**Financing of research in social sciences in developing countries of Africa: between valorization of internationalization and local priorities of research**

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**Abstract:**

No one would argue that nowadays research in social sciences is marked by internationalization. We see proliferating everywhere European research calls or international projects according to predefined thematic and axes and multiple co-publications abroad resulting from these calls. Calls for European and international projects provide funding for developing countries for scientific research, but push them to work on a local topic that is not always within their priorities. Are we faced to a social science research targeted and controlled to the detriment of the interest of the researcher?   
Isn’t research a result of a personal interest and motivation for a given topic?

The current research funding methods must not promote internationalization at the expense of the location of the search. This can only limit the researcher in his choice of research areas of theoretical references and in its methodology.

As part of our research, we will deal with the paradigm of the national society and its alternatives and then address the expansion and increasing calls for European and international projects in social sciences citing the advantages and disadvantages. Finally, we will address the issue from a scientific experience.

**KEYWORDS**: Social Sciences - finance- internationalization - Localization – South countries

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**1.Paradigm of national society and its alternatives:**

The said concept refers to the adequacy of the concept of society in the space of the nation-state in the discipline of social sciences. This view is challenged by social theory in 1970, and in particular by the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai.

In the nineteenth century, Sociology emerged as a discipline at the height of the nation state. The national society then seemed the most obvious conceptual reference for thinking about social relationships.

However, the process of globalization grows and multiplies the social ties outside the national territory. Thus, the adequacy of the concept of society across the nation-state became less and less relevant.

Ulrich Beck’s works on Cosmopolitanism are major considerations in an attempt to overcome methodological nationalism. Beck argues that the nation is but one dimension of collective identity, which is no more relevant than others to address the differences and social groups within humanity.

As to John Urry, he suggests that sociology put forward the concepts of mobility, networks and flows as paradigms of social ties in this globalized world. In her works on global cities, Saskia Sassen adopts the perspective of transnationalism rather than methodological nationalism.

Moreover, many phenomena and developments which are observed within nation states result from interactions with other societies. It appears that the existence of similar elements in different cultures is often the product of circulation and exchange of patterns rather than the consequence of comparable causes (when it is not a common heritage)

Let’s take for example the concept of field. According to Giséle Sapiro, this concept is generally used in a national context, which is why many researchers addressing transnational or international matters are reluctant to use it, hence, preferring the less restrictive concept:"space". As for Pierre Bourdieu, it is not mentioned in his works that ‘fields’ are necessarily confined to the perimeter of the nation state. Movement and migration are also a source of renewal of national fields.

**2.The impact of the Bologna process:**

Bologna process was initiated in 1998 and led to the creation of the European Higher Education Area. African higher education was reformed at the same time for historical, linguistic and political reasons that bind the two continents.

Nevertheless, Bologna Process has resulted in effects on the higher education system in many developing countries. Some authors have even addressed the issue by questioning whether it represented globalization or return to the colonial situation. Khelfaoui (2009, 4) argues that Bologna Process "appears as the completion of a slow process of exclusion of African states and societies from defining their own public policies. The considerable work of postcolonial reconfiguration of education systems is radically called into question in favor of a new control paradigm conveyed by globalization agents. "

Moreover, some authors have questioned the true role of the African University (Amougou 2003 Ela 2003). Shawa (2008) is concerned that the harmonization of qualifications promotes the brain drain of the best African researchers to Europe.

\*Khelfaoui (2009) considers that these reforms in Africa are justified by their reference to the context of globalization and tend to overshadow any discussion of the outcomes that could be negotiated locally with the undoubted suffered crisis within universities in the continent.

Nogueira & Aguiar (2008, 117), stated that "docility to the international [...] rooted in the unequal symbolic relationship between the nations where the cultural attributes of the dominant countries enjoy recognition and value, and are imposed on dominated nationalities, for which international investments become highly valued and worthwhile. "

**3.Expansion of European journals and development of intra-European collaboration with developing countries**

We have been witnessing a proliferation of calls for EU projects and others involving researchers from developing countries. These calls encourage them to achieve co-publications, often disseminated through international journals. Countless are seminars, research projects and journals sponsored by the EU.

However, a policy of social science research should be based on the principles of freedom and autonomy of research.

Indeed, in developing countries, Social scientists lack funding in their research work. Calls for European and international projects offer them this funding opportunity, but make the researcher work on a local topic that does not always fall within his or her priority.

\*We also disagree that the idea of ​​Western hegemony in social sciences is defended by some researchers. For instance, Wiebke Keim, a researcher in the University of Starsbourg. According to her, Sociology of developing countries still suffers from intellectual dependence on the production of the West and an unequal division of labor.

Certainly, many social scientists in developing countries are conducting empirical research for the benefit of organizations and international institutions. But these same researchers also examine the theoretical implications of this work. So this is no longer the preserve of Nordic researchers. It is, however, to note that the use and exploitation of results of this work by developing countries researchers are problematic since research is driven initially by a foreign institution.

Syed Farid Al-Attas, a sociologist and Malaysian researcher, notes that many research projects adopting methodologies, theories or empirical approaches impregnated from standards and discourse of the dominant research prove inadequate or inapplicable to the diversity of local contexts.

**4.Personal Scientific Experience**

**a) Findings**

Based on our scientific experiences: social science Professor-researcher and member of several European projects, and as responsible for scientific research in Mohammed V University in Rabat and Hassan II University in Casablanca, and currently a PhD student in social sciences, We could notice several deficiencies in the system of scientific research in general, and in social sciences particularly in developing countries.

Among the research challenges that we identified in Morocco and that we also noticed in the other developing countries: career advancement does not depend, as in the international, on research publications, but on seniority. Consequently, Professors do not do research. Add to that the large number of teaching hours, lack of resources and lack of "scientific communities".

According to the sociologist, Pr. Cherkaoui, there are two major groups contrast and a third which holds an intermediate position. The first group is composed of teachers oriented towards the international: members of foreign and national journal committees, participating in international conferences ... The second group is heterogeneous. \*It consists of individuals facing students and the audience. It produces books that are actually underway. The third group is composed of individuals who have a good knowledge of disciplines.

It is also worth to mention that the majority of Professors, researchers, more than 55%, have never published a single line for an average of 4 years (study conducted by Pr. Cherkaoui for the production of faculty in SHS from 1996 2006).

This alarming situation is due to the lack of scientific community, and the fact that scientific recognition is not done by peers on the basis of scientific production. Moreover, the evaluation and promotion of Research Professors only takes into account the scientific production of the last two years.

Not to mention the fact that the status of the teacher researcher in Morocco is perceived by the public as one of the lowest.

**b) Difficulties of scientific research in developing countries**

It may be mentioned in particular:

- The human research potential and low material with respect to the extent and acuteness of the scientific problems to solve.

- Aging of human potential in scientific research

- Low production and development of scientific research, especially in social sciences. The work and research results are not valued and are only in publications in scientific journals of less value or are not read and consulted at local or national level.

- Deficiency in the orientation and organization of research: this translates into a research structuring problem and a weakness of the division of labor on the part of the researcher (research centered in most cases on the supervision of theses and research papers)

- Financing Difficulty of scientific research: lack of means to pay the costs of publication of an indexed article for example ...

- Dependence regarding the outside

- Low scientific production, especially in indexed journals

It should be noted that research in developing countries is mainly funded through public funds (those provided by the ministry or public research organizations in each country).

Our research systems are closely linked to the outside, either to acquire scientific equipment or to fund research activities (publications, research projects ...).

It is generally accepted that he who controls the research funding, obviously monitors the results and directions of scientific research.

Scientific research must have the role of being a powerful development factor. This ability must be national, permanent and reproducible.

Let’s take a look at the low production in the field of social sciences in some African countries compared to other scientific disciplines.

1. 1. Production in Africa from 1995 to 2015 (all disciplines)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Country | Number of publications |
| South Africa | 188104 |
| Nigeria | 59372 |
| Tunisia | 58769 |
| Algeria | 42456 |
| Morocco | 40737 |

3. Production in Africa from 1995 to 2015 (Social Sciences only)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Country | Number of publications |
| South Africa | 24002 |
| Nigeria | 6035 |
| Kenya | 2700 |
| Ghana | 1816 |

**5.Conclusion :**

In addition to researching local issues and topics that are not necessarily a priority, it can be noted that some faculty members are content to collect data and have difficulty producing / or discussing theories of epistemology.

Do not forget the specificity of social sciences in the South. It is hard to recognize their usefulness and thus grant them the necessary funding, like what is done with the natural sciences (grant facilities to acquire scientific equipment ...)

6. References

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