Management of pre-university Egyptian education: politics, issues and trend

M.A. Zaki Ewiss

Department of Physics, Faculty of Science, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt

Abstract

Purpose – Educational management's main task is to achieve learning quality outcomes in acquiring knowledge, scientific skills and social values. This study aims to provide a background on Egyptian thought development in educational management from 1990 to 2020.

Design/methodology/approach – In this study, we used the descriptive method to collect and interpret data. This method aims to describe an object of phenomena after data collection, analyze it, identify the conditions and relationships between variables and monitor the challenges arising from Egypt's educational system's problems.

Findings – The results showed the following: (1) the trend toward decentralization of educational management is not fulfill during that period and (2) the district and directorate administration continued to receive administrative instructions from the managerial ladder's highest authorities. The Ministry of Education was in control of policy decision-making processes and administrative and financial responsibilities. Many decisions and laws hinder decentralization, such as centralizing examinations, curricula and teachers' recruitment and transfer.

Originality/value – The challenges of developing educational management are related to the shortage of modern management methods in administrative leadership, organizational behavior and decision-making, such as human relations and decentralized administration. Also, the insufficient material resources, managerial competencies and educational, intellectual stagnation among many leaders and administrators.

Keywords Educational management, School administration, Educational leadership, Educational policy

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The management concept is related to coordinating institutions' efforts to effectively and efficiently achieve their objectives using available resources. These resources include human, financial and natural resources. During the last twentieth century, management science developed as an academic discipline related to social studies and organization arts. This science applies human public relations and identifies responsibilities by delegating powers and efficiency in problem-solving, making appropriate decisions and managing change. Academics in management science are interested in developing a business philosophy and presenting theories, laws and business principles, including organizational processes and practices (Ginsburg *et al.*, 2010; Zaki Ewiss *et al.*, 2019; Alama, 2020).

Management has also linked the ability to establish formal structures that mandate achieving objectives and carrying out administrative functions. An example is social, educational, health

Journal of Humanities and Applied
Social Sciences
Vol. 5 No. 1, 2023
pp. 35-58
Emerald Publishing Limited
2632-279X
DOI 10.1108/JHASS-04-2021-0079

institutions, police, military and succession work (Lodato, 2006). The administrative work carries out by a group of individuals or one person, such as the teacher who administers the classroom. Here, we point out that the educational management affairs can assign governors, senior officials and school committees to form sub-departments, as in the various ministries' government structures. Managers' functions depend on acquiring skills and knowledge in management science, continuous decision-making, planning and problem-solving. There are five critical functions for the managing director: planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding and controlling. They include future action plans, ensuring that human and physical resources carry out tasks and accomplishing the actual duties efficiently and effectively. On the other hand, administrative work's success depends on coordination and interaction with staff, processing, analysis and information that require appropriate decisions (Kaur, 2016). Figure 1 shows the aspects of the management.

Method

The methodology of our study had based on a comprehensive review of the development of educational management of pre-university education in Egypt. We used the available literature database, collected articles, reports, essays and conference proceedings of related topics. This methodology is illustrated in Figure 2.

| Determining the required work |
| Implement the policy and achieve the goals |
| Planning, Organizing, and Coordinating |
| Regulating the human resources |
| Organizing the business by others though planning, Directing and censorship |
| Responsibility to achieving the results |
| Issuing the right decision and implement it |
| Achieving goals and objectives of the Institutions |
| Finishing the work |

Figure 1.
The aspects of management

One Stage Screening
Hand search

Two Stage Screening
Electronic Search

Title and Abstract
Screening

500 Papers Reviewed
(100 Papers Excluded)

100 Papers Full Screening

Citation Excluded 50 on date,
300 on Relevance, and 100
on Location

Aquisition of Report

60 Reports Obtained

Full Document
Screening

There are some additional
studies form part of the
theoretical framwork, but do not
form core focus of the study

42 Studies Included
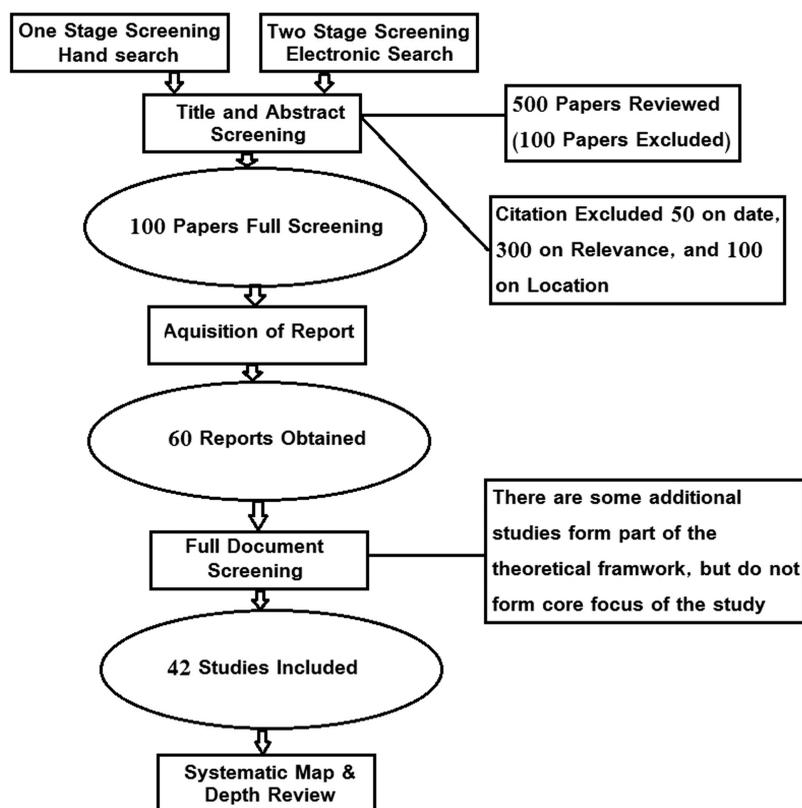
Systematic Map &
Depth Review

Educational management
The Educational management conducts the planning, organization, guidance and
monitoring of all educational institutions by using human and material resources to
carry out teaching tasks effectively and efficiently. All developed and developing countries
seek to create educational policies to achieve comprehensive development goals at all
cultural, economic and social levels (West and Wolfe, 2019; Woods, 2014; Nathanaili, 2015;
Alama, 2020).

These policies had linked to the dynamic ability to bring about social change to preserve
cultural identity and national belonging. Professional management to achieve the
effectiveness and efficiency of educational institutions also requires:

(1) Identifying the tasks and responsibilities of the education managers in all educational
stages

(2) Developing institutional strategies and educational leadership at the micro-level

(3) Making appropriate decisions to solve problems, communicate, manage information
and build an effective team

(4) Planning for all activities and curricula, and academic evaluation planning for all
activities and curricula and educational evaluation

(5) Maintaining school records and assessing student achievement

(6) Optimal use of financial resources and budget planning for educational institutions.

The success of the educational management depends on achieving the objectives of the state's educational policy through continuous improvement of planning, organization and follow-up processes within all educational institutions, as well as enhancing learning outcomes and efficiency in the management of human resources from employees, teachers, students, etc. It needs to effectively strengthen the educational infrastructure, relationships with the community, support career advancement and improve communication and homogeneity among individuals.

The functions of educational management are as follows (Armstrong and Rayner, 2021; Gomes and Gomes de Melo, 2018):

(1) Planning that is proactive by asking what? What time? Where is? By who? How to? While it follows a series of steps:

- Identifying the goals and objectives,

- Assessing of the current situation concerning objectives and perception of opportunities,

- Planning and case analysis of external factors and future forecasting trends,

- Choosing the best alternative to achieve goals,

- Choosing the course of action to follow,

- Developing plans to support and arrange human and material resources,

- Implementing the plan and stages of work, including the evaluation process.

(2) Organizing is a process combining the work individuals or groups have to do with all the necessary facilities to implement it. It provides the duties that perform the best channels to efficiently, systematically, positively and coordinate the available effort. It requires the following:

- Division of labor or specialization: Educational activities assign to different people who specialize in this field, as the speciality improves efficiency.

- Goal-oriented: This approach needs to be consistent with the overall objectives of the organization.

- Individuals and groups' composition: Individuals are grouped into different educational departments, and their work is coordinated to achieve the required organizational objectives.

- Different jobs: The entire business is divided and assigned to individuals to achieve the organization's objectives. Each person performs a different task, and each person also coordinates with the functions of others.

- Ongoing process: Groups of people with specific relationships work together to achieve your organization's goals. These relationships do not end once the task is completed.

- Devolution: Hierarchy levels are determined, and formal relationships assess the scope of control.

- Creating a communication channel: to make effective decisions, coordinate, control, supervision, feedback, motivation and address the problems or grievances they face.

(3) Output: That is the process of influencing people so that they willingly pursue the group's goals. It focuses on developing the desire to work with enthusiasm and confidence, provides sufficient guidelines to accomplish the task and motivates individuals to achieve goals in a coordinated manner. It also focuses on leadership practice with accountability.

(4) Control: It depends on measuring and monitoring performance according to plans and taking corrective action when needed. It needs to establish output standards based on objectives, measures and reports on actual performance and take corrective and preventive actions appropriately. Oversight refers to determining the extent of the original plans. The goals were successfully achieved by requiring accurate information on actual performance, comparing it with planned performance and searching for appropriate solutions. The monitoring is mainly concerned with institutional budget and funding, the expenditure sources, the necessary physical needs and equipment, the library and maintenance work, the learning and teaching process, school accounts and records and discipline between staff and students.

(5) Evaluation: That is the process of measuring and evaluating objectives achievement. It provides the strengths and weaknesses and planning for future endeavors. It helps determine the plans' effectiveness for both managers and other stakeholders such as teachers, staff, students, parents and the whole community. It is worth noting that the objectives achieved can be documented and information provided to all relevant stakeholders, and corrective actions of obstacles or improvements. It reinforces the relationship between the implementation of the plan and the results obtained. A critical area of the income is identifying objectives and content regarding choice, validity and relevance. It also includes all educational activities for teachers and students, curricula, teaching methods and connectivity.

Figure 3 illustrates the functions of the educational management.

The evolution of the concept of educational management
Educational management originated as an area of study and practice from the science of management. First, it had applied to industry and commerce. Industrial management processes have significantly been applied to educational environments. This topic's development has been limited as an academic field and develops alternative models based on school observations and experience. By the twenty-first century, the main theories had been produced either in the educational context or adapted from industrial models to meet educational institutions' specific requirements. Educational management has evolved from being a new area based on ideas developed in other environments to research and theories. Educational institutions have diversified, from small rural primary schools to urban schools. It also relates to the diverse nature of schools' problems, which require different approaches and solutions. It reflects the multiple theoretical aspects of education and social sciences (Lemos, 2014; Ribbins, 2002).

Educational management is a specialized activity that manages the entire educational program, consisting of human and material resources in an orderly manner toward a productive and constructive goal. The dynamic environment of the academic institutions operates for the continuous implementation of plans and improvements. It requires the training of administrators, teachers and staff to increase their administrative competence. Educational management tasks' success depends on stakeholders' follow-up, continuous monitoring, problem identification and the search for appropriate solutions. The academic management ensures the work's efficiency, defines the educational institutions' vision and mission, cares for human resources, staff and provides a healthy educational environment for teamwork and goal-keeping.
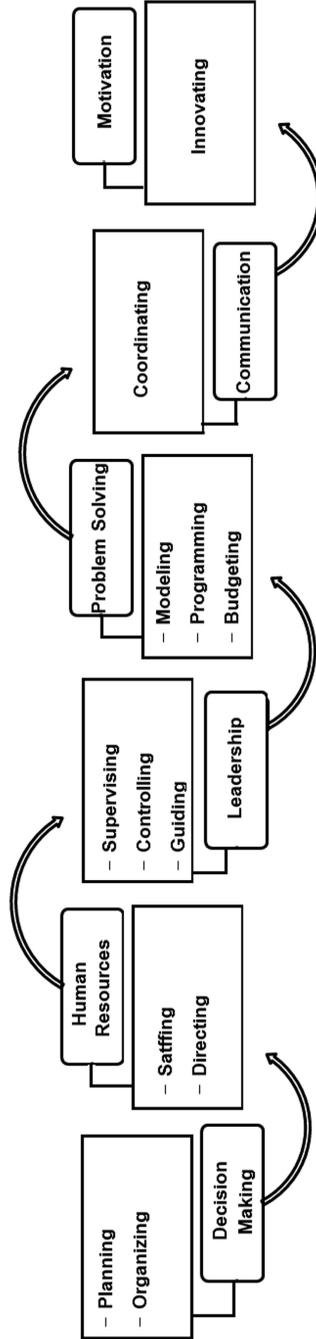
40

Figure 3.
The functions of the
educational
management

It is worth mentioning that educational management is concerned with its workforce's efficiency, commitment and goals. Its main tasks are to ensure the implementation and realization of the plans developed, supervise the completion of fieldwork and provide advice to improve working methods. It also enhances the work's efficiency by diagnosing strengths and weaknesses and finds alternative solutions for continuous development.

Educational management encompasses all aspects of institutions, including planning processes, targeting, optimal use of resources to prevent waste, duplication of efforts, unhealthy practices and plans systematic implementations.

In Egypt, education planning is carried out at the central level by the Ministry of Education, the provincial and the school levels (MoE, 1981). The preparation of the budget is one of the critical aspects of the organization's success and administration. It calls for an estimated calculation of income and expenditure with the possibility of including emergencies where appropriate. The centralization system supervises the institutional regulation concerning the availability of physical equipment, infrastructure and human resources of stakeholders to maintain efficiency, productivity, effectiveness and benefit in the teaching and learning environment (UNDP, 1999; UNESCO, 2006).

Ibrahim and Hozayn (2006) discussed the main functions of the education department. These functions include the following (Ibrahim and Hozayn, 2006):

(1) Preparing the curriculum for different educational stages according to its various capacities.

(2) Scheduling the academic calendar,

(3) Designing joint courses,

(4) Organizing of school work,

(5) Constructing and completing the school infrastructure,

(6) Organizing and conducting examinations,

(7) Guiding the educational institutions,

(8) Organizing community outreach programs

(9) Providing auxiliary services such as student nutrition, school uniforms, books, medical examinations, etc.

Management's quality and efficiency characterize its ability to exploit and direct material and human resources and resources to achieve the desired objectives (Sudit, 1996). The most important aspects are the following:

(1) Resolute leadership capable of dealing with subordinates in a way that creates a spirit of responsiveness and respect for leaders,

(2) Organization and good guidance,

(3) Making decisions.

Figure 4 shows the main processes of the decision-making and communication of the educational management.

Finally, educational management in all countries has a wide range of activities and processes from planning to budgeting to make the educational process meaningful, effective and systematic, ensuring the work's efficiency and achieving the educational process's objectives to benefit the nation and the citizen.
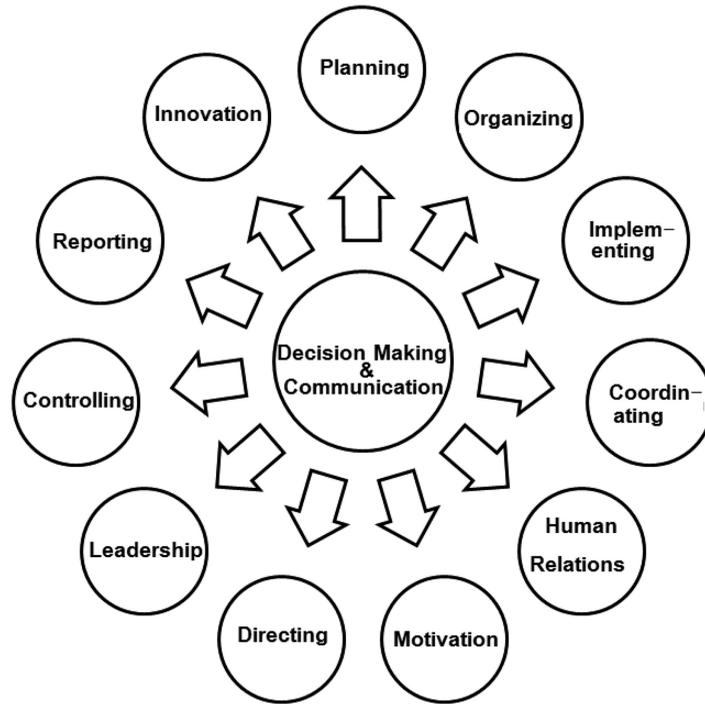
Educational management in Egypt

In Egypt, the official government carried out the basic administrative processes within the educational system's framework. The Ministry of Education concerns the scholarly work at the national level, following its policies, objectives, strategies and educational orientations (Ibrahim and Hozayn, 2006).

Education administration (middle management)

It is the group of administrative processes achieved for educational objectives and implementation of the educational policy; the policy is represented by the Ministry of Education and adopted at the regional or provincial level. The regions take over management functions at the middle levels concerning educational work at the educational district level and implement the senior leadership policy. Usually gives the academic department of education some financial and administrative powers that help it complete the work and implement operations. The executive powers are required to supervise the schools in their area and develop policies in their place. Education with its ideas, proposals and statistics for senior management and procedural work areas is the school's relationship with the community and its association (Winkler, 1989; Welsh and McGinn, 1999; Mina, 2001).

School administration

The government's policy of "self-determination" is a significant step toward developing a new education system, which is the primary means of achieving the "family" and ensuring that the child can participate in their development. Educational management has two basic patterns as follows.

Centralization of educational management
Education has been subjected to all institutions and operations in a single authority, often represented by the Ministry of Education. It draws and plans education policy and takes all procedures and measures related to that. In this pattern, local authorities and sub-departments have no role except in the implementation process only, regardless of its own opinion and its different circumstances. Figure 5 illustrates the centralized educational management, including other administrative departments (UNESCO, 2006; NCERD, 2001). The centralization goal is to ensure complete control and the proper distribution of resources to various departments and regions.

Figure 6 shows the structure of the centralized educational management system at the directorate level.

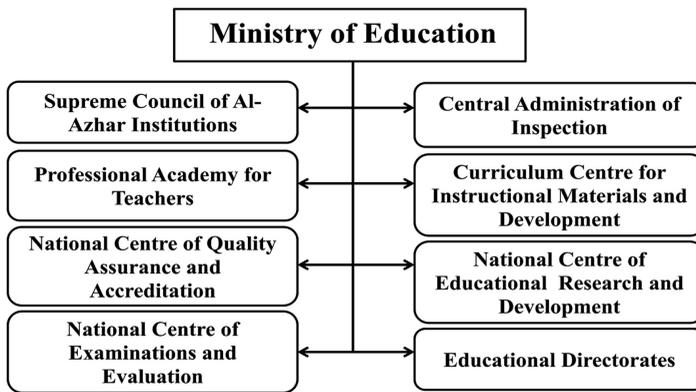In this system, the ministry of education's objectives and functions are as follows:

Figure 5.
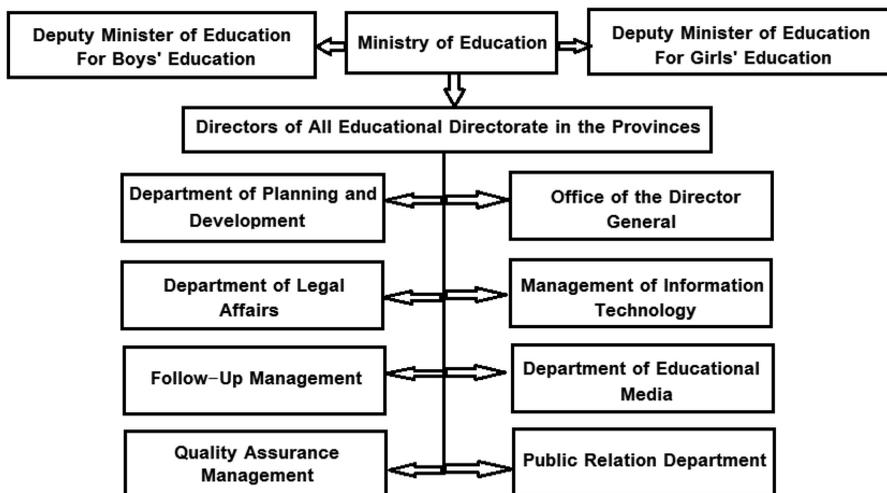Centralized
educational
administration system

Figure 6.
The structure of the
centralized directorate
educational
management

(1) The overall goal: The Minister of Education provides all the educational process requirements that prepare the individuals for life and adapt to the world according to Egyptian society's principles and foundations.

(2) The main tasks are:

- Providing public education following the statute of government and the educational policies adopted.

- Working to instill the principles of Islamic law and consolidate its concepts among the ministry's employees.

- Training teachers and educational supervisors, developing their abilities and skills, developing their knowledge through rehabilitation and training programs held for this purpose.

- Eliminating illiteracy and blocking its origins through adult education programs.

- Conducting educational studies and research aimed at developing the educational process, taking into account the modern methods and trends prevailing in the world that do not conflict with the belief, heritage and traditions of society,

- Implementing programs aimed at laying the foundations and rules for the teaching and learning process for all stages of public education.

- Completing the comprehensive coordination with all government and private educational institutions concerned with public and technical education to integrate the scholarly and educational process and join efforts to achieve the higher goals of education.

- Supervising the community educational institutions technically, according to the national education regulations.

- Developing the regulations and rules to conduct the educational process related to curricula, teachers, students, etc., which has to do with the scholarly and educational process.

- Providing the educational process requirements of teachers, curricula, facilities, school equipment and educational technologies.

- Participating in other sectors of government, civil society and organizations in contributing to the spread of scientific and cultural awareness to keep pace with the movement of progress and growth.

- Fulfilling any other tasks assigned to the ministry by the country's political leadership.

Decentralized educational management
It intends to assign units of the central authority (directorates, departments, schools) to the responsibilities. These units hold full responsibility for the planning and implementing outcomes under a general vision and agreed objectives that are a reference for follow-up, accountability and the delegation of authority to civil society participants (Lauglo, 1995; McGinn, 1992; Kamat, 2002; Grauwe, 2005; NCERD, 2001; Healey and Crouch, 2012).

The elements of community participation from civil society are:

(1) The political parties,

(2) The trade unions, student unions and teachers' club,

(3) The non-governmental organizations individually or through their partnerships with governmental or international bodies,

(4) The private sector,

(5) The elected local councils.

It is worth noting that there is a global trend toward decentralization in education; studies have shown that the more decentralized or less centralized the industry and educational decision-making, the more rigid the system of academic authority becomes, leading to the creation of innovation. Countries that have been quick to decentralize the education system have made great strides in improving educational outcomes and quality (INP, 1996, 1997/1998; UNDP, 2003, 2004; UNESCO, 2003, 2004). Figure 7 illustrates the main structure of the decentralized educational management system.

The development of educational management from 1990 to 2000

Egyptian society began to decentralize the education system at the beginning of the 1990s when former President Hosni Mubarak declared in 1992 that education was a national security issue for Egypt (MoE, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2014; NCERD, 2001). The issue of education became a national and shared responsibility among the community groups and segments of society. In light of this sense of national duty, the officials sought to mobilize energies and potential at the national level. The government's decision to suspend the work of the National Assembly is a matter of concern. One of the most important laws that emphasized the importance of community participation in education at that time was:

(1) The ministry of education's ministerial decree no. 30 of 1996 authorized NGOs to establish single-classroom schools, community schools and small schools to activate the role of associations in providing educational services to the most disadvantaged places challenging to access informal education.

(2) The ministerial decision No. 306 of 1993 emphasizes article no. 15 the need to donate money to private school owners to fund, support and finance national educational projects.

The document entitled "Mubarak and Education, the National Project for the Development of Education" (MoE, 2001; NCERD, 2001) stressed the importance of decentralization. It encourages the local provinces to participate in decision-making, implementation, follow-up and evaluation processes. The central level has provided full support to the High Coordination Committee created in the regions and localities. It can rationalize all those involved in reforming the most critical education projects based on community participation in the educational process:

(1) Community schools established by NGOs' self-efforts in remote areas under UNICEF's auspices have a degree of autonomy in planning, managing and recruiting teachers, funding and an essential role for parents' councils.

(2) The Mubarak/Kul bilateral education project, which aimed to develop technical education and vocational training in Egypt by applying the dual education system, was the parties involved in this project:

  • The Ministry of Education,

  • The investors' associations and business people,

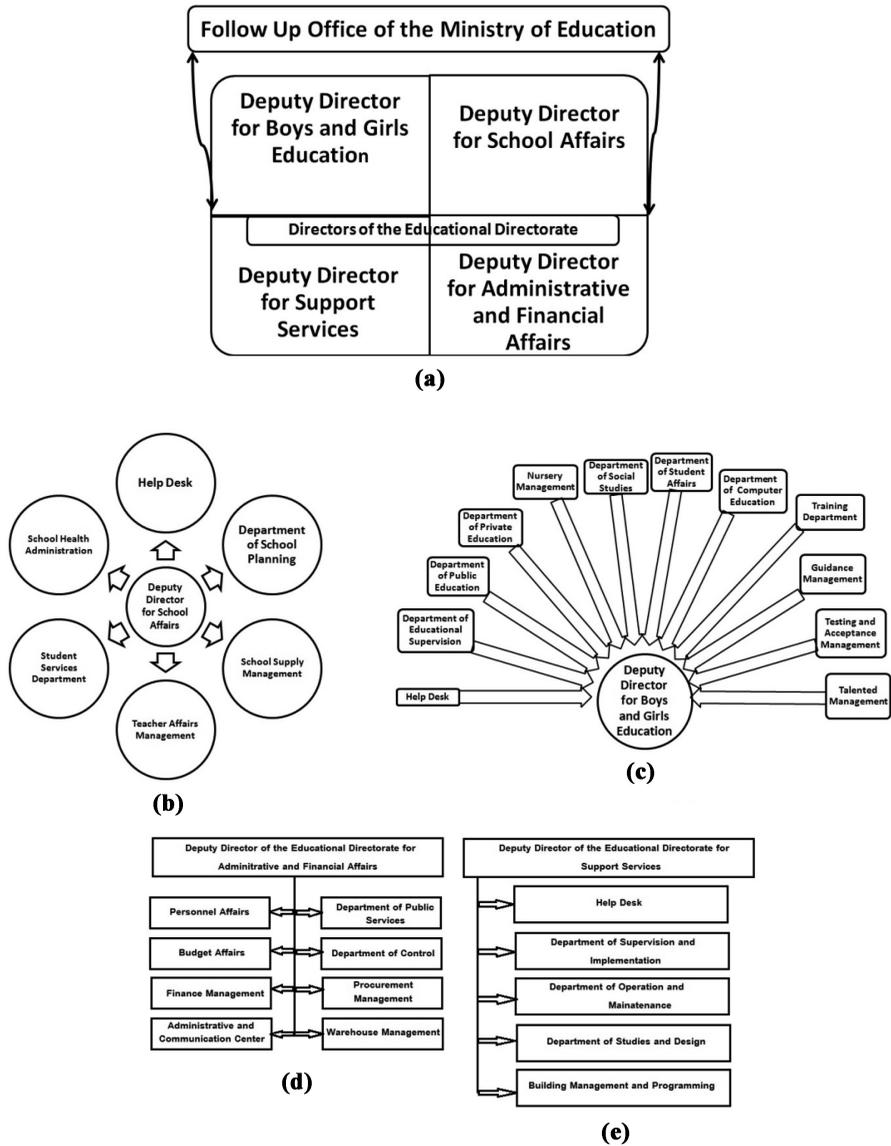 • The German Agency for Technical Cooperation.

Figure 7.
The decentralized educational management structure at the Directorate level, including the sectors of (a) the supervisors of the administration tasks, (b) the school affairs, (c) the boys and girls education, (d) the administrative and financial affairs, and (e) the support services

(3) In 1993, the established single-classroom schools were decentralized in curriculum planning, the school day's distribution and combine academic and vocational education for girls who drop out of school (MoE, 2003),

(4) The efforts of the private sector in establishing and managing high-quality schools for the incapable, such as the Sekme experience,

(5) The national project to build 100 schools after the Earthquake of October 1992 aimed to diversify education funding sources by encouraging the private and business

people to contribute to education financing. Whether by establishing model schools at their expense or contributing to providing the necessary equipment for schools and providing land for construction.

At the school administration level
The ministry has moved to activate social participation in decision-making and training on the principles of modern management through:

(1) Activating the role of parent and teacher councils: Ministerial Decree No. (5) of 1993 was issued regarding parent and teacher councils, according to which parents have a clear role in developing the educational process, following up on its implementation and ensuring that the school achieves its goals, then Ministerial Resolution No. (464) issued in 9/8/1998, which gave the Parents and Teachers council the right to follow the educational process from its beginning to its end, and the matter was not only involved in managing the school only, but it became the right of parent councils to distribute school budgets (MoE, 1999).

(2) Training school administrators on the principles of modern management through (NCERD, 2001):

- Foreign missions: in 1998, 105 school principals were sent to the United States of America, France and England for training on modern management foundations,

- Remote training: The Video Conference uses to train administrative members based on modern management.

When analyzing the previous period, we note the following:

- During that period, the trend toward decentralization of educational management was limited only to schools financed by foreign entities, NGOs or business people.

- The school administration and even the educational department, and the educational directorate continued to receive administrative instructions from the managerial ladder's highest authorities (NCERD, 2001).

The Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2004) mentioned that the central government's education system's strong centralization combines the roles of planning, budgeting, financing, resource allocation, organization, follow-up and evaluation. This policy has a shortage in the development of the education system in Egypt. We have strong evidence in many countries that the transfer of power from central administration to governments, communities and schools with parents' contribution can lead to a significant improvement in the education service. Thus, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the government took some steps toward decentralization.

The development of educational management from 2000 to 2010
At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Egyptian government realized that the importance of developing education became imperative and logical to meet the global challenges and enter the knowledge society. The orientation toward decentralization in education with the opportunity for a more significant role for the community and community participation in educational management was necessary to develop education at all levels and stages.

Development of organizational structures
A new structure with the following characteristics developed as follows (MoE, 2003):

(1) Decentralization, which helps speed decision-making and accomplishes tasks,

(2) Activating and expanding delegates,

(3) Achieving the smoothness of communication in all directions between different sectors, departments and levels of management,

(4) Exchanging opinions and ideas between individuals and departments to the speed of information circulation,

(5) Applying the principle of accountability and clarifying the boundaries, roles, responsibilities and follow-up processes.

Increase disjointed community participation projects
The most important of these projects was:

(1) The Alexandria Schools Experience Project: To establish the principle of decentralization, community participation and self-management is controlled by a board of trustees with 16 members representing governmental, administrative and educational parties. The United States of America contributes to this project's technical and financial support and trains many leaders and teachers to acquire this innovation's experiences and skills. In 2003, the Minister of Education and the united state of America side agreed to apply the Alexandria experience in six other provinces in Cairo, Minya, Al-Fayoum, Beni, Qenna and Aswan (MoE, 2003, 2004).

(2) Education Improvement Project: In cooperation between Egypt, the World Bank and the European Union, 15 governorates improved education centrally to support the ability to manage and implement decentralize system (World Bank, 2002a, b).

Delegation of powers
In 2002, the minister's authority was delegated to the Governor of Alexandria to activate the educational administration's decentralized process. The mandate expanded to include seven other provinces besides Alexandria province. The delegation was limited to educational administration and determined by the Minister of Education's authority following the agreement with other ministries (MoE, 2003, 2004, 2007).

Affirming adherence to the standards of outstanding educational leadership in administrative practice
The ministry has made it necessary for the educational leadership in its administrative practice to adhere to the national standards of education in Egypt, especially the standards of excellence management, for each level of supervision (upper-central- executive), in terms of (MoE, 2003):

(1) Ensuring objectivity in discussing issues and problems and dealing with teachers, students and parents,

(2) Managing creative educational development based on the data of modern theory,

(3) Committing to professional ethics and setting an example for others,

(4) Confirming compliance with the latest scientific research.

The establishment of a council of directors of educational directorates
The committee focused on the participation of all directors of the directorates in the country, It deals with field issues and the Ministry of Education's educational vision.

Establishment of the information and decision-making center
The ministry established the information and decision-making center to collect data and information that serves the educational process's objectives and recorded, analyzed and organized this information and data and updated it to help make sound decisions (MoE, 2001, 2010).

In 2005, the Minister of Education introduced a new strategy under the "Mubarak and Education" future policy, which set the elementary education objectives in three objectives, availability, quality and systems efficiency. The ministry developed the national strategic plan for education to achieve educational goals at the end of 2012. It is worth mentioning that there is no quality and no availability without efficient administrative systems that emphasize decentralization and community participation. Therefore decentralization and community participation became one of the main objectives that the Egyptian government sought to implement in that period (MoE, 2007).

The ministry has developed a decentralized orientation program focusing on the following dimensions:

(1) Increasing the school's financial, administrative and educational powers in decision-making and expanding community participation.

(2) Transferring administrative powers to the management level by increasing the roles and responsibilities of departments and developing them, and directing support to schools in light of the school development plan.

(3) Developing the directorates' role by focusing on organizational and analytical tasks and control at the provincial level.

(4) Developing the ministry's role as an observer and policy and standard in light of the directorate reports will include follow-up and evaluation of policy implementation and curriculum development.

The ministry stressed the need to translate the strategic plan into an operational plan by forming a committee to implement the following:

(1) Preparing an operational plan for the program

(2) Determining the time needed to move to the implementation process

(3) Obtaining the necessary decisions and regulations to build a new institutional framework that achieves the objectives

(4) Ensuring that this reform is done at all levels

The development of school management during 2000–2010
One of the essential measures that were carried out to develop the school administration and apply decentralization at the school level was:

Development of parents' and teachers' councils
The ministry increased the competence of parents' and teachers' councils and the right to participate in decision-making in various school administration matters. The aim is to improve the efficiency of the educational process with effective participation that achieves complete follow-up. The councils have played an active role in achieving community control over education and their role in making academic school decisions. These councils have been made up of a broad base of businesspeople and non-governmental associations.

Establishment of the board of trustees
The ministry has formed the Board of Trustees and appointed a council of public figures in the community whose mission is to (MoE, 2003):

(1) Participating in school management, nominating principals, evaluating proposals on approaches related to the environment, society and budget allocation.

(2) Participating in achieving the school's goals, raising additional resources for funding and connecting the school to the community.

(3) Ensuring that the experience of the boards of trustees achieves greater community oversight and participation in school management.

Develop the organizational and functional structure of the school
A new organizational structure has been developed and characterized by:

(1) Giving students wider opportunities in the exercise of democracy.

(2) Giving the school more decentralized spaces.

(3) Connecting the school to its environment and community.

(4) Activating boards of trustees and parents in developing the educational process to ensure popular control over education,

(5) Ensuring the optimal operation of the administrative staff in the school and setting rates for them.

(6) Establishing the evaluation, training and education technology units and psychological guidance offices in each school.

The National Plan for the Development of Education (2007/2008–2011/2012) also stressed the need to activate the school-based reform program, and the procedural objectives of the program were as follows:

(1) Improving the school based on national standards of education and preparing it for educational accreditation.

(2) Preparing schools for school-based management practice.

(3) Building good governance by activating all reform appointees' participation in supporting and decision-making in schools.

When analyzing the previous period (2000–2010), we noted that despite these efforts to decentralize the educational and school administration, there is still a strong centrality in decision-making, as the actual application due to the following (MoE, 2014):

(1) The construction policies, school building specifications and engineering models are centrally developed.

(2) The curriculum is a purely central issue that none of the provinces has shared in its design.

(3) The center essentially guides the local leaders and the training process. It centrally conducted the design of various training programs.

(4) The selecting method of educational leaders based on seniority rather than competence leads to educational leadership.

(5) There is no precise mechanism for sharing experiences and information between different leadership levels.

(6) Conflicting responsibilities, competencies and authorities at all administrative centralized and decentralized levels.

(7) An insufficient organizational structure that defines duties and responsibilities across different management leadership levels.

The school administration is still fully affiliated with the Educational directorate department and is not interested in modern administration methods. The study has concluded the following:

(1) The majority of teachers are members of the sample (80%). They stated that they did not share the idea in the curriculum for the following reasons:

- The ministry has developed the curriculum, has not changed for more than 20 years and is full of scientific errors.

- The ministry is keeping all power, causing a centralized education system.

(2) 35% of respondents believed that the school does not encourage them to express their opinion on school matters. There is no decentralized system, but instructions must be adhered to after the ministry decides on schools' actual reality for higher rules.

(3) 78% of the teachers stated that they could not express their opinion on education policy because the management is central to decision-making.

We found a contradiction between the theoretical trend toward decentralization and the actions of centralization. Many decisions/laws hinder decentralization, such as centralizing examinations, curricula and teachers' recruitment and transfer (MoE, 2007).

Our study confirmed the contradiction in the National Strategic Plan's achievement for the Reform of Pre-University Education (2007/2008–2011/2012). The plan did not translate into stages of its duration, and there are no priorities for the institutional rooting program for decentralization. There is no time-keeping of each sub-objective of the plan.

The development of educational management from 2010 to 2020
During this time, the most critical educational policies were the National Education Reform Strategy 2014–2030 (MoE, 2014). It emphasized that the overall goal of achieving system efficiency is to develop the institutional structure of pre-university education management from a system based on providing inputs to a results-based approach that maximizes resource efficiency in achieving returns in a balanced framework between central and decentralization.

The strategy set several procedural objectives for implementing the reform program as follows (MoE, 2014):

(1) Strengthening the structure of a centralized/decentralized institution, balancing the powers of the central body of the pre-university education sector in the development of the national curriculum, policies, general strategies, quality assurance standards and the evaluation of the educational system at the national level, and strengthening financial and administrative powers for schools, departments and educational directorates in the implementation of national policies and plans and follow-up at the local level.

(2) Providing a high-quality educational and financial information infrastructure for all stakeholders in planning, follow-up and evaluation at all levels.

(3) Ensuring each's efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out its tasks and duties within information transparency.

(4) Establishing a constructive system accessible to public opinion for vertical and horizontal accountability, including efficiency in using resources and effectiveness in achieving results.

At the school administration level
The strategy emphasized the importance of focusing on school-based reform by developing school management within a balanced central/decentralized system. It strengthens sustainable professional development, good governance and accounting to provide a supportive educational environment, achieving education and children's rights. It will produce an innovative citizen capable of competing in the knowledge society contributing to national development. The school is the unit of action in the educational system and must be cared for to develop it. The strategy has set several objectives for the development of the administrative institution's capacity focused on:

(1) Supporting educational institutions' capacity to self-management, transparency and accounting in a balanced central and decentralized framework.

(2) Developing educational leaders' performance for school-centered management practice and lead change to meet performance evaluation to achieve quality standards.

(3) Building the capacity of the educational institution and provide continuous technical support to ensure sustainable quality.

(4) Activate participation between the community and the educational institution to achieve quality requirements.

(5) Provide an attractive and safe educational environment that achieves equal opportunities and supports the self-reform of the school.

By reviewing the development of educational management from 1990 to 2020, we find the following:

(1) The interest in decentralized management was limited in the 1990s and was limited only to social participation programs, whether from NGOs or the private sector.

(2) At the beginning of the third millennium, the ministry's clear trend of decentralization began:

- Setting national standards for pre-university education and included in these standards outstanding management and community participation.

- Establish the Board of Directors to address critical issues.

- Establish the Board of Trustees to participate in the educational process and school management.

- Develop the role of parents' and teachers' councils and activate their function in participating in decision-making in various matters of school management.

- Increase social participation projects.

- Establish an information and decision-making center.

- Interest in school-centered reform.

Despite this interest, reports and studies have confirmed that the education system in Egypt is still central and that there is no balance between centralization and decentralization in educational management, and one of the most important reports and studies was:

(1) The Global Competitiveness Reports (2016–2019) confirmed that Egypt ranked 138th in school management quality and had 2.5 out of 7 grades (Schwab, 2016, 2019).

(2) The monitoring of educational choices during the last ten year confirms that many managerial regulations are not objective and that the consequences of their implementation are not studied and assessed, whether on the educational process or educational workers. It is attributed to the following:

- Getting used to centralization, which became rooted in the Egyptian administrative system. Therefore the culture of decentralization in educational institutions must be spread through leaders' and teachers' rehabilitation.

- An adequate accounting system, whether at the ministry level, directorates or schools, is needed,

- Ineffectuality to follow up on important decisions and ensure their implementation, evident in the contradiction between what is announced and the actual practices.

Conclusion

From the results mentioned above, we conclude that educational management cannot change the current administrative structures to keep pace with the rapid development in education globally. It is always surrounded by centralism and bureaucracy, leading to conflicting decisions and a waste of time, material and human resources. The inadequacy of public opinion participation, parents, teachers and other education professionals weakens competition's chances to address their root problems.

Officials provide many reasons not to overcome chronic problems in educational management, such as high student-teacher ratios, insufficient support staff, financial resources, school buildings, neglect of the infrastructure, etc. Although the policy adopted teacher training programs to meet critical needs in teaching methods and efficiency raising, many of these programs have not improved teaching, monitoring and evaluation processes. Also, the education officials and administrators believe that providing schools and students with computer equipment is sufficient to address teaching and learning problems. These measures have often been seen as a means of supporting traditional teaching methods. However, this reasonably superficial view of the role of information technology in learning ignores that these classic and highly transformed methods are often at the heart of students' rejection of education.

We found that the deprivation of keeping up with schools' governance and accountability systems and maximizing the role of effective oversight and evaluation affects education and learning outcomes critical to developing society's knowledge. It seems that many officials and managers of educational departments, as is currently happening, believe that more accountability can occur through more student tests, more external oversight and more inspections. In the end, increased funds have constantly sought to renovate old structures and further improve poorly performing routines while increasing the complexity of the system and its bureaucratic requirements.

In our view, only increased spending does not necessarily lead to the development and improvement of education. There must be a complete change in administrative structures and all existing traditional activities and processes. The actual investment should direct

research and development for innovative methods to overcome the educational system's fundamental shortcomings. It is worth noting that current efforts to use information technology to develop the administrative labor system are insufficient to bridge the gap between education and society. There are no competencies that can reformulate and completely degrade education to serve learners better to reflect particular communities' changing demands and expectations. The current efforts to use information technology to develop the administrative labor system are insufficient to bridge education and society. At present, as COVID-19 continues to spread in successive waves and a policy of closing schools entirely or partially, the application of the globalization system and accelerated advances in information technology, lead to a significant impact on the knowledge, skills and values that people need, affecting social and economic stability. More than ever, we need to develop management thinking skills to communicate and interact within an advanced technological infrastructure that requires a great deal of digital efficiency, creativity and fast movement.

In this regard, we consider the importance of administrative reorganization rather than bureaucratic hierarchies and divisions to dynamic network formations embodied through projects and participation. It requires educated individuals to be competent, creative, confident and responsible, open to change and ready to learn and work together while exercising power and building leadership. Here, we emphasize the importance of applying the knowledge that students already have and stress the importance of enhancing students' independence, their ability to collaborate in different groups, to communicate and work effectively through interactive systems and to be able to think critically and creatively.

It is worth noting that educational and organizational structures consist of many institutions established to educate students in all social categories. Schools are usually very similar and rely on organizational capacity and provide material and human information and capabilities determined according to the required disciplines. So far, Egyptian education systems have established student classification according to the subjects studied and did not based on knowledge and competencies development. This system has resulted from tradition as a cultural heritage approved by successive governments through stereotypical educational departments. Educationally, the commitment to teaching in the classroom is no one responsible for student learning. Students must integrate into the institution and adapt their personality and behavior to regulated rules. Their inspiration and expectations have become linked to a vague promise of benefits and returns in the distant future. It is not always untenable significantly, as the number of students skeptical of the education system's seriousness and the dropout rate among students at all stages increase. Although this problem is of concern to teachers who deal with students daily, it is primarily an issue that educational management should address.

Moreover, education managers cannot take responsibility for the education system's inefficaciousness in its current form. We need to strengthen considerations that focus on students' learning more deeply and enhance their work in the community. Through the national dialogue, the nation must decide what educational disciplines society needs in sustainable development. These disciplines are what students should learn.

We believe that authorities must develop appropriate curricula at each stage, determine the pace of learning according to age and identify ways to control the learner's performance. It requires, at least initially, a significant administrative effort. So far, the focus has not been on students acquiring essential competencies and twenty-first-century skills but on subject-based academic disciplines because they are at the heart of the school's philosophy, organization and strength.

We found that relying on academic disciplines as the best way to structure and organize knowledge has not met the labor market's needs. Most students prove that they cannot master educational content enough so that they can apply it appropriately in new contexts.

Besides, increased student density in the classroom, fewer teachers and poor teaching skills, especially in advanced scientific disciplines, lead to poor quality learning outcomes. The Central Education managers are directly responsible for this disastrous outcome of schools' inexplainable organization, public education, skills acquisition, personal development and student guidance.

The undisclosed discussions on developing crucial educational competencies and a profound rethinking of the radical, speciality-based school education system are futile. It is unacceptable to neglect essential issues such as developing individual autonomy, communication skills, collaborative learning, applying knowledge and even developing values associated with the importance of intellectual understanding of human issues and situations.

According to 2020 data from the Index Mundi, Egypt's population is 105 million, and the number of students in pre-university education is 25 million. With the increased demand for education and a shortage of material and human resources, educational management in all provinces has suffered from continued supervision of school affairs management and efficient learning and evaluation processes (Index Mundi, 2020).

Administrative work within applying the rules has no meaning without serious follow-up, especially in school maintenance, infrastructure completion, classroom safety and other educational activities.

In its current form, the concept of educational management does not serve educational objectives, study programs, resource development, assessments and interactions between students and teachers. Students' learning and development have been hindered through classrooms at all stages. These classes did not design for student research, creative projects, collaborative work or co-teaching. There have been no interactive relationships between teachers and students to increase efficiency, skills and knowledge.

It is worth mentioning that during the 1990s, computer and information technology evolved. The use of the Internet became increasingly common. The traditional concept of school, based on teachers' words and a few books as sources of exclusive knowledge, had to be thoroughly reviewed. There is no longer a need for an education rule on textbooks, works, a few maps, and a dictionary. Through the Internet, endless educational possibilities can provide to students because of the digital nature of information, media and virtual laboratories. The traditional education system has become unstable, and the authority of educational management has become limited. It is a break in the old concept of cognitive power and a fundamental pillar of the school system, requiring a review of modern administrative structures beyond teachers' capabilities, such as individuals. Despite efforts to use online or distance education, many students are still learning by following subjects in their textbooks and passing exams, both of which embody a minimal information space. Unfortunately, this will result in students' success and the granting certificates they have not qualified for and do not deserve.

Finally, we call for the importance of education managers taking ultimate responsibility for schools, education systems and outcomes. This crucial issue should consider as the Ministry of Education's top priority. There are no enough teachers who can make a real difference in institutional situations without capable and supportive managers working with vision, knowledge and commitment to profound change. It's hard to imagine why this principle does not apply to those who run education. Still, it's rare to find top-level policymakers and education managers who speak this language. Innovative leadership is critical to any sound and effective key efficiency strategy. The philosophy of leadership in the centralized system, is likely to have yielded satisfactory results in the past. It has not revealed its limits in society's progress by learning democracy and multiculturalism, where skills and knowledge are the main drivers of

success, economic growth and societal prosperity. We need a much broader vision to inspire those at all levels of management to meet the educational demands of the twenty-first century.

References

Alama, N.M. (2020), "The decentralization of the administration of basic education to councils and its effectiveness on educational supply", *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN*, Vol. 4 No. 5, pp. 257-284, available at: https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd31850.pdf/, ISSN: 2456-6470.

Armstrong, P.W. and Rayner, S. (2021), "School business leadership: current issues and future prospects", *Management in Education*, Vol. 35 No. 2, pp. 81-82, doi: 10.1177/0892020620981947/.

Ginsburg, M., Megahed, N., Elmeski, M. and Tanaka, N. (2010), "Reforming educational governance and management in Egypt: national and international actors and dynamics", *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, Vol. 18 No. 5, pp. 1-56, doi: 10.14507/epaa.v18n5.2010/.

Gomes, S.S. and Gomes de Melo, S.D. (2018), "Evaluation policies and educational management: articulations, interfaces, and tensions", *Educação and Realidade*, Vol. 43 No. 4, doi: 10.1590/2175-623688386/.

Grauwe, A.D., Lugaz, C., Balde, D., Diakhate, C., Dougnon, D., Moustapha, M. and Odushina, D. (2005), *Does Decentralization Lead to School Improvement? Findings and Lessons from Research in West Africa*, Semantic Scholar, available at: https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Does-Decentralization-Lead-to-School-Improvement-in-Grauwe-Lugaz/64c850916e9a2ddfea2efada3ed7788acf21f50e.

Healey, F.H. III and Crouch, L. (2012), *Decentralization for High-Quality Education: Elements and Issues of Design*, RTI Press publication No. OP-0008-1208, RTI Press, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, available at: http://www.rti.org/rtipress/.

Ibrahim, A. and Hozayn, R. (2006), *Historical Periods of Decentralization in Modern Egyptian Education: 1883–1979*, Education Reform Program, Cairo.

Index Mundi (2020), available at: https://www.indexmundi.com/egypt/demographics_profile.html/.

INP, Institute of National Planning (1996), *Egypt Human Development Report: 1997/1998*, Institute of National Planning, Cairo, available at: https://www.inp.edu.eg/.

INP (1997/1998), *Egypt Human Development Report: 1997/1998*, available at: https://www.inp.edu.eg/.

Kamat, S. (2002), "Deconstructing the rhetoric of decentralization: the state in education reform", *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 110-119, available at: https://www.tc.columbia.edu/cice/pdf/25663_2_2_Kamat.pdf.

Kaur, J. (2016), "Educational administration in India in the twenty-first century", *Online International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, Vol. VI No. I, pp. 303-309, available at: https://nroer.gov.in/home/file/readDoc/59835eb416b51cc4c4db27b9/educational-administration-structure-function-and-processes-at-the-district-and-sub-district-levels.pdf/.

Lauglo, J. (1995), "Forms of decentralization and their implications for education", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 5-29.

Lemos, Monica (2014), *Concept Formation in Educational Management*, University of Helsinki Center for Research on Activity, Development and Learning – CRADLE, Helsinki, pp. 1-38, available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/19524851.pdf.

Lodato, M.W. (2006), *Management, the Process. BPTrends*, pp. 1-14, available at: https://www.bptrends.com/publicationfiles/02-06-WP-ManagementasaProcess-Lodato-2.pdf.

McGinn, N. (1992), "Reforming educational governance: centralization/decentralization", in Arnove, R., Altbach, P. and Kelly, G. (Eds), *Emergent Issues in Education: Comparative Perspectives*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York, pp. 163-172.

Mina, Fayez Mourad (2001), *Education in Egypt: The Reality and the Future up to 2020*, Third World Forum, Cairo, (in Arabic).

MoE, Ministry of Education (1981), *Law No. 931 of 1981 by the Education Act*, Ministry of Education, available at: https://www.egypt.gov.eg/arabic/laws/download/newlaws/%d9%82%d8%a7% d9%86%d9%88%d9%86%20%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%aa%d8%b9%d9%84%d9%8a%d9% 85%20%d9%88%d8%aa%d8%b9%d8%af%d9%8a%d9%84%d8%a7%d8%aa%d9%87. pdf/.

MoE (1999), *Education, Mubarak's National Project 1991–1998*, Ministry of Education, Cairo, (in Arabic), available at: https://moe.gov.eg/.

MoE (2001), *Mubarak and Education. Arab Republic of Egypt*, Ministry of Education, Books Sector, (in Arabic), available at: https://moe.gov.eg/.

MoE (2003), *National Standards of Education in Egypt*, Vol. 1, MoE, Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Education, Books Sector, Cairo (in Arabic).

MoE (2004), *Reforming Pre-University Education Programs*, MoE, Cairo, September (in Arabic), available at: https://moe.gov.eg/.

MoE (2007), "National strategic plan for pre-university education reform in Egypt 2007/2008–2011/ 2012", Ministry of Education, available at: http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ ressources/egyptstrategicplanpre-universityeducation.pdf/.

MoE (2010), "Condition of education in Egypt 2010: report on the national education indicators, Egypt", Ministry of Education, available at: http://www.moe.gov.eg/Pages/moe-homepage. aspx/.

MoE (2014), "The strategic plan for pre-university education in Egypt (2030/2014), education the national Project for Egypt - Together, We Can Provide a Good Education for Every Child", Ministry of Education, available at: http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/ c33b72f4c03c58424c5ff258cc6aeaee0eb58de4.pdf/.

Nathanaili, V. (2015), "School leadership in pre-university Albanian education system (1995–2012): politics, issues and trends", *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, Vol. 5, pp. 201-207, doi: 10.5901/jesr.2015.v5n3p201/.

NCERD, National Center for Educational Research and Development (2001), *National Report of the Arab Republic of Egypt from 1990–2000*, NCERD, Cairo, available at: http://adapt.it/ adapt-indice-a-z/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ncerd_education_development_egypt_ 2001.pdf.

Robbins, S.P. (2002), *Foundations of Management: Study Guide*, Prentice-Hall, Brisbane, pp. 1-142.

Schwab, K. (2016) (Ed.), *The Global Competitiveness Report 2016–2017*, World Economic Forum, available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GCR2016-2017/05FullReport/TheGlobal CompetitivenessReport2016-2017_FINAL.pdf.

Schwab, K. (2019) (Ed.), *The Global Competitiveness Report 2019*, World Economic Forum, available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf.

Sudit, E.F. (1996), "Effectiveness, quality, and efficiency: the need for an integrated framework", in *Effectiveness, Quality, and Efficiency: A Management Oriented Approach*, Springer, Dordrecht, doi: 10.1007/978-94-009-1828-3_1.

The World Bank (2002a), *Arab Republic of Egypt Poverty Reduction in Egypt Diagnosis and Strategy*, Volume I: Main Report, Report No. 24234- Egt, World Bank Group, Washington, District of Columbia.

The World Bank (2002b), *Arab Republic of Egypt Education Sector Review: Progress and Priorities for the Future*, Volume 1, Main Report No. 24905- Egt, World Bank Group, Washington, District of Columbia.

UNDP (1999), *Egypt Human Development Report 1998/99*, UNDP, available at: http://hdr.undp.org/ sites/default/files/egypt_1998_1999_en_1.pdf.

UNDP (2003), *The Arab Human Development Report 2003*, Building a Knowledge Society.

UNDP (2004), *Egypt Human Development Report 2004*, UNDP, Cairo.

UNESCO (2003), *Educational Reform in Egypt: 1996–2003: Achievements and Challenges in the New Century*, September, African Knowledge Base (AKB) Platform, available at: http://akb.africa-union.org/auc/handle/AKB/66060.

UNESCO (2004), *The Political and Legal Context of Basic Education in Egypt. Egypt: Report: Part I: Main Indicators for Education for All*, UNESCO Office, Cairo, available at: http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/egypt/rapport_1.htm.

United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (2006), *Decentralization of Education in Egypt. Country Report at the UNESCO Seminar on EFA Implementation: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization*, Author, Hyderabad, India.

Welsh, T. and McGinn, N. (1999), *Decentralization of Education: Why, when, what, and How? Fundamentals of Educational Planning Series*, Number 64, available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED446365.

West, A. and Wolfe, D. (2019), "Academies, autonomy, equality, and democratic accountability: reforming the fragmented publicly funded school system in England", *London Review of Education*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 70-86.

Winkler, D. (1989), *Decentralization in Education: An Economic Perspective*, Working Paper No. 143, World Bank, Washington, District of Columbia.

Woods, C. (2014), *Anatomy of a Professionalization Project: The Making of the Modern School Business Manager*, Bloomsbury, London.

Zaki Ewiss, M.A., Abdelgawad, F. and El-Gandy, A. (2019), "School educational policy in Egypt: societal assessment perspective", *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 55-68, doi: 10.1108/JHASS-05-2019-004.

About the author

M.A. Zaki Ewiss is a professor of physics and the faculty of Science, Cairo University. During the year 2009–2019, he was the counselor for Cairo University's postgraduate studies and scientific research. He contributed enormously to many cultural and civilization dialogues and events. He acted as secretary-general of the international workshops and conferences. Since 1999, he is a member of the scientific, cultural committee at the Egyptian Supreme Council of Culture. Prof. Ewiss has a comprehensive academic and scientific cooperation with many universities in different continents such as Malaya University, Malaysia, Ulm University, Germany, Amsterdam University, Netherlands, Colorado University, USA and Nagoya University, Japan. He acts as a principal investigator for many International Scientific projects through the USAID project and the International cooperation with the Egyptian Academy of Science. Since 2010, he is the principal investigator of the project entitled "Sewage water treatment using the non-centralized technique" at Cairo University. Since 2017, he is the principal investigator of the project entitled "Cairo University Proposal of developing education in Developing countries using modelling approaches". He has significant contribution in organizing Egyptian and Arabic events in the dissemination of Scientific Arabic Culture. Prof. Ewiss published a high number of scientific papers in international journals. He also published 30 books in the field of popular sciences and Education. Due to his academic achievements, he obtained the discretionary and Excellence awards of Cairo University in basic science for 2008 and 2015, respectively. He is the founder of the International Organization of Science and Technology (IACT) organization (Website: IACT-org.com). M.A. Zaki Ewiss can be contacted at: mzewiss@cu.edu.eg