriculum. This should mean using the digital technologies in the process of designing and developing of the curricula and not being separated from the modern methods of teaching (Tian & Martin, 2014). Accordingly, the correlation between Transnational Education Trends (TETs), and curriculum development and course design are hypothesized to be as follows:

H2: Transnational Education Trends (*TETs) have a positive influence on the curriculum formation and course design in HEIs to promote scientific exchange and cooperation but at the same time, has to maintain and respect the Religious, Ideological and Cultural Imperatives which are as good as imprinted on any Curriculum.*

2.3 The Cross-Cultural Competence Requirements (CCRs)

Cross cultural competence is now an important aspect in the development on a curriculum especially during the globalization period hence the need to have Cross cultural competence requirement (CCRs) in the process of developing higher education curriculum.

According to Kazakeviciute et. al. (2016), CCRs has been defined as the capacity to engage and interact with others from culturally different worlds, something that students entering the global workplace and communicating with people of different nationality or origin, need.

From the study conducted by Tseng (2017) and Wimpenny et. al. (2022) cross cultural competence is found to be a part of curriculum or course development in which the students are being prepared for intercultural communications experiences alongside the benefits and harms of international interaction that a student is supposed to face after passing out.

This encompasses addition of other co-curricular academic activities like the study tours and intercultural interaction to enhance cross cultural learning among students. Subsequently, in order to guarantee that such an approach yields no preference or restriction of one culture over another, it has to meet all peculiarities of each culture (Dunne, 2011). Accordingly, the proposed hypothesis is:

H3: *The improvement of the proposed and implemented Cross Cultural Competencies Requirements (CCRs) positively influences curriculum formation and course design in HEIs, and consequently enhance formation level of students' intercultural competencies preserving the religious constants and values.*

2.4 Global Mobility of Faculty & Students (GMFSs)

Apparently, GMFSs has a significant impact on size, strategy and method of developing curriculum and design of courses in higher learning institutions as identified by Simm & Marvell (2017) and Huang, (2016).

The constant moving of faculty members for long time is helpful in effectively accessing much knowledge, experience, skills and even the best practices inn teaching from other

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countries thus impacting on the curriculum development and the course designing arrangements Nova et. al., (2011). Stating that, amongst other things, student mobility plays a part in curriculum and course design, even though this is not a particularly considerable one.

Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal (2016) revealed that international lecturers and students come to the classes with different viewpoints, exposures, and expectations of what contemporary curricula look like and can thus ensure that faculty adjusts their strategies and content accordingly to parallel the differences of the two approaches and create learning outcomes. Accordingly, the proposed hypothesis is:
H4: *The improvement of the GMFSs bring positive impact in improving the teaching curricula, enhance international institutional cooperation and amplify the acceptance of international standards in the higher learning institutions.*

2.5 Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD)

The curriculum approaches developed in the higher learning institutions are remarkably influenced by the Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD).

Marginson (2016) and Bhuvan (2018) found that universities and colleges are now expected to match curriculum with industry demands and trend in employment in order to produce graduates who will enhance the reality of the employment industry and bring qualitative and quantitative improvements to production realities.

Altbach et. al. (2019) and Anastasiu et. al. (2017) asserts to the need for a positive and effective relationship between the innovation, development and the flexibility of curriculum and meeting the global market needs.

Achieving such high ranks implies the creation of program curriculum that merges organizational sphere skills, interdisciplinary and practical training ones. From here high goals such as the ability to employ graduates and improve competitiveness on the world employment market can be achieved (Carnegie & Crane, 2019). Accordingly, the relationship between Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD) and curriculum development and course design is hypothesized as follows:
H5: *Integrating the curriculum with the Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD) addresses the issue of preparing competitive students in the global market, alongside accepting the importance of preserving the Cultural heritage values within the curriculum.*

2.6 International Rankings & Benchmarking (IRB)

At present, the concept of International Rankings & Benchmarking (IRB), have a central role in prompting the need for the alteration of curriculum in higher learning institutions. This is done through shaping the directions and plans of learning establishments and an impact on resources.

Dill & Soo (2005), opine that issue of rankings exerts a substantial influence in promoting organizational prestige and global presence in forums. Moreover, it also supported educational institutions to pay attention to their teaching curriculum and develop it, to enhance their research indicator, and to increase the quality of education so as to be classified under higher ranks in those rankings.

According to Richter (2015) and Akram Jalal (2020), the levels of research production of the faculty of higher education institutions suffice the level of ranking of these institutions to the international ranking associations. Knowledge also proves its capability in a discrete manner affecting growth of the academic research potential amongst academics for innovation and enhanced teaching quality.
Furthermore, according to Hazelkorn (2015), benchmarking helps to enhance the process of curriculum development and course design, as the majority of higher education institutions, comparing with other HEIs, would like to sustain the process of curriculum development, at least, periodical and regular, and approve the international standards, continuing the improvement of the quality of education and research activities.
H6: *Initiatives enacted by higher education institutions to improve their rankings and achieve international standards in quality while maintaining religious constants and societal values, have a positive impact on curriculum development and the design of high-quality courses.*

2.7 Global Educational Policy Networks (GEPN)

International bodies such as UNESCO, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Regional Accreditation Bodies (RABs) or Education Policy Networks Worldwide (WEPNs) are involved in assessing the policies and standards that define curricula for higher education institutions, private and governmental alike.

O'Donoghue & Vidovich (2017) and Laferrière & Montané (2012) acknowledged that WEPNs enable exchange of knowledge, policy discussion, and academic capacity development projects among policy makers, faculty and experts in academia.

The authors Marginson et al. (2011) observed that many global organisations have become involved in shaping policies and practices of higher education institutions especially on issues of quality assurance, accreditation and curriculum.

Concerning the relationship mentioned above, it is useful to mention that these global education policy networks actively shape the processes of curriculum development and course design by providing teachers and academic institutions with multiple global contexts, standards, and programmes.

H7: *The interaction with international educational networks helps to develop a curricula and courses, use standards and experiences on an international level, while at the same time not losing religious, ideological and cultural codes.*

Accordingly, the relationship between variables of indicators and globalization and between the curriculum development of higher education and course design is very extensive and complex. Awareness of these connections helps faculty – academic professionals, policymakers, curriculum designers

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and directors, and researchers – to make effective choices and to facilitate an effective advancement of curriculum and classes creation without getting lost in globalising standards which bring benefits, knowledge, and quality with relativising, post modernising religious and cultural bearings.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses survey research design as the theoretical foundation to determine how globalised driven factors collaborate in curriculum development and course design in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq without eradicating religious constants and civilizational values. Research methodology includes developing a conceptual framework for conducting the study, to address a gap in the research literature on the role of standards created by globalization processes in maintaining constants and values when developing curricula and courses.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Globalized-driven factors adopted in this framework challenge the complexity of curriculum development from the standpoint of preserving religious and social values and constants as postulated by the proposed conceptual framework of the study depicted below in figure one below. This framework defines the correlation between the independent variables, namely — Internationalization Initiatives (IIs), Transnational Education Trends (TETs), Cross-cultural Competence Requirements (CCRs), Global Mobility of Faculty & Students (GMFSs), Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD), International Rankings & Benchmarking (IRB), and Global Educational Policy Networks (GEPN)—and the dependent variable: Curriculum development and course design. Also, this study highlights the importance of assessing whether the identified globalized driven factors are incompatible with attempts to preserve values and traditions in higher education institutions.

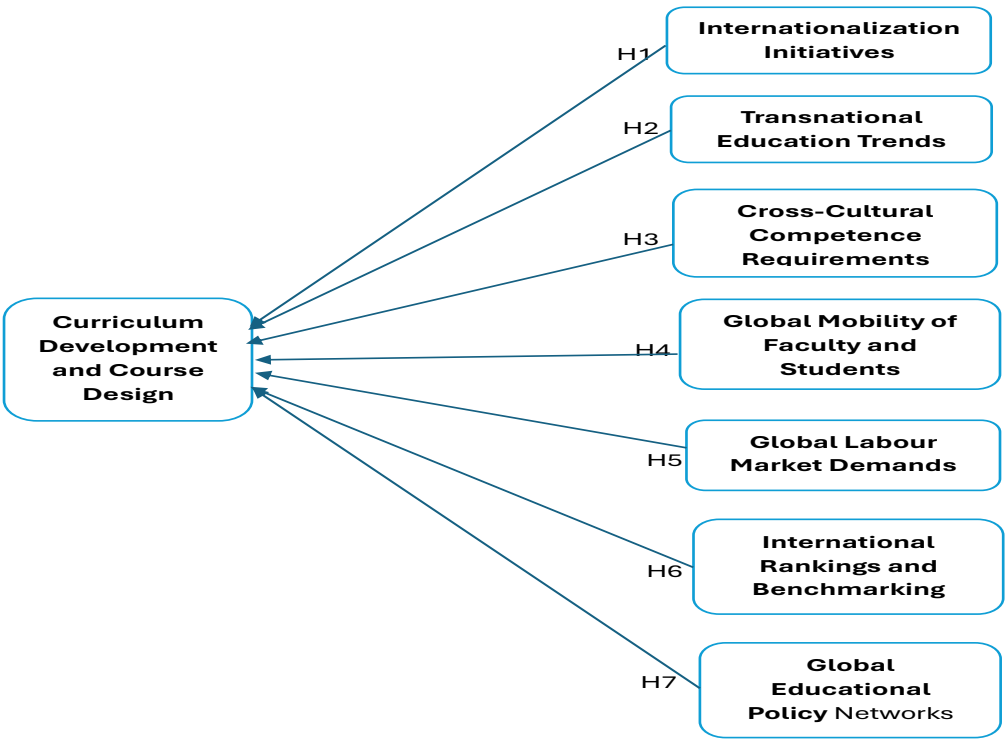

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.2 Participants

In this survey, participants are not chosen randomly, but according to the criteria that define their degree of qualification and academic background. This is in order to employ persons who are highly qualified and experienced in the areas of curriculum development, teaching, education, research and publishing. Those selected for this study are in leadership positions as deans of faculties, assistant deans, head of departments, department directors and so on.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The data collecting instrument, which will be used as the structured questionnaire will be in two broad sections. The first part of the survey concerns the respondent's basic demographic profile including age, gender, qualification, educational title, and position.

The second part of the questionnaire is the main survey questions which would assess the hypothesises raised in the conceptual framework.

These survey questions, with the Likert scale answers, assess participants' perceptions of the influence of globalized standards on the curriculum and course in Iraqi higher education, so that value, standards and constants could be preserved.

3.4 Questionnaire Distribution

An online survey is conducted using Google Docs where the survey was electronically deployed later to collate data. This questionnaire was distributed to 250 experienced academics in the development of curriculum and Identification of learning

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outcomes for courses in Iraqi higher education institutions and they were invited to participate in this study.

Of the 250 people that were addressed, 183 completed the questionnaire. Moreover, 23 participants had provided us with incorrect and wrong response, and we had eliminated them for this assessment. This has made the total respondents to be 160. The questionnaire was explained to the respondents on how it was going to be filled, and they were advised on how to fill it in a proper way; the issue of anonymity was also clarified to the respondents.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

This section brings out the findings of the data analysis conducted to validate the hypotheses that was developed in this study, against which data was gathered. These hypotheses were tested in the SPSS software through test functions and hypotheses testing. The purpose of the study is to determine the integration and integration between globalization and the conservation of religious, cultural, and social values and norms in the process of Curriculum development and course development in higher education institutions in Iraq.
Table 1 and 2, and in order to provide the comprehensive analysis of the multiple factors in the higher education context, present the analysis results and demonstrate the connection between the standards promoted by globalization process and the practices related to the curriculum and course design as well as cultural and historical heritage in the Iraqi system of higher education.

Table 1: ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.368	7	9.053	130.114	<.001[b]
	Residual	10.575	152	.070		
	Total	73.944	159			
a. Dependent Variable: Curriculum_Development						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Global_Educational_Policy, Cross_Cultural_Competence_Requirements, Transnational_Education_Trends, International_Rankings_and_Benchmarking, Global_Mobilityof_Faculty_and_Students, Internationalization_Initiatives, Global_Labuor_Market_Demands						

Table 2: Coefficients Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.192	.166		-1.158	.249
	Internationalization_Initiatives	-.342	.077	-.338	-4.427	<.001
	Transnational_Education_Trends	-.044	.050	-.042	-.887	.377
	Cross_Cultural_Competence_Requirements	.124	.050	.112	2.487	.014
	Global_Mobilityof_Faculty_and_Students	.279	.070	.275	3.984	<.001
	Global_Labuor_Market_Demands	.298	.099	.299	3.001	.003
	International_Rankings_and_Benchmarking	.505	.057	.481	8.806	<.001
	Global_Educational_Policy	.217	.076	.219	2.866	.005
a. Dependent Variable: Curriculum_Development						

As shown in the result of the ANOVA table (Table 1) and coefficient table (Table 2), it is possible to identify the connection between IVs and DV to identify which of them is accepted and which one is rejected.
When it comes to hypothesis testing, significant predictor variables are if the p values are less than.05 (the traditional alpha level). Hence, the accepted variables are:

1. Internationalization Initiatives (IIs) (p <.001)
2. Cross Cultural Competence Requirement (CCCR) (p = 0.014)
3. Global Mobility of Faculty & Students (GMFSs) (p <.001)
4. Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD) (p = 0.003)
5. International Rankings & Benchmarking (IRB) (p <.001).
6. International Educational Policy Frameworks (IEPF) (p = <0.005)

The Variable that is rejected is: Transnational Education Trends (TETs), as p =.377, which is more than.05 or, hence, not statistically significant. Hence, it is not taken as an independent variable of Curriculum Development.

4.2 Discussion

The subjects to the survey instrument acknowledged the purpose of the concept of internationalization initiatives (IIs) and how they capture the efforts of higher education institutions to assimilate and draw into their systems the focus and innovativeness of education programmes. Therefore, it could be understood that some Iraqi universities aim at finding partnerships with some of the internationally accredited

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universities and cooperate to set up a joint package or exchange programs, assisting in the intention to install the internationally accepted benchmarks for enhancing curricula helpful for the growth of the wonderful educational programs that do not harm religious and cultural beliefs and norms.

Cross-cultural competency requirements (CCRs) are one of the most significant underpinnings of a contemporary higher learning institution. In the currently diverse world, it is crucial for the students to acquire knowledge at least about other cultures and interact with them for the improvement of the fixed values. This is not done effectively unless the curriculum incorporates approaches that develop students' cross-cultural skills with a view of improving on their ability to relate with people from other cultures within the countries in question, and at the same time building resilience without compromising on religious and cultural beliefs and practices within the global society.
This should be done in a manner that would enable the graduates to fit within the diverse and inter dependent world that is out there. Thus, this standard was approved and can be endorsed by the participants of this survey.

According to the understanding of the participants, GMFS was considered as a process through which students can acquire knowledge on the best practices for curriculum development as well as course designing by faculties while the faculties share knowledge and ideas and may be enhanced through practices in the other universities. Thus, they identified its relevance in the higher education institutions in Iraq where the academic staff and students can get acquainted with the experience of modern educational institutions and apply the teaching methods and different approaches to learning. This could lead to the actualization of new innovative standards for the curriculum development as well as course design.

According to the findings of the survey, the labour market demand globally (GLMD) is seen as an avenue through which faculty members and students get to learn about education systems and methods that prevail globally and share this knowledge, experiences, and ideas with one another and in this respect, the religious and societal constants, value and principles should not be infringed. Thus, high competence has to be possessed in terms of curriculum development, and course design.

From the analysis of the literature review section of the academic papers, in conjunction with the responses the academics contributing to the survey provided, this study further unfolded that International Rankings and Benchmarking (IRB) is one of the most significant pillars to develop the sound framework in relation to curriculum development and course construction in the higher learning institutions. The application of standards aimed at the enhancement of the quality assurance up to the international standards is possible only through the adherence to the IRB, which would enhance the reputation of the higher education institutions through expanding the base of international recognition and increasing competitiveness in the global market to attain the higher level of the overall quality and global ranking which would place them among the most competitive institutions according to the international total quality ranking table.

According to the survey respondents, GEPNs are considered as the most effective means of facilitating cooperation, exchange of information and best practices, and capacity building of academic institutions internationally. This study reveals that, the aspects and construction of cooperation and partnership with GEPNs concerning Iraqi HEIs helps them to gain splendid wealth, experience and more resources which assists in getting in touch with international standards hence improving the process of development of curriculum as well as course design. Provided these religious and cultural values and constants are preserved, positive interaction with GEPNs allows for the educational institutions in Iraq to find effective solutions to methodology, and effective approaches to curriculum development and course designing employed in education systems around the world connote to enhancing the quality of higher education in Iraq.

The findings of the analysis of the information indicated that the claimed transnational education trends (TETs) do not influence the processes of creating the curricula in the IHEs for some reason, probably the most crucial of which can be the fact that the IHEs have not based their educational strategies on the use of TETs. This means that bureaucratic barriers prevent the recognition of TETs in Iraq's higher education regulatory frameworks and accreditation standards; as a result, traditional curricula prevail over innovative ones.

Moreover, political turmoil in Iraq and geopolitical risks can make certain countries not willing to be receptive to transnational education venture. Perhaps the emphasis placed on national identity as well as independence in curriculum implementation and course development and a shift from international intercessions contribute to the non-implementation of TETs. Further, political crisis and conflicts in Iraq do not allow the international counterparts to penetrate into the country and coordinate effectively with TETs. Participants may thus believe that TETs cannot be applied effectively in the unique context of Iraqi higher education and that they apply more suitably in other education systems. Consequently, these may not necessarily act as significant players in altering the curriculum and course offering in institutions of Iraq.

5. CONCLUSION

In this research, the authors investigated the dynamic connection between globalized driven factors, the maintenance of religious and cultural beliefs and traditions, and curriculum construction and course organization in Iraqi higher learning institutions.

Based on the findings of the survey and hypotheses testing, the study uncovered some facts and explanations of the current and potential situation explaining the international standards used in developing the conceptual framework of this study, and the level of their influence on the current practices in curriculum development and course design in Iraqi higher education institutions.

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The study established that the commonly adopted international standard influenced higher education curriculum in Iraq; these included Internationalization Initiatives (IIs), Cross cultural Competence Requirement (CCRs), Global Mobility of Faculty & Students (GMFSs), Global Labor Market Demand (GLMD), International Rankings & Benchmarking (IRB), and Global Educational Policy Networks (GEPN). These indicators concern values affecting the curriculum content definition and hence are reflected in implementation models and learning outcomes thus witnessing the interdependence of higher education in a progressively more globalized world.

However, based on the research findings made in this study to determine the above factors and their overall impact within the Iraqi setting, it was noted that Transnational Education Trends (TETs) may not have a huge impact on the curriculum development and course design practices in the higher educational institutions.

This underscores the importance of considering context and culture measures and index in assessing the impacts of globalization related endeavours on education system.

Besides, this research was discussed about the understanding that as globalization offer the opportunity people of the world, different institutions and opens the doors of knowledge exchange, on the other hand, it may become a threat to religious fundamentals, ideological values, and moral ethical norms for institutions of higher learning.

The results therefore reflect on the need for higher education institutions to employ deliberate efforts on the manner in which curricula are developed so as to incorporate international view and embrace values and constants which should enable global curriculum to be accepted globally while at the same time being sensitive to cultural differences.

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