**Challenges to promoting “education for innovation”**

**in the Arab education system in Israel**

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The concept of innovation has many definitions and is covered extensively in the academic literature. In the present study, innovation is defined as “the capacity to think and act differently in a beneficial manner” (Beckman, 2014). The term “capacity” indicates that the process is continuous and not a one-time event. The emphasis on “thinking and acting differently” highlights the importance of breaking down existing paradigms and conventions and of translating inquiry into activity. This is especially important in a traditional and collectivist society, such as Arab society. Notably, the Israel Innovation Authority (2016) found that no more than 2% of the Arab population Israel is engaged in innovation, although Arabs comprise 21% of the citizens of Israel.

These figures indicate the great importance of promoting education for innovation in Arab society in Israel overall and in the Arab education system in particular. However, promotion of education for innovation, through which students in this system will be encouraged “to think and act differently” is likely to encounter a number of complex challenges. For example, this population may demonstrate low achievement as compared to similar populations in other parts of the world. There is a failure to provide quality education to all segments of the population. The number of outstanding students is low. The quality of teachers is poor, as reflected in methods of teaching and assessment that are unsuitable for the era of innovation. Students express a very low level of motivation to learn. A high percentage of teachers in this education system come from the humanities and social sciences. Budgetary investment in education in Arab society is inefficient. Traditional and collective thinking of teachers and students is prevalent in the Arab education system.

The current study addresses the challenges facing the promotion of education for innovation in the Arab education system in Israel. This topic has not yet been addressed in previous research or the professional literature. This study has two main goals. The first is to demonstrate the importance of education for innovation in the Arab education system in Israel. At the core of this is the need for research that outlines policies and contributes to better decision-making. The second goal is to examine the challenges facing the promotion and implementation of education for innovation in the Arab education system in Israel, in order to propose a culturally adaptive model for education for innovation. In this study we address two main questions:

1. What characteristics of the Arab educational system in the State of Israel present barriers to the promotion of education for innovation?
2. What cultural and social characteristics of Arab society, including those originating with teachers, students, and their parents, present barriers to the promotion of education for innovation in this system?

The main research methods will be interviews with school principals, teachers, and students within Arab society in Israel, and collection of data from official websites for all programs that promote education for innovation in the Arab education system in Israel.

The main preliminary findings indicated barriers to this education system and its operation, including obstacles related to the physical infrastructure, educational leadership, the quality of teachers, as well as cultural and social barriers.

Based on these findings, conclusions will be drawn related to policy and implementation of a model of education for innovation in the Arab education system in Israel, as well as for education systems of national minorities around the world.

Biographical summary of Dr. Baha Zoabi.

Dr. Zuabi is an academic dean of the Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education. He is a graduate of the Department of Learning, Instruction, and Teaching at the University of Haifa, under the guidance of Prof. Gabi Solomon. In recent years, he has been engaged in the field of innovation and innovation in education. He leads courses in innovation, develops arenas for innovation, and develops learning materials in the context of innovative and future-oriented pedagogy in higher education. He leads international conferences for researchers, teachers, and students in the area of education for innovation.

In the past two years, Dr. Zuabi has invested a great deal of effort in bringing about a “collective impact” in the field of education for innovation in Arab society. The aim is reducing gaps and maximizing the potential for creativity and innovation among students in the Arab education system in Israel.