The Role of School Leadership on Teacher Development in Select Private Schools in Abu Dhabi

في المختارة الخاصة المدارس في المعلمين تطوير في المدرسية القيادة دور أبوظبي

by

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

at

The British University in Dubai

June 2020

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ABSTRACT

The National Agenda of the UAE seeks to develop the current status of education into a First-Rate Education System. The ambitious goal requires rigorous transformation of schools in the UAE. In order to reach this goal, educational leadership is tasked with raising student achievement at or above international standards. Teacher development is a key area of focus to reaching this goal, as the government strives to have 100% of its' schools staffed with high quality teachers. While there are measures in place to improve teacher qualifications at the district level, leadership at the school level have a large role in developing teachers to the status of high quality. The UAE teacher workforce hails from diverse educational and experiential backgrounds, which in some capacities is a strength, but can in some cases create difficulties in understanding where development is needed or pose large gaps in pedagogy and practice. The teacher workforce is also an incredibly transient population with relatively high turnover rates, making long-term teacher development strategies difficult to implement.

This study aims to investigate how Principals, embodying characteristics of transformational leadership, in private schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, are working to ensure they are developing their teachers toward the high-quality standards set by the ministry. The study will present data from six different schools at varying performance levels, to identify best practices of leadership that are driving school improvement. The study will also measure how the teachers at this school are performing on emirate specific deficits in teacher performance.

The study found that there are common practices used amongst these leaders that are developing high quality teachers and high student achievement or that are making measurable growth in these areas. One of the key commonalities among leaders is the use of teacher and distributed leadership. All leaders aimed to empower staff and utilize the human capital. Findings also suggest that student population, recruitment and budget may play a role in the rate of development of teachers.

ملخص البحث

من تعليمياً نظاماً ليصبح للتعليم الحالي الوضع تطوير إلى المتحدة العربية الإمارات لدولة الوطني البرنامج يسعى هذا لتحقيق. المتحدة العربية الإمارات في المدارس في صارماً تحولاً الطموح الهدف هذا يتطلب. الأولى الدرجة منها أعلى أو الدولية المعايير مستوى إلى للطلاب العلمي التحصيل مستوى برفع التعليمية القيادة تكليف تم، الهدف من ٪100 لتزويد جاهدة الحكومة تسعى حيث، الهدف هذا لتحقيق للتركيز رئيسياً مجالاً المعلمين تطوير يُعد مستوى على المعلمين مؤهلات لتحسين قائمة تدابير وجود حين في. عالية الكفاءة ذوي من بمعلمين مدارسها تنحدر. العالية الكفاءة مستوى إلى المعلمين تطوير في كبيراً دوراً المدرسي المستوى على للقيادة فإن، المقاطعات في يشكل ما وهو، متنوعة وخبرات تعليمية خلفيات من المتحدة العربية الإمارات في المعلمين من العاملة القوى التنمية إلى تحتاج التي المجالات فهم في صعوبات إلى الحالات بعض في يؤدي قد ولكنه، قوة نقطة الحالات بعض السكان فئات من المعلمين من العاملة القوى تعد كما. والممارسة التدريس طرائق في كبيرة فجوات يشكل قد أو طويلة المعلمين تطوير استراتيجيات تطبيق يجعل مما، الموظفين لتبديل نسبياً عالية معدلات مع كبير بشكل المتنقلين القادرة القيادة سمات يجسدون الذين، المدراء عمل كيفية في التحقيق إلى الدراسة هذه وتهدف. صعباً أمراً الأمد التي العالية الكفاءة معايير نحو معلميهم تطوير لضمان، أبوظبي إمارة في الخاصة المدارس في، التغيير على الممارسات أفضل لتحديد، متفاوتة أداء بمستويات مختلفة مدارس ست من بيانات الدراسة ستقدم. الوزارة وضعتها بحسب المدرسة هذه في المعلمين أداء بقياس الدراسة ستقوم كما. المدرسي الأداء تحسين إلى تدفع التي القيادية بين تستخدم شائعة ممارسات هناك أن الدراسة وجدت وقد. الإمارة في المعلمين أداء في المحددة العجز حالات هذه في ملموساً نمواً تحقق أو الطلاب عند عالٍ وإنجاز عالية كفاءة ذوي معلمين تطور والتي القادة هؤلاء القادة جميع يهدف. الموزعة والقيادة المعلم استخدام هي القادة بين الرئيسية المشتركة السمات بين ومن. المجالات والتوظيف الطلاب عدد أن إلى أيضاً النتائج تشير. البشري المال رأس من والاستفادة الموظفين تمكين إلى المعلمين تطور معدل في دوراً يلعبون قد والميزانية.

Dedication

To my husband, Nathan, for his continuous love, support, and endless patience

To my work brothers Hossam, Dylan and Michael for their support and motivation

To Jeff for seeing the leader in me and pushing me out of my comfort zone

To the teachers and students at my school for inspiring me daily

To coffee, because I really needed a lot of it

Acknowledgement

Thank you to the faculty at BUID for your guidance and feedback during this time. Much

appreciation to Dr. Christopher Hill for supervising the research and dissertation process.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The National Agenda of the UAE seeks to develop the current status of education into a First-Rate Education System. The ambitious goal requires rigorous transformation of schools in the UAE. Furthermore, the agenda seeks to not only transform education but also health care, economy, public safety, public happiness, environment, and global land, sea, and air infrastructure (National Agenda 2019). With such a high demand for change, school leaders are not only tasked with transforming their schools, but also aligning their decisions, actions, and student preparation with policies and initiatives of the nation. One major goal of the National Agenda is "to ensure that 100% of schools have high-quality teachers." Currently school leadership has been tasked with prioritizing the improvement of teachers through various mandates and initiatives. Considering the teacher workforce is highly transient, with great diversity in culture and educational backgrounds, and taking into account the large number and urgency of policy and development initiatives being implemented- teacher development is a priority for educational leadership across the UAE, and is also a complex endeavor.

1.2 Purpose of Study and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to identify best practices of teacher development through the analysis of Principals, who are currently leading at highly rated Abu Dhabi private schools or who are leading Abu Dhabi private schools that have driven improvement in the area of teaching and learning. These leaders have all been identified to demonstrate characteristics of transformational leadership. The role of the school leader in teacher development is explored to identify strategies and actions that lead to development in teaching and learning, which in turn ultimately impacts student achievement and outcomes.

The study will identify and analyze the practices of six school principals in private schools in Abu Dhabi. Three of the schools, with established leadership, are performing at Very Good or Outstanding according to Irtiqa ratings, and three of the schools have received the rating of Good and recently had a change in leadership, who has implemented impactful changes to

improving the quality of teachers since their last inspection. Through survey results from education management leaders, and recent policy reports-the areas of focus in teacher development in Abu Dhabi are currently: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement.

Utilizing data from ADEK inspections reports, questionnaires and follow-up interviews with the Principals, this study seeks to gain insight on the following research questions:

1) What are common best practices in leading teacher development among Transformational Leaders?

2) What strategies are being used to diagnose teacher needs, provide supports, and hold teachers accountable to high standards?

3) What challenges do leaders face in developing high-quality teachers?

4) Do schools with strong leadership excel in the key areas of emirate-wide scrutiny: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement?

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Raising the Standard of Education in the UAE

In 2017, the UAE set strategic objectives in order to meet their 2021 targets aiming to raise the standard of education. Two of the targets for focus in this study include: schools having 100% of their teachers to qualify as "High-Quality Teachers" and 100% of schools to have "High Effective School Leadership." (MOE 2017). In order to meet their targets, the Ministry has set objectives such as, "Achieve excellent leadership and educational efficiency" and "Ensure quality, efficiency and good governance of educational and institutional performance, including the delivery of teaching" (MOE 2017). With ministry objectives emphasizing the increase in quality and transparency of services and standards. The reform of the teaching system has led to the new system of teacher licensure, titled 'Teacher and Educational Leadership Standards and Licensing Program'. The intentions of the new licensing system are to standardize, and quality assure teacher qualifications, for both Emirati and expatriate, in public and private school throughout the UAE. In addition to standardize teacher qualifications, national examinations and portfolio expectations have been set for teachers that meet the criteria. The National Qualifications Authority, Ministry of Education, ADEK, KHDA, and Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Institute of Applied Technology collaborated to develop the new requirements and training for teachers (MOE 2017). The Regional Center for Educational Planning-UNESCO and The Emirates College for Advanced Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the 22nd of January 2020, which "aims to jointly organize specialized training programs to develop the national experts of the UAE in the areas of planning, leadership, and educational management" (RECPUNSECO 2020). The RCEP work closely with the MOE "to ensure policies and national priorities are in line with the international best practices" (MOE 2020). In order to quality assure and assess progress of these items, the UAE School Inspection Framework is used to evaluate and deliver recommendations to schools for improvement.

2.2 Measures of School Effectiveness: UAE School Inspection Framework

This study will utilize the most recent school reports, which are completed using the UAE School Inspection Framework. The Framework is composed of six performance standards:

1. Students' Achievement
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills
3. Teaching and assessment
4. Curriculum
5. The protection, care, and guidance and support of students
6. Leadership and Management

These performance standards are rated through a "six levels of quality" scale: Outstanding, Very Good, Good, Acceptable, Weak, and Very Weak. As this study will be focusing on leadership and teacher development, the extraction of relevant data will come primarily from performance standards 3 and 6, but not exclusively (Irtiqa Framework 2017).

Measures of school effectiveness utilize tools that are often used to monitor school improvement and progress. These tools can generate data to lead to school improvement but can also be limited. Scheerens (2000) discusses school effectiveness in an UNESCO publication that aims to define and discuss the nature of school effectiveness measures. She claims that school effectiveness is a casual concept, due to the fact that it is quantitative to a degree, but when looking at schools holistically the individual nature of the school can be difficult to quantify and is often generalized by evaluation tools. There are frameworks that define school effectiveness, and measure a desired output, but there needs to be room for anecdotal evidence to be utilized to understand the true complexities and factors that generate school improvement.

Al Saadi (2017) examined the UAE inspection framework. These frameworks are used to measure a school's performance and effectiveness. She concluded that school transformation is impacted by the framework, as it drives self-evaluation and accountability. The framework and inspection process is used as a quality assurance tool, but can sometimes influence what a school focuses on. It can also lead to difficulty in extracting what factors contribute to improvement and effectiveness. Therefore, there is a need for additional data in determining what contributes to a school and their leadership's overall effectiveness.

2.3 Transformational and Distributed Leadership

Leadership in the UAE is undergoing change and is in need of leaders who can innovate and promote. Leadership must focus on meeting the targets set by government and various policy holders. Abu Dhabi is currently working toward becoming one of the highest performing group of schools, measured by PISA and TIMSS scores on the international level and UAE National Assessment programs at the national level. In order to meet these goals, Abu Dhabi leaders will have to improve teacher effectiveness and student performance (ADEK 2012). The 2012-2016 ADEK performance auditing reports shed light on areas of weakness within schools. These areas of needed improvement included weak school leadership, poor teaching (lower Bloom's level learning methods), and lack of quality teachers. In response to this, leader and teacher standards have changed the way schools are developed as can be seen in the UAE School Inspection framework (Irtiqa Programme 2017). In order for these changes to occur, leadership has to improve and transform the current status of education.

Burns' original concept of transformational leadership was "a process in which leaders transform an organization by increasing the achievement and motivation of their followers" (Stewart 2006). Cameron and Green (2009) define transformation leaders as those who are able to facilitate change. Leithwood (2006) discusses the need for transformational leaders in education, especially when decentralization occurs. Transformational leaders will work towards a shared vision, motivating and empowering instructors within the school to be part of the change process. Under transformational leadership, change and learning becomes a shared responsibility among all stakeholders within the school. Transformational leadership aims to nurture, build, and strengthen the school staff, which in turn contributes to a cohesive and strengthened school culture (Senge, 1990) Leithwood and Stewart posit that transformational leaders help staff "buy in to the change approach and feel empowered within its aegis" (2006, 2006). Litz and Scott conducted a study in the UAE in 2017 looking at transformational leadership and the impact on its' reception from different cultures.   Their findings indicate that the Western model of transformational leadership needs to be adjusted to accommodate other cultures. Their study also found that transformational leadership is perceived differently at various staff levels. Leaders often found themselves more aligned

with the pillars of transformational leadership than the lower levels of staff (Litz and Scott 2017). Lewis, Boston, and Peterson find that Transformational Leadership is beneficial and appropriate for systems in education, as globalization and diversity in schools increases (2017). Bunaiyan and McWilliams concluded in their study that leaders with specific behaviors and characteristics of transformational leadership are better suited to apply reforms, "especially within educational systems grappling with the complexity of globalization" (2018). Northouse found that leaders with transformational characteristics, such as charisma, can inspire others and helps develop the relationships needed in order to drive change and inspire a shared vision (2016).

The term distributed leadership can sometimes be used interchangeably with terms such as 'collaborative' leadership or 'team' leadership. Spillane and Gronn have specified the differences in their work and defined the distinct criteria for distributed leadership. Gronn and Spillane (2008 and 2006) define distributed leadership as a way to clarify job descriptions, strategic thinking, and developing teacher leaders. Distributed leadership is a way of developing leaders within schools and promoting a shared responsibility among staff. (Spillane 2006). Al Ahbabi (2018) presented a study that found that school success in facing challenges and burdens was better managed when there was more unity and shared responsibilities in schools. A study conducted in Malaysia in 2015, determined that distributed leadership directly correlates to success in developing the education system (Daud et al 2015). The concept of teacher leadership within schools in the UAE is becoming more common. The developing nature of the education system almost requires that leaders foster future leaders in order to promote buy in to higher expectations and the goals of the national agenda.

Employing a model of transformational leadership or at least key components of the model and utilizing distributed leadership has become more common in the UAE. Due to the youth of the UAE education system and culture of change and reform within schools, the impact of this leadership style and use of distributed leadership to promote change and increase teacher effectiveness and student success requires further inquiry and scrutiny.

2.4 Teacher Development

UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, states that "education, a fundamental human right, is the key to global peace and sustainable development" and it is essential that "children, young people, and adults gain the knowledge and skills they need to live in dignity, to fulfull their potential and contribute to societies as responsible global citizens" (2016).   The impact of quality education reaches far beyond the classroom; therefore, educational research is continuously being conducted in order to improve and evolve with the changing world. One of the key areas of focus and development is improving teaching quality, which is essential to driving improvements in student achievement and improving schools. The impact teachers have on students and their future have lasting effects. Darling-Hammond defines teaching quality as "instruction that enables a wide range of students to learn" (2012). Therefore, for a teacher to be considered high quality, they have to be addressing the needs of the lowest and the highest students, in addition to the students performing at grade level. The focus on the role of the teacher and their development has increased over the past decade, as schools respond to reform policy, development of pedagogical approaches, globalization, and an ever-evolving job market. The impact of a high-quality teacher in the student's future has been elevated through economic research. For example, Hanushek (2011) conducted a study in which it was determined that teachers evaluated as 'high quality' were connected to the future economic earnings of students, but an ineffective teacher was also connected to negative impact on future student earnings. Teacher's impact on student outcomes, therefore, are long term. Teacher reform is at the forefront of educational research, and "a great deal of learning on the part of the teachers will be difficult to make without support and guidance" (Borko, 2004). Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley concluded in their study that teachers who receive substantial teacher development can increase student achievement by 21 percentile points (2007). Therefore, due to the increasing stakes and growth of expectations of teachers, there needs to be proper developmental supports that district and school levels.

Responding to the data from teacher impact studies on student achievement, educational researchers have conducted many studies which sought to identify common effective practices and approaches in supporting teacher's development. Webster-Wright's research discusses the shifts that teacher development approaches have taken over the past twenty years. Teacher development programs are evolving from the transactional and didactic practices, to

implementing methods and approaches that place the teacher at the center of their own learning and they engage in an "authentic professional learning" experience (2009). According to McLaughlin and Zarrow, teacher development is composed of several characteristics, with teachers treated as "active learners" (2001). When professional development is "job embedded" (Wei et al., 2009), well-designed, and dispersed throughout the year within the appropriate amount of hours, teachers are most able to engage in their own development and impact student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007). Successful job-embedded professional development includes collaborative learning and professional learning communities (Vescio et al., 2008), making content-specific connections between curriculum, assessment, and professional-learning decisions, using active learning, and increasing and deepening content knowledge and delivery methods (Wei et. al 2009).

The quality and facilitation of collaboration amongst teachers and leaders plays a key role in the teacher growth, which leads to better student achievement. Ronfeldt conducted a two-year study in Florida schools, in which the researchers monitored the activity of instructional teams across the district and measured the quality of collaboration against the rate of student progress and achievement. They study concluded that learning teams with clear vision and strategy who were presented with clear guidelines for collaboration, and applied them consistently, were most effective (2015). Professional Learning Communities are proven as effective tools in teacher development. These are centralized collaborative venues for teachers to continuously reflect on their practice, share best practice, seek guidance or input, and engage in meaningful dialogue with their colleagues. The PLC is also a place where teachers are involved in the school-wide development working toward teacher-leadership skills. When the group focuses on a key goal of improving student learning, there is a marked improvement on teacher growth (Vescio et al., 2008).

Practices within Professional Learning Communities that are common to producing growth and improvement in teacher practice include: peer observation, video-based reflections, peer and leader mentorship, and student-based teams. Peer observation has proven to be a successful tool amongst teachers, especially when a structure of feedback and implementation is in place (Burbank 2003). The use of peer observation in teacher development is a useful tool to not only create a collaborative culture within the school but it also allows teachers to

take an active roll in their own development (Smith 2017). In turn, when teachers are able to evaluate best practices in teaching and learning, they not only apply these items to their own classrooms, but into the wider-school level discussions on teaching improvements (Hattie et. al, 2015).

One approach to teacher development has been gaining momentum is the use of video-based reflection and analysis. While it is a great way to circumvent the common issue time and schedule-centric obstacles, it allows teachers to observe their own lesson and evaluate their own practice and interactions. In addition, videos can be used as powerful tools for collaborative discussion and for modeling of best practice (Allen et. al., 2011). Marsh and Mitchell's conducted a study which explored the role of the use of video as a tool for professional development, they concluded that the exercise not only helps develop teacher's reflective practice and assists with teacher's ability to move from describing teaching to analyzing it (2014).

One of the repetitive themes throughout the review of best practices in teacher development research is consistency, support, and accountability. In the various studies on teacher development, there is little to no impact on teacher development and student growth outcomes if development provided in isolation and infrequently. Therefore, school leadership's role plays an essential role in the quality of teacher development and therefore the success of the program within the school.

2.5 The Role of the Leadership in Teacher Development

There is no one size fits all model for teacher development, as the plan of design needs to be responsive to the needs of the teachers and the institution. Teacher development strategies need to be developed with context in mind. The role of the Principal in teacher development will take varying forms, but ultimately the Principal will need to set the vision and guidance that aligns with the school development goals and student needs. Schools and educators need to work together to diagnose teacher and student needs, account for cultural beliefs and practices, and align development plans to the trajectory of the school-wide goals and reforms (Scribner 1999). Principals are tasked with providing the time, vision, time, and resources to support teacher development. They are also responsible for fostering a positive school

climate for students and teachers so that development may occur (Leithwood et al., 2004). Research suggests that effective leadership can have a strong positive impact on student achievement if there is a focus on "developing people's capacities rather than their limitations" (Bryk and Schneider, 2003).   According to Darling-Hammond, the key features needed for leaders to drive quality development include: standards-based focus, performance-based assessment creation, develop standards-based evaluation, put supports in place that are of high quality, fair, and effective, and align teacher learning opportunities to the needs (2012).

A common theme in the research on leadership impact on teacher development is that empowerment of teachers in the development process through distributed leadership often leads to success and teacher buy-in (Wei 2009). The Wallace Foundation found that in their studies, developing leadership across "the entire organization" contributed to stronger teachers and a more collaborative environment (2012). A study in Washington determined that distributing leadership at the secondary level was critical, as the range of subjects and expertise are wide and they benefit from empowering those that are experts. In doing this, those leaders are more informed and purposeful when developing and guiding instruction (Louis et. al 2010). Through a case study perspective, education reform in teacher development, in the 1990s, in Finland, has moved to decentralize power and offer teachers a large autonomy in their pedagogical and curricular decisions. Surveys indicate that teachers spend the majority of their time in co-planning, curriculum development, and parental engagement (Gonnie van Amelsvoort and Scheerens, 1996). There is very little in-service training and instead the teachers participate in policy decision making. It is reported the decentralized system has been successful due to the highly collaborative and inclusive culture allowed by leadership at all levels (Hargreaves, Halasz, and Pont, 2007).

In high performing countries, a common theme in teacher development is that teachers receive an appropriate amount of development time and are offered active opportunities to research and collaborate in their field and school to make an impact on change and improvement. In one study, examining US schools, researchers concluded that an average of 49 hours of teacher development per year, at a minimum, was needed to improve student

achievement (Yoon et. al., 2007). Countries such as the Netherlands, Singapore, and Sweden require teachers commit to 100 hours minimum of professional development per year- which mostly entails planning time with colleagues and self-inquiry semi-guided by leadership (Barber and Mourshed, 2007). The Singapore government also requires teachers to participate in action research projects in addition to their 100 hours. Their classroom-based research on a common challenge in the classroom is then shared with others through a Teacher's Network. Feedback from teachers is positive, as they feel the are developing professionally and producing new knowledge. (Tripp 2004). Experienced teachers in South Korea are required to complete 90 hours of professional development courses every three years, and are encourages to enroll in government research programs for incentives in the workplace (Kang & Hong, 2008).   In Japan, a large part of their teacher development strategy is in conducting research lessons in collaboration with other teachers. The lesson is usually recorded and then discussed among colleagues in and outside of the school. Once the lesson is revised it is taught by another colleague for further evaluation. This develops a culture of continuous feedback, collaboration, and ongoing improvement and refinement of best learning practices (Fernandez 2002). England and Canada provide opportunities for school-based research, which they in turn share with their colleagues through conferences and publications (OECD, 2005).

In a recent study, Buckner, Chedda, and Kindreich, examine teacher development in the UAE (2018). The research examined public school professional development, gaining insight on the type of professional development available to teachers, identifying major barriers, measuring perceived impact, and the needs of teachers. The study concluded that professional development needs to be "better incentivized" and "targeted to teacher needs (Buckner et. al., 2018). From the teacher surveys they administered teachers wanted more time on development, especially in targeted PD weeks. They also wanted more specialized training, which the researchers conclude need to be active and research based. The teachers also wanted more involvement in the planning process of their teacher development programs as well as more rewards and recognition. Researchers also found that school leadership needed to take a more active role in developing teachers, as well as utilize their internal teachers of excellence to develop them into teacher leaders. The study also found that there were large

deficits in the areas of: Teaching students with special needs, Technology in the Workplace, Teaching in a multi-cultural setting, School leadership in teacher leadership, and career guidance. Strengths were in Curriculum and subject knowledge and the pedagogical competency (Buckner et. al., 2018).

Another study was conducted in 2018 on building UAE teacher capacity. She identifies the "primary conduit" of professional development and student achievement as the teacher. Reforming the education system through the standardization of teacher qualification and therefore has been a focus for educational leaders in the UAE. Werner concludes that, at present, there is too much focus on learning for licensure. She recommends the two interventions take place: 1) Effective Professional Development and 2) Teacher Empowerment. The policy briefing emphasizes the need for a new professional development model to be adapted, which utilizes virtual opportunities, is flexible and need based, is metacognitive, and encourages collaboration and interaction with colleagues (Werner 2018). Her policy also notes the high attrition rate of teachers can be in response a lack of motivation in the workplace in response to a lack of empowerment and motivation amongst teachers (Werner 2018). While these studies are informative and provide a good overview of the UAE and needs of teacher development in the emirate, there are gaps in research between the public and private sectors. This study will focus on individual private schools to identify best practices and methods for teacher development that work in a specific context, with considerations to the teaching and student population.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

A mixed methodology approach of qualitative and quantitative methods was utilized to conduct this study. The preliminary quantitative component of the study required administering a MLQ Survey to middle leaders and teachers at eight schools to evaluate their Principal, in order to determine which leaders would be appropriate for the study. Concurrently, members of educational management groups in Abu Dhabi completed a survey, which helped identify key areas of scrutiny in teacher evaluations consistent across the emirate of Abu Dhabi at this time. Following the MLQ administration and collating the survey results, the qualitative component was enacted. It required selected school leaders with transformational leadership traits to complete a questionnaire and if necessary, respond to follow-up questions in a semi-structured interview, regarding their role and practices in teacher development. Within the questionnaire, Principals were asked to evaluate their teachers in the pre-identified areas of focus. The data was then triangulated with the inspection report data to create an overall summary for analysis of teacher development practices at each school.

3.2 Participants

The participants of the study were selected in various phases. The first phase was to identify schools in the Abu Dhabi private school sector that have made improvements in the area of teaching and learning, and have been rated at a Good, Very Good, or Outstanding on their most recent Irtiqa Inspection report. The rationale behind this was to select schools that show evidence of growth and success. Using school inspection reports and informal feedback from private school education management leaders, twelve schools met the criteria. Of these twelve, ten were able to participate in the next phase. In phase two of participant selection,

Middle leaders and five randomly selected teachers of the selected schools were asked to complete a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire about their leader to identify whether or not those leaders exhibit qualities of transformational leadership. Following this vetting process, seven leaders met the criteria. One of the leaders declined to participate due to the unprecedented transition to e-learning in the wake of the coronavirus, therefore this study will have six Principal participants.

Of the six Abu Dhabi private school leaders who agreed to participate in the study, all had extensive leadership experience. Two principals completed their leadership training in the UK, three completed leadership training in the USA, and one completed their leadership training in Ireland. Principals A, B, and C have been at their schools for over 3 years and have either maintained or earned ratings of Very Good or Outstanding. Principals D, E. and F, lead schools rated as Good, and have led their school for 3 or less years. These leaders have evidence of driving improvement in their schools, especially in the area of teaching and learning.

3.3 Data Collection and Instrumentation

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

The study made use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, created by Avolio and Bass. Cascio posits that "more often today's networked, interdependent, culturally diverse organization requires transformational leadership" (1995). Since his study the need for transformational leaders has grown exponentially as our world continues to change and integrate at a faster rate. The MLQ is an ever-evolving tool, which has responded to the changing paradigms of leadership and is used by leaders and organizations to measure and identify leadership behaviors. The MLQ is divided into three leadership types-transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. The tool is not used to label a leader as one of these types definitively but is to identify key characteristics within an individual that correlate with that leadership style (Avolio et. al, 2004). In order to select leaders for this study, the MLQ Rater form was administered to middle leaders and teachers of select schools, who were performing at Outstanding and Very Good or who have made notable growth on

their last inspection rating of Good. The rationale for using the MLQ Rater form was to identify leaders who are perceived by their teams as transformational, as middle leader and teacher evaluations would inform the people's perception of their leader.

The participants selected included middle leaders- grade level leaders, heads of department, curriculum coordinators, etc. In addition, a random sampling of five to seven teachers, to be distributed by one of the middle leaders with the instructions to randomly select the sample. The aim was to have ten participants per school take the MLQ, but in some cases there were less responses. Overall ten school submitted an appropriate amount of surveys.

The MLQ Rate form presents 45 descriptive statements with a frequency rating scale of 0-4, 0-not at all, 1-Once in a while, 2- Sometimes, 3-Fairly often, and 4-Frequently, if not always. The rater forms were then scored using the key and the mean was calculated in each scale of the characteristic. Table 1 provides a description of each scale item in the context of school leadership. In Table 2, Leaders rate with a mean score from raters as 3 or above in the majority of Transformational Leadership characteristics were selected for the second phase of the study.

Characteristic	Scale Name	Description in context
Transformational	Idealized Attributes/Influences *formally Charisma	Teachers view their leaders in an idealized way. Much trust and confidence is invested in the leader. Teachers are inspired (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Idealized Behaviors	Leaders have a strong sense of purpose and communicate this with teachers. These leaders consider moral and ethical consequences. Leaders have a "collective sense of mission" (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Inspirational Motivation	The leader motivates their teachers to work as a team and work toward a future goal. The leader will set a vision for the future and teachers will have a clear idea of what their success criteria is (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Intellectual Stimulation	The leader will be innovative and inclusive in problem solving. They will involve teachers and middle leaders in the decision making process, and questions the status quo to stimulate development (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Individual Consideration	Leaders know their team and work as mentors and coaches. Leaders will "treat others as individuals" (Avolio et al., 2004).
Transactional	Contingent Reward	Leaders will "provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts." The teachers and middle leaders know that their effort will result in a stated outcome. Leaders offer praise when something is accomplished (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Mgmt by Exception (Active)	Leaders will "focus attention on irregularities, exceptions, mistakes, and deviation from standards." These leaders will respond when things are not in the norm (Avolio et al., 2004).
Passive Avoidant	Mgmt by Exception (Passive)	Leaders will respond to problems once they are escalated. They will not challenge the status quo (Avolio et al., 2004).
	Laissez-Faire	These leaders will have a reduced presence in their organization and will be hesitant or unwilling to make decisions. They will also avoid response to urgency (Avolio et al., 2004).

Table 1. MLQ Characteristic and Scale Descriptions in Context

Leader Code	# of participants (n=)	Transformational					Transactional		Passive Avoidant		Principal Selection Teacher Development Study-Dissertation Code
		Idealized Attributes (IA)	Idealized Behaviors (IB)	Inspirational Motivation (IM)	Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	Individual Consideration (IC)	Contingent Reward (CR)	Mgmt by Exception (active) (MBEA)	Mgmt by Exception (passive) (MBEP)	Laissez-Faire (LF)	
L1	10	2.6	1.4	1.8	2	2.6	2.5	3.1	3.4	3.4	N/A
L2	9	3.7	4	4	3.5	2	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.4	Principal D
L3	10	3	2.6	2.6	2	2.9	3.4	1.8	2.6	3.1	N/A
L4	10	3	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.2	1.2	1.1	0.8	1.5	Principal B
L5	8	3.4	3.1	2.8	3.25	3	1.9	1.5	2.1	0.5	Declined
L6	7	3.9	4	4	3.4	4	2	0.9	0.1	0.7	Principal A
L7	9	3.7	3.6	3.6	4	3.2	1.8	1.6	0.7	0.1	Principal C
L8	10	3.2	3.6	3.7	4	3.2	2	1.5	0.8	0.7	Principal E
L9	10	1.8	2	2	2.1	2.9	3	3.2	3.1	3.7	N/A
L10	10	3.6	4	3.7	3.9	3.8	2.8	1.6	1.6	1.3	Principal D

Table 2: MLQ Results- Results and Leader Selection Process

Survey

The purpose of the preliminary survey was to identify common areas of development in private schools in Abu Dhabi in order to structure and focus the Leadership Questionnaire. Education management leaders of school networks were contacted via phone and e-mail to help design the survey. The leaders were asked to provide a list, with no item limit, of areas of teacher development needs. These leaders manage and develop groups of private schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, and therefore have firsthand insight on common needs of development, as they have in-network school review teams that prepare their schools for external inspection. The roles of these participants are varied, but all consulted participants have served on in-network school review teams, serve as Education Directors, or are leading CPD over a network of schools. Their lists were then combined and provided insight into what key areas the majority of teachers need development in, the common items with the most frequency helped to formulate a list of 20 focus areas for the survey. The 20-question preliminary survey was then administered to the same participants to give a rating, using the UAE Inspection Framework scale, to rate overall teacher performance. The purpose of the

survey was to narrow the list to areas of performance that were rated at an Acceptable (3) or Below.

Leadership Questionnaire

Once the preliminary steps were taken, the Leadership Questionnaire was developed in order to gain insight on the practices of the identified Principals. The questionnaire was designed using inspection reports, a review of the current research on global teacher development practices, and preliminary survey results. The intention of the questionnaire was used to gain insight into how leaders analyze teacher needs, what supports they have in place to support and develop these needs, the resources and time used, and identify obstacles Principals face in developing a diverse and transient teaching staff. The Questionnaire will also survey leaders in the areas of development identified in the preliminary survey, in order to measure their present levels and impact of practice against emirate-wide development needs. Several questions were asked in order to determine cultural influence of leadership training on leadership.

An online version of the questionnaire was sent to participants asking the following:

1. What school are you currently leading?
2. What is your nationality?
3. How many years have you served as a school leader?
4. How many years have you served as a school leader in the UAE?
5. Where did you receive your school leadership training?
6. How would you rate the effectiveness of the current teacher development program in your school?
7. Describe ways in which you diagnose teacher's needs.
8. How often do lesson observations occur and by whom?
9. Do you have a long-term strategy for teacher development and if so, can you describe?
10. What in-house Professional Development opportunities have you provided to your teachers thus far?
11. What external development strategies have you provided for teachers thus far?

12. What methods or strategies used to develop teachers do you find most useful? Can you describe those methods and strategies?

13. If a teacher is not performing to standards, what steps does leadership take to support that teacher?

14. What accountability measures are in place to ensure interventions or professional development is being implemented?

15. What obstacles do you face as a leader in developing your teaching staff?

16. Additional comments or explanation:

The remainder of the questionnaire was a survey, in which the Principal rated the following areas- using the UAE Inspection Rating Scale: Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement.

Follow-Up Interviews

After receiving the questionnaire feedback from Principals, follow-up interviews took place via the phone, to clarify or ask for elaboration on vague or limited answers.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The reliability of a study is the consistency across time, items, and researchers. When evaluating the study, the research was conducted with the intent to represent the intended variable (Price, et. al., 2013). Preliminary surveys and measures were conducted in order to create consistency in the school and participant selection and the areas of focus. Various stakeholders in the emirate were considered in developing and selecting data collection tools.

The validity of a study is based on the various types of evidence. Various instruments were used to develop a summary of leadership that could be analyzed for research purposes. The use of inspection reports, questionnaires, surveys, and interviews provide a range of perspectives and data to be cross-referenced and collated to present a clear and accurate presentation of the Principal's role and the schools present level.

3.5 Research Limitations

A final phase of the study was canceled, which would have strengthened the reliability of the research. A teacher development questionnaire for teachers- aligned with the leadership questionnaire was created and was to be administered to teachers. Due to the state of education in the UAE in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, teachers participation and availability was limited. Due to this unexpected event, the teacher perspective is not present in this study.

The leadership questionnaires were created to allow leaders to answer open-ended questions, which at times led to vague or off topic responses. All leaders would have participated in a follow-up interview if time had permitted.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

All ethical considerations were considered in conducting this study. Every participant was presented with an e-mail describing the study and asking for voluntary participation. All participants and their schools and management companies remain anonymous, with codes applied to all Principals and schools (ie. Principal A). A consent form was signed by all participants, ensuring them that the study was being conducted for research purposes only. Teacher evaluation and development can be a topic of controversy, as teachers come from various backgrounds and may have different pedagogical philosophies, therefore all teacher judgements were made using the UAE Inspection Framework to ensure the ratings were utilizing the rubric specifications. Any data that was unclear or not applicable was either clarified verbally or through e-mail or was left out as unreliable to the study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS, DATA ANLYISIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Preliminary Data Survey:

A preliminary survey was submitted to education management leaders in Abu Dhabi in three different networks, to determine what areas of development were common across the emirate. The education directors and head of CPD from each company were asked to complete the survey, for a total of ten participants. Below are the findings, that will later be used in leadership questionnaires:
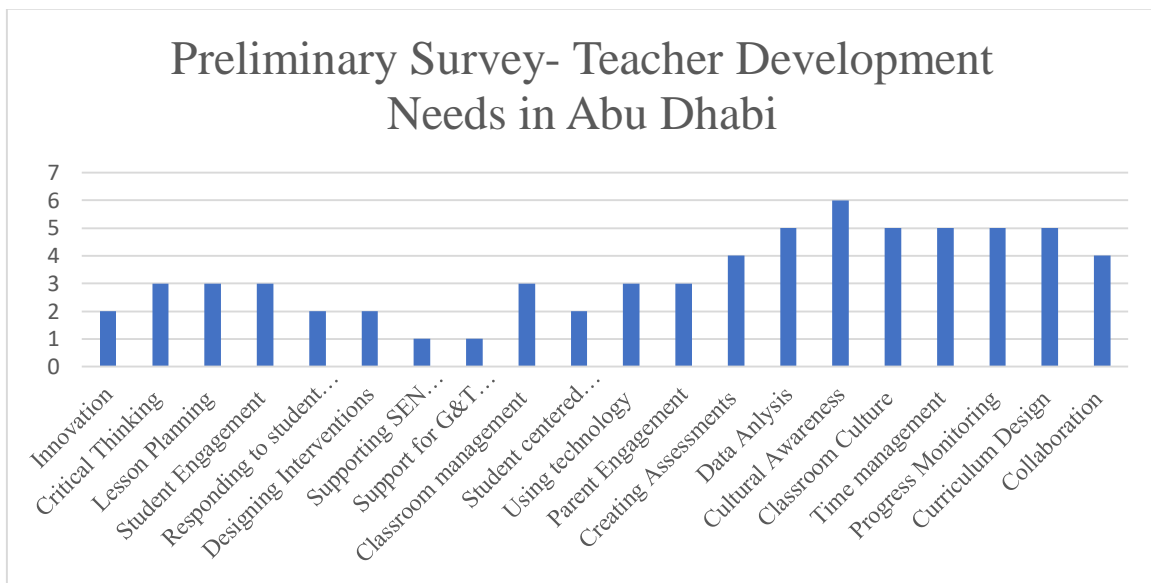
Figure 1. Preliminary Survey Results to determine areas of scrutiny

From this data the 12 items that scored a 3 (rating of Acceptable) or below were used in the quantitative component of the questionnaire survey.

4.2 Questionnaires, Follow-up Interviews, and Inspection Report summaries:

Leaders submitted questionnaires with a quantitative survey component and when appropriate, participated in a follow-up interview. The below data summaries are from the completed leadership questionnaires, the quantitative portion of the questionnaires-identifying performance in targeted teacher development, and school inspection reports. The data is

triangulated to produce a summary of teacher development and Principal practice at six private schools in Abu Dhabi.

School and Participant Profiles						
Dissertation Code	**Principal Leadership Training**	**Self-Rating of Teacher Development Program**	**Years as a leader in UAE**	**Years at current school**	**School ADEK Inspection Rating**	**School Curriculum**
School A Principal A	UK	Effective	4-6	4	Outstanding	IB
School B Principal B	American	Effective	4-6	4	Very Good	American and IB
School C Principal C	UK	Very Effective	1-3	3	Very Good	UK
School D Principal D	American	Very Effective	4-6	2	Good	American
School E Principal E	Irish	Somewhat Effective	4-6	1	Good	American
School F Principal F	American	Somewhat Effective	4-6	1	Good	American

Table 3. School and Principal Profiles

School A:

Principal A has been leading the school over the past 4 years. Through MLQ results completed by teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal A has key characteristics of a Transformational Leader. He has over 10 years of experience in Educational leadership and 4 years leadership in the UAE. The principal received his leadership training through UK institutions and serving on various school inspection teams.

School A is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the past two ADEK inspection reports School A was rated Outstanding in all Performance Standards. The K-12 IB

curriculum school is currently enrolled at 2035 with a diverse student body of which the largest nationality groups consist of 15% Emirati, 13% American, 8% Canadian, and 6% Indian. 161 teachers are on faculty with a turnover rate of 18%. 10% of the student population qualify as SEN. In the most recent inspection report the inspectors describe the teaching and use of assessment as Outstanding. The majority of teachers are described as having "outstanding knowledge of the subjects and high expectations" which contributes to the "highly independent, innovative, and internationally minded" students. Students are overall performing above curriculum standards. Recommendations include strengthening teaching and assessment in Arabic subjects.

Observations of leadership and management were noted by inspectors to be "inspirational and skilled" with a "sustained capacity to innovate and improve over time." It was also noted that school leaders at all levels are involved in teacher development. An area of relative strength was the systems of assessment and self-evaluation among leaders at all levels (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal A. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Effective by the Principal. In order to diagnose teacher needs, Principal A of School A conducts annual reviews and creates KPIs for individuals and groups based on data analysis. Staff are evaluated at least twice a year by a member of the SLT team or middle leaders in a formal observation, and there are continuous walk-throughs and informal observations throughout the year. The teacher development strategy is reviewed on a yearly basis due to transience and continuous policy updates. There are regular targeted in-house professional development opportunities available throughout the year. Some opportunities focus on individuals and other opportunities are provided for departments, grade-levels, and whole school. Providing targeted opportunities for development to the appropriate groups is important. Leader A also believes that the strength of their teacher development program is the fostering of collaboration across departments and when teacher leaders share best practice. External professional development includes Responsiveness Classrooms, THRASS phonics, Positive Ed, and numerous IB workshops. When a teacher is not performing to standards a 30-day action plan is devised

which involves interventions such as team teaching and coaching from the appropriate mentor or leader. The teachers progress is monitored, and continuous feedback is provided to the teacher. Teachers and middle leaders are held accountable by a robust tracking and appraisal system. While Principal A responds that there are not many obstacles to providing quality development to his teachers, he could enhance the current programs and activities with a larger budget.

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the areas of Providing for the needs of Gifted and Talented students and Parental Engagement, Principal A submitted a rating of Good. In the areas of Lesson Planning, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, and Classroom Management Principal A submitted a rating of Very Good. In the areas of Innovation, Critical Thinking, Student Engagement, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Student-Centered Learning, and Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, Principal A submitted a rating of Outstanding.
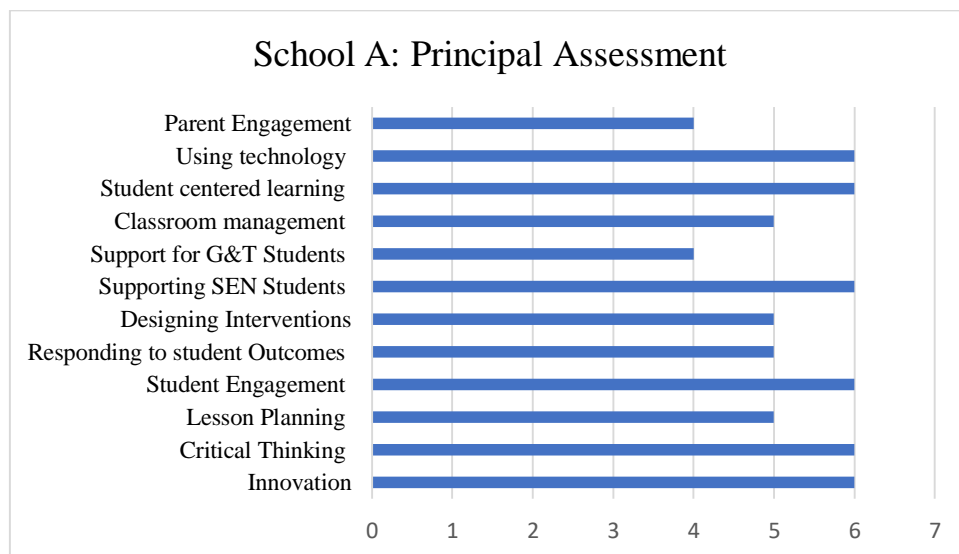

Figure 2. School A Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

An in-person interview was conducted with Principal A to discuss best practices in his school. In discussing the professional development within the school, the principal grew passionate and would talk about how he says yes to almost everything. From conferences, to new initiatives, to outside partnerships-he is on board to try it. He stated that, "Even if something fails, we tried. Innovation always starts with failure."

The leadership team at the school often engages in the importance of intentional professional development. They attribute their success to a high standards of performance management, which informs them of what development is needed throughout the school. The principal discusses motivation for current staff to perform and engage. "We promote from within." The principal believes this fosters a strong work ethic and commitment from the staff. "They staff know they will be promoted and rewarded if they are doing what is needed, so they are invested…they know that hard work and commitment will advance them." The progress made in the past three years, is a result of a rigorous professional development plan created with all staff members input. "We have to work together and we want to provide leadership opportunities at all levels. The group development of the professional development plan helps us to get everyone on board." The three-year plan proved successful as subjects such as social studies, Arabic, and Islamic all saw marked improvements."

School B

Principal B has been leading School B for the past four years. Through MLQ results completed by teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal B has key characteristics of a Transformational Leader. She has 6 years of experience in educational leadership and 4 years leadership in the UAE. Principal B received her leadership training in American institutions and through years of experience as a Teacher leader in various roles including a grade level lead and a teacher mentor.

School B is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the most recent ADEK inspection report School B received a rating of Very Good in all Performance Standards. The K-12 American and IB Curriculum school is currently enrolled at 2390 students with a diverse student body of which the largest nationality groups consist of 28% Emirati, 17% Egyptian, 12% Jordanian, and 6% Lebanese. 179 teachers are on faculty with a turnover rate

of 27%. 4% of the student population has qualified as SEN. In the most recent inspection report the inspectors describe the overall teaching and use of assessment as Very Good especially in Science. External examination grades indicate that the majority of students are performing at or above curriculum standards. The individualization of teaching, especially of SEN and Gifted and Talented students was considered a "provision of best practice." According to inspectors, there are a "wide range of highly effective teaching strategies implemented" across secondary. It is noted that teachers collaborate frequently and there is consistency in teaching. They also engage an "effective programme of professional development." Inspectors recommended area of improvement in Performance Standard 3 was to develop problem solving and higher-level thinking skills. The leadership was rated as Very Good. Strong academic leadership has been attributed to the improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. Leaders are noted to have a clear vision and cultivate an inclusive environment. Recommendations to move toward a rating of Outstanding that leaders implement self-evaluation processes for leaders and that more educational leadership is distributed in the primary and middle phases (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal B. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Effective by the Principal. In order to diagnose teacher needs, formal and informal observations are conducted regularly. Formal observations occur at least two times a year and observers, members of SLT, are required to stay for a full lesson. Shorter walk-through observations are conducted weekly by administration and academic coordinators. Teacher surveys are also used to collect data a few times a year. There is a year long plan for teacher development which includes scheduled teacher led professional development sessions, in addition to assigned peer observations. This year teachers have attended in-house sessions on Collaborative Learning, How to Effectively use Peer Observations, and Literature Circles. External opportunities have also been provided for teachers. This year they have completed several on Differentiation, Special Education Needs, and Collaborative Learning Techniques. When a teacher is not performing to standards a teacher is placed on an Improvement Plan. This process includes sitting with a member of the administration team and developing a series of goals. There are check-in

benchmarks established and the teacher is regularly observed and receives feedback. The teacher is expected to keep a portfolio to provide evidence of their progress and development. Accountability measures are in place to ensure all teachers are working toward their own improvement and development. There are a certain number of Professional Development sessions that teachers must attend each year depending on their stage of development. All teachers are required to keep a portfolio of how they are implementing what was learned in each development session. They must have two to three artifacts as a minimum requirement per session attended. Principal B identifies her greatest challenges to her success in developing her teachers is the lack of motivation and ability to adapt to change. She says that some teachers are "set in their ways" and do not want to change their methods, which she feels is a detriment to students.

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire, leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the areas of Providing for the needs of Gifted and Talented students and Providing for the Needs of SEN students, Principal B submitted a rating of Acceptable. In the areas of Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Classroom Management, Student Centered Learning, and Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning Principal B submitted a rating of Good. In the areas of Innovation and Parental Engagement, Principal B submitted a rating of Outstanding.
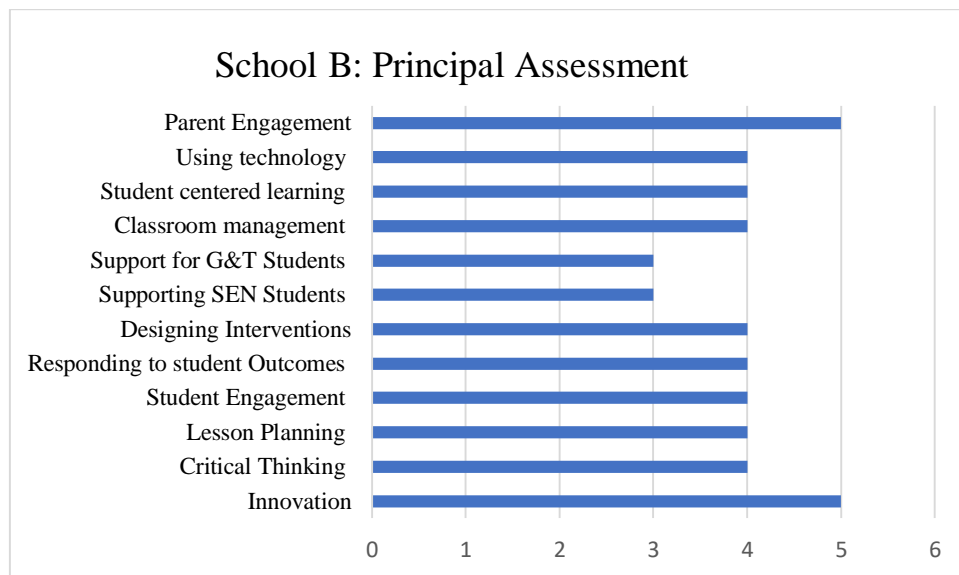
School B: Principal Assessment

Figure 3. School B Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

A follow-up phone interview was conducted with Principal B to further discuss teacher development best practices at her school. She explained that "due to the transient nature of the teacher population it is difficult to create long term strategy for development, but they are intentional and methodical in their annual plan" She also explained that while the inspection report highlighted the support for SEN students and Gifted and Talented, she feels that her staff are only Acceptable as most teachers need improvement in this area, although she agrees that pockets of excellence were observed in the inspection. In addition, a few teachers who have left this year to go back to their home country excelled in these areas. When asked what she attributes to the success of her teacher development program she responds, "a strong middle leadership, high expectations, and accountability measures. Teachers need to know that they are going to be held to high expectations, but they will be supported in this. We are always giving quick feedback for quick implementation." She also discusses peer assessment and teaching teachers how to approach peer assessment as a strength, as it has made a significant impact on certain teachers. When asked how to motivate teachers who are not accepting of change and development, one of the obstacles mentioned in the questionnaire, she responds that "we are trying coaching methods and targeting small and individualized

changes so that they are able to see an impact in the classroom from these changes. This creates buy-in." She attributes her alignment of the school development plan with her teacher development considerations as an item of strength as well.

School C

Principal C has been leading School for the past two years. Through MLQ results completed by teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal C has key characteristics of a Transformational Leader. She has more than 10 years of experience in educational leadership and 3 years of leadership experience in the UAE. Principal C received her leadership training in UK institutions.

School C is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the most recent ADEK inspection report School C received a rating of Very Good in all Performance Standards, and rated an Outstanding in Performance Standard 5. The English National Curriculum is delivered to 517 students in the Primary and Middle phases. School C serves a diverse student body of which the largest nationality groups consist of 19% Emirati, 10% British, 8% Indian, and 8% American. 43 teachers are on faculty with a turnover rate of 11%. 6% of the student population has qualified as SEN. In the most recent inspection report, inspectors rate the quality of teaching as Very Good and that students have strengths in "independent learning skills" and innovation. The support for G&T and SEN students are considered Outstanding. Due to the age of the school, assessment data is limited to measure student achievement and progress. One of the key strengths mentioned is the use of digital learning, as the school is an Apple Distinguished School. Observations conclude that the large majority of teachers have a strong subject knowledge and plan engaging lessons. The teachers promote independent learning. Higher-level thinking is promoted in many lessons and questioning offers the appropriate challenge. The teachers are praised for their "creativity, problem solving, and innovation" within lessons. There is ample evidence that teachers use assessment to inform their instruction and this is clear in the learning plans for SEN and G&T students. Recommendations include strengthening teaching and assessment in Arabic and Islamic subjects. The leadership is praised for sharing "high aspirations for the school's success" with all stakeholders. Middle leaders show strength in implementing poignant professional

development and rigorous support to teachers in most subjects. There is a rigorous self-evaluation and teacher development process that leadership adheres to, which is aligned with the school development plan. The entire school participates in ICT initiatives and receives regular support as an Apple Distinguished school. Inspectors recommend leaders focus on teacher evaluations in the area of "impact of teaching on student's learning and progress" (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal C. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Effective by the Principal. In order to diagnose teacher needs the teachers go through a self-assessment process at the beginning of the year. Line-managers and peer observations are also used to determine teacher's area of need. Student attainment and progress are tracked rigorously in every class, as part of diagnosing teacher needs. The leadership has a long-term strategy in place for teacher development. Principal C believes that "onboarding is essential." There is a robust induction program for new teachers every year and a whole school INSET program. Leadership and peer observations are used to identify staff expertise. Termly formal observation and line-manager meetings take place, as well as peer coaching. Termly learning walks occur with specific foci. Weekly CPD sessions are led by teacher leaders in their area of identified expertise. Currently the leadership team is working on a video library project, "which will better utilize in-house expertise, so that CPD offered is differentiated across the faculty." Another approach by leadership to develop teachers is to strengthen middle leaders using "renumeration allowances for a range of responsibilities assigned." Middle leaders, who often hold a teaching load, are often "encouraged to lead whole school projects-including across our group of schools to increase their exposure." In addition, teachers have been offered funding to complete a Masters program. Principal C adds that development is essential at all levels at the school and there is even an initiative for Senior Leadership shift the foci of their roles each year to gain experience in many areas. There has been a focus on increasing collaboration across the school groups, staff attend "cluster meetings with other local schools to share best practices." Currently 12 teachers are actively seeking their Masters at various universities. Two teachers are participating in NPQSL. If a teacher is not performing to standards, leadership will conduct a review meeting and create SMART targets

with the teacher. Together they will create a specific CPD plan and assign a peer mentor. Accountability measures in place for all teachers includes "fortnightly performance management targets for all teachers and school development review meetings with line managers." Termly tracking of student data is also connected to teacher accountability measures. Regarding obstacles to teacher development, Principal C finds there are not many. "We create time as staff development and wellbeing is a priority." She considers the school "well resourced" referring to in-house experts and group experts. She also notes that courses and teacher development courses are available locally and online, and that there is "little excuse" not to work on professional develop "in the present climate". She credits the teachers with being willing and enthusiastic.

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire, leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the areas of Innovation, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Providing for the Needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement, Principal C submitted a rating of Outstanding. In the areas of Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, and Providing for the needs of SEN students, Principal C submitted a rating of Very Good.
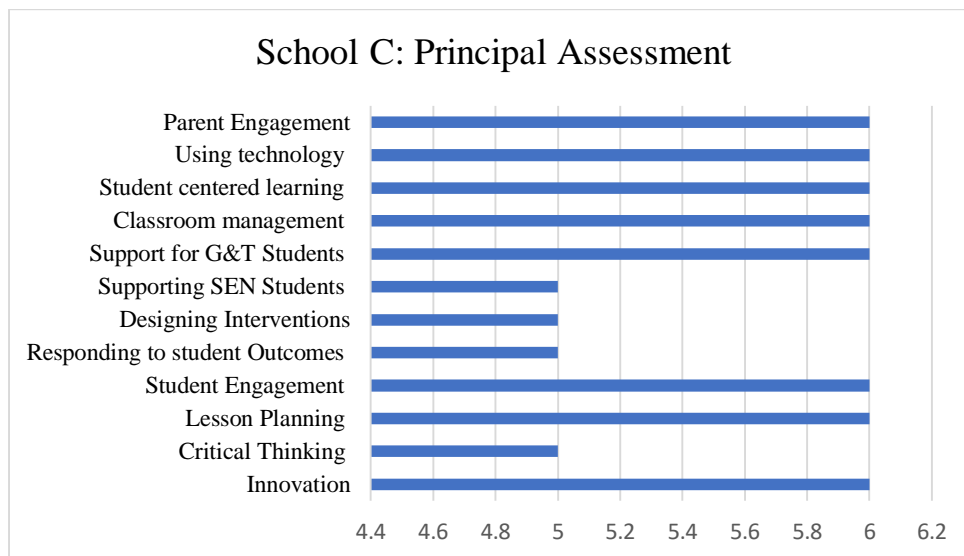
Figure 4. School C Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

School D:

Principal D has been leading the school over the past 2 years. Through MLQ results completed by teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal D has key characteristics of a Transformational Leader. He has 5 years leadership experience, all of which have been in the UAE. The Principal received his leadership training through American institutions.

School D is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the latest ADEK inspection report School D was rated Good in all Performance Standards, improving from their Acceptable rating in the previous inspection. The K-8, with high school construction underway, American Curriculum school is currently enrolled at 913 students. The student body is diverse of which the largest nationality groups consist of 24% Jordanian, 14% Egyptian, 10% Syrian, and 6% Emirati. 57 teachers are on faculty with a turnover rate of 21%. 2% of the current student population qualify as SEN. In the most recent inspection report the inspectors describe the teaching and use of assessment as improved. Leadership at the Principal and Vice Principal level took their posts at the beginning of the inspection year and are credited with driving improvements in teaching and learning due to their "vision and

strategic plan". Some students are performing at curriculum standards, but this is an area of needed improvement. Inspectors observe strong subject knowledge among teachers and credit this to "detailed planning of lessons and positive interactions with students" by the teachers. Teacher have only started working with external benchmarks in the 2018-2019 school year. Teachers demonstrate a strength in providing written feedback for students. Inspectors recommend teacher improve their critical thinking and innovation skill across all phases. The individualization of lessons requires development, and in turn the planning for SEN and G&T students. Inspectors comment on the strength of the new leadership in raising expectations for students and teachers. There is evidence that the leaders are producing quality lessons with intention and creativity and through the increased use of technology in lessons. The leadership was also noted as contributing to teacher improvement through a "consistent and constructive 'next steps' feedback." The school leadership team is praised for including key stakeholders in their vision and the planning process. Leadership is noted as having "strong knowledge of the American curriculum" and recommendations include improving the use of assessment data and teaching in Arabic medium subjects (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal D. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Very Effective. In order to diagnose teacher needs the teachers go through a different "appraisal methods such as teacher surveys, external and internal data indicators, and regular classroom observations." There is a weekly and daily timeline established for observing teachers. The Principal or the Vice Principal conduct some of these observations. The Director of Assessments and the Teaching and Learning coach are assigned specific teachers and foci by senior leadership "to routinely observe and feedback to." The leadership team have a long-term strategy in which their mission is to "equip every teacher with the tools to deliver individualized learning paths for every student." Professional development in the school focuses on training teachers in understanding external data reports for the purpose of "targeting each student's learning readiness and learning level per subject." Their current training sessions are focused on grouping students strategically, "according to their specific data indicators." Modeling it utilized frequently in helping teachers design lessons "that target students' personal academic needs." In- house professional development is frequent and strategic. Since joining the

school, Principal D has provided in-house trainings identified as "44 Meaningful Monday PD sessions, 8 PD sessions on Purposeful Planning, 8 PD sessions on Assessment and Question Types, 4 PD sessions on Exact Path. External development opportunities have been on Edmentum, NWEA, and Viewsonic Interactive Panel training. Principal D finds his weekly 'Meaningful Monday' sessions most impactful to staff improvement. During these sessions he realigns the teacher and leadership focus to the mission and vision to "provide every students with an individual learning path." When a teacher is not performing to standards they are offered a 'TLC' (Teacher-Learning Coach) that "partners with the teacher who is struggling." An administrator is also assigned to low-performing teachers to regularly provide feedback and support. Leadership keeps staff accountable to maintaining high standards by routinely analyzing classroom observation data and giving immediate feedback to staff. Every Monday and Wednesday the staff is brought together for development based off this observation data. The greatest obstacle to teacher development at School D has been retention. Principal D also ended his questionnaire with an additional note: "we work to grow our teachers as much as we invest in growing our students. Our Mission and Vision of individualized growth applies to everyone on staff."

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire, leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the areas of Providing for the needs of SEN students, Critical Thinking, and Innovation, Principal D submitted a rating of Very Good. In the areas of Parent Engagement, Classroom Management, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Designing Interventions, Responding to Student Outcomes, and Lesson Planning, Principal D submitted a rating of Very Good. In the areas of Using technology, Student centered learning, and Student Engagement, Principal D submitted a rating of Outstanding.
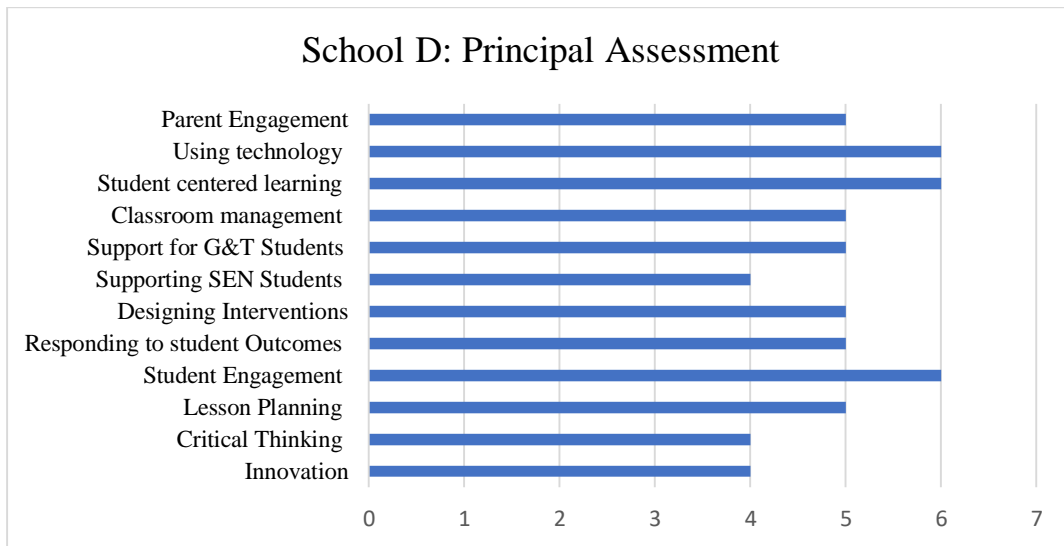
Figure 5. School D Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

School E:

Principal E has been leading the male campus of the school since the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Through MLQ results completed by the teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal E has key characteristics of a Transformation Leader. He has more than 10 years of leadership experience, and has led schools for 6 years in the UAE. He has received his leadership training through Irish institutions.

School E is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the latest ADEK inspection report School E was rated as Good in all Performance Standards, maintaining their rating of Good but improving in certain Performance Standards previously rated as Acceptable. The K-12 American Curriculum school is currently enrolled at 3651 students, with 941 students housed on the Male campus. The school is composed of three campuses-Elementary, Female, and Male; the inspection data for this study will only look at the male campus specific components of the report. 98% of the male student population is Emirati students, with the remaining population consisting of 1% Jordanian and 1% Yemeni. 64 teachers are on faculty on the male campus with a turnover rate of 21%. 3% of the student population is qualified as SEN. In the most recent inspection report, the inspectors make note that the school is under

new management and leadership. The current leadership team is making improvements with a clear vision. With the direction of the new leadership team, there is evidence that the quality of teaching has increased as a "result of leadership addressing key priorities for improvement." The leadership for the male campus refers to the Deputy Heads of Pastoral and Teaching and learning, as the Head of School position was vacant at the time of the inspection. While the inspection team recognizes key improvements in the secondary school, the area of key development rests in the middle school phase, as teacher skills in classroom management is weak in this area. Some students are performing at curriculum standards, in the secondary phase, but below curriculum standards in the middle phase. There is evidence teachers are engaged in collaborative planning which has led to a reduction of "teachers reliance on textbooks" and an increase in practical activities, which inspectors note are "motivating students more successfully." There has been an improvement in the assessment process and the effective use of questioning in lessons in the secondary phase. The secondary school is also noted as improving in incorporating critical thinking and skillful questioning. The strengths in teaching are the "inspiring teaching in the high phase" and "linking of teaching and learning to the real world." The inspectors recommend teachers utilize data to inform instruction and that internal assessments be "calibrated to student achievement against curriculum standards." Inspectors note that leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the areas of improvement in the school. The improvement plan is focused on improving teaching and curriculum and the use of assessments, which are key addressed by inspectors. The monitoring of teaching and professional development is considered a relative strength, and the improvement plans of teacher support teachers well. The inspection team recommends that leadership make a greater impact in Arabic medium subject. While the leadership mentions do not refer to Principal E, they inform the study in what the recommended focus is for the school by the governing bodies (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal E. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Somewhat Effective by the Principal. Termly Formal and regular informal observations, teacher feedback surveys, walk-throughs and "faculty plenary sessions" are used to diagnose teacher development needs.

There is a long term strategy in place, Principal E mentions the education management company as having a role in developing the long term supports. There are internal and external supports, therefore there is a collaborative strategy between the school and education management company which houses 18 schools in Abu Dhabi. Leaders use "all relevant data as a barometer to ascertain teacher needs." In- house professional development focuses on key areas of need including "behavior management and teaching and learning targets." The staff also participate in a structured peer observation program, in which they are given guided foci. Thus far, staff has participated in various trainings- internal and external behavior management training, cultural awareness, unpacking the standards, writing meaningful objectives, creating rubrics, understanding the lesson observation rubric, internal and external MAP training, data analysis training, active learning, differentiated learning. They have received external training from NWEA, Reading A-Z, Unifrog, Microsoft 365, PowerSchool, Curio, Yardstick, Khan Academy and ALEF. The methods and strategies used to develop teachers that have been most effective include peer observation and continuous professional development, also "encouraging collaboration among subject areas and grade level has proven effective." If a teacher is not performing to standards, "the first step is to meet with the teacher to identify their areas of needed development and create a support plan with clear targets." The "meticulous follow through from heads of department is key to the teacher's improvement." There is also targeted professional development assigned to the teacher. Principal E is continuously setting new targets with department heads and members of the SLT to make sure there is "visibility in the classrooms to encourage accountability." He offers immediate feedback, "leading with a praise, and ending with a growth target." The obstacles Principal E faces in developing staff include "staff motivation and time" as well as a lack of resources and low budget for teacher development.

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire, leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the

areas of Using Technology and Creative Thinking, Principal E submitted a rating of Weak. In all other areas, Principal D submitted a rating of Acceptable.
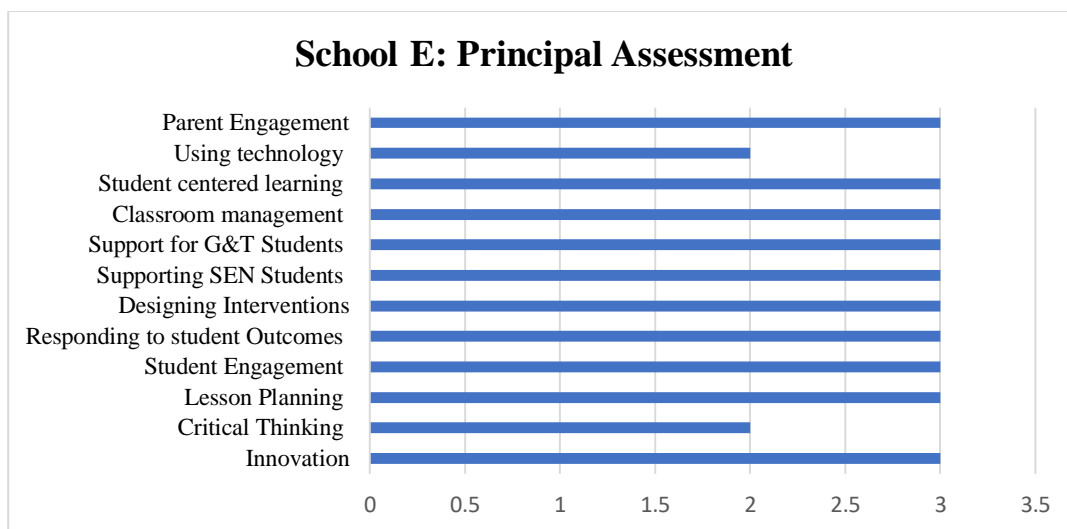
School E: Principal Assessment

Area	Rating
Parent Engagement	3
Using technology	2
Student centered learning	3
Classroom management	3
Support for G&T Students	3
Supporting SEN Students	3
Designing Interventions	3
Responding to student Outcomes	3
Student Engagement	3
Lesson Planning	3
Critical Thinking	2
Innovation	3

Figure 6. School E Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

School F:

Principal F has been leading the school since the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Through MLQ results completed by the teachers and middle leaders at the school, it can be determined that Principal F has key characteristics of a Transformational Leader. He has 8 years experience in educational leadership and has led schools in the UAE for 6 years. He has received his leadership training through American Institutions.

School F is a private school in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In the latest ADEK inspection report, School F was rated as Good in all Performance Standards, maintaining their rating of Good. The K-10 (grade 9 and 10 were added in 2019). American Curriculum school is currently enrolled at 861 students. The school has a student population consisting of 73% Emirati, 5% American, 1% Jordanian. Over 43% of students are considered new enrollments. 19% of the student population is qualified as SEN. 74 teachers are on faculty with a retention rate of 24%. The core subjects have seen marked improvement in teaching and the majority of lessons are rated as good. Most students are performing at curriculum standards, and is

considered Very Good in English, in which students "are given good opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills, and Science. Arabic attainment has also seen improvements. Students are consistently given opportunities to collaborate. Inspectors comment that "students respond well to teacher comments." Students receive feedback regularly which helps them improve their work. Inspectors observe that "the internal assessment system identifies students with SEN and G&T." Low achievers and SEN students are noted as "well supported in the classroom." Teacher observations provide evidence that students are engaged through thoughtful questioning which "increases motivation for students." The report also notes that there is an increase in the use of inquiry-based learning approaches. The middle phases note that teacher expectations are "too low" and there is a need to develop "speaking skills in Arabic." While most teachers meet most needs of students, it is observed that there is not enough opportunity of challenge for advanced students. Inspectors recommend teachers increase the "use of assessment outcomes by class teachers to plan work adapted to the needs of all students" and to increase "consistent development of critical thinking, innovation, and problem solving in lessons." Recommendations for leadership include improvement in the "monitoring of teaching and learning by middle leaders." They also recommend consistency in implementing plans "to improve innovation skills in lessons and behavior of students in the middle school." While the leadership mentions do not refer to Principal F, they inform the study in what the recommended focus is for the school by the governing bodies (ADEK Inspection Report 2018).

An online questionnaire was administered to Principal F. The rating of effectiveness of the current teacher development program in the school was rated as Somewhat Effective by the Principal, he notes that "the implementation of my teacher development practice is too new to call it effective as the proper data is not available as of yet. But I have used this in the past and have seen the high effectiveness of the program." The school uses regular informal observations led by middle and senior leadership, "to best evaluate the quality of teaching and learning." Lesson observations occur bi-weekly for every teacher by a joint Middle leader and co-teacher within the department. The senior leadership team observes teachers once per month. Formal observations take place one to two times per year. Principal F has introduced the Danielson model of self-evaluation to teachers and middle leaders this year. Teachers and

middle leaders are to use the framework to "identify areas of strength and growth." Each teacher is "attached to their department chair" and they work together "to set professional goals and identify key areas of strength and growth within the Danielson elements of practice." The Danielson framework is "used for teacher to self-assess and leaders to validate." A plan for CPD and/ or induction is then developed using the results. There is a long-term strategy for professional development and Principal F says that "he is to have a best practices resource where each of the Danielson elements of practice has clear exemplars of practice." The Principal has assigned a lead for professional development and performance management for each teacher. The school offers professional development every Sunday for 1 hour "at various divisions of the school." The senior and middle leadership plan these sessions in line with school initiatives such as "planning, assessment, and instructional strategies." There are external CPD opportunities that teachers can submit for permission and funding. The expectation is that these teachers will present the outside CPD material to the appropriate body of teachers upon attendance. Principal F states that "we use district and network opportunities for cost savings within the group of schools." The most effective strategy for teacher development this year has been modeling a skill or practice in CPD. A recent example of this, "if we are looking at developing engagement in the classroom, we would identify a teacher(s) in the school and record a segment of their teaching to use for whole group analysis or training. This creates buy-in and context as the sample are from our own environment." If a teacher is performing below standard, a member of senior or middle leadership will set planning and instructional goals for that teacher. Multiple observations and quick feedback will be given. A mentor will be assigned to the teacher and growth and implementation of agreed upon skills will be monitored. Senior leadership keeps teacher accountable by setting high expectations. Every month a CPD log submission is required. Teachers are required to keep a portfolio of their implementation of skills and items learned through development sessions. SLT and teachers meet once a month to review their portfolio of "teaching and learning artifacts." Obstacles faced in providing quality teacher development include time, buy-in, and capacity. Principal F states that " Given the day is 8 hours and then asking teachers to stay after school is tiring." Another obstacle is the

motivation of teachers to engage in their own development. Finally, Principal F is concerned with the "quality of middle leadership to quality assure and develop teachers."

In the qualitative portion of the questionnaire, leadership was asked to rate overall teacher performance in the following areas: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement. The rating scale aligns with the Irtiqa Inspection Framework rating scale. In the areas of Support for G&T students, Support for SEN students, Designing Interventions, Responding to Student Outcomes, Student Engagement, and Critical Thinking, Principal F submitted a rating of Good. In the areas of Using Technology, Student Centered Learning, Classroom Management, Lesson Planning, and Innovation, Principal F submitted a rating of Very Good. In the area of Parent Engagement, Principal F submitted a rating of Outstanding.
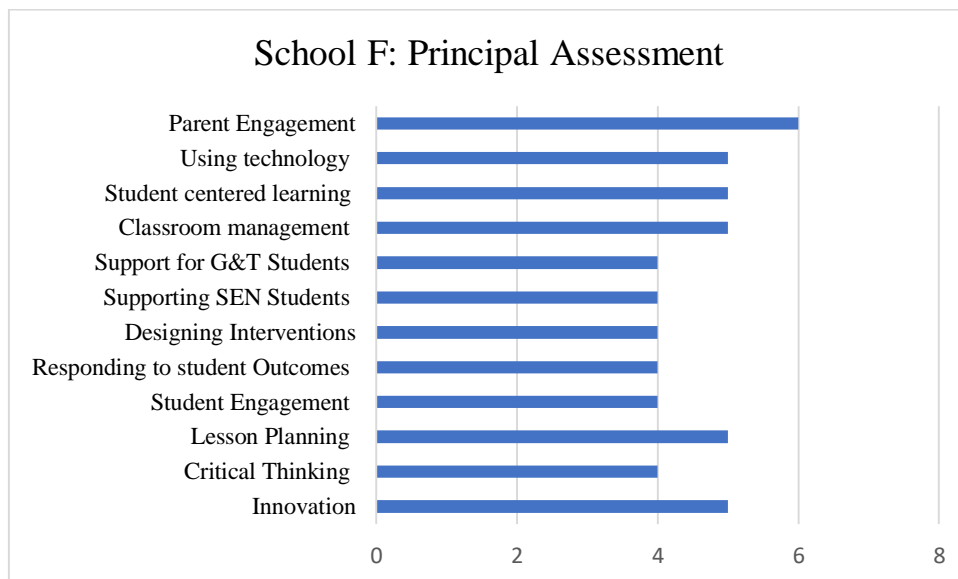

Figure 7. School F Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by the Principal

4.3 Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What are common best practices in leading teacher development among Transformational Leaders?

The study was able to produce insight into high performing or high progress private schools. Quality leadership plays a large role in driving change and maintaining levels of outstanding teaching quality. From the data, the common best practices among leaders include- providing a shared vision, empowering leaders and teachers within the school, maintaining high expectations, visibility in the classrooms, a continuous feedback loop, providing collaborative opportunities, guiding and supporting goal attainment, and a team approach to school improvement and teacher development. While the leaders from School A-F had varying descriptions of these practices within their responses, it should be noted that all of the schools are at varying degrees of development, which impacts priority and strategy.

Evidence suggests that Schools A, B, and C enact more advanced practices to teacher development strategies, and depended on distributed leadership more than Schools D, E, and F. This would be in line with their present levels- as Schools A, B, and C are performing and maintaining high standards, while School D, E, and F are in the improvement process. While all leaders have strong Transformational Leadership characteristics, the school needs vary so best practices may look different at varying levels of school development. For example, when asked what Professional Development opportunities were available at School C, the Principal responded with out of school opportunities, such as encouraging and funding Masters or NPQSL endeavors, in addition to collaborating with in-network colleagues to plan for school development, and creating a video library of best practices from expert teachers. School D, in comparison, had many in-house and planned CPD throughout the week, with many CPD sessions in clear response to inspection feedback. School D also had meetings to discuss and reaffirm their vision frequently. School D, in comparison to School C, is working to build their teacher capacity at some of the basic levels, therefore their approach to teacher development must address the need and level of their teaching staff. In this case, leadership in School D, potentially allows teachers less autonomy in their development plan, to drive change. Schools A and B applied similar practices to C, and School E and F applied similar

practices to School D. Another item of consideration in the differences in best practices between the schools, is the leaders time at the school. While Principals A, B, and C have been in their position for 3 or more years, Principal D, E, and F have only served in their posts for 2 or less years. Those with more time at their school, are assuredly advantaged in their knowledge of their teachers and the school, and are over the initial introduction phases. Leaders in their early years at a school need time to set and share a vision, establish high expectations, understand the needs of staff and students, and build trust and relationships. Therefore, best practices and teacher development will look different according to the duration of a Principals' time at a school.

While all of the school Principals empowered leaders and teachers in their practices, School A, B, and C had a higher degree of empowerment. Principal A shared that he says "yes" to almost anything teachers or middle leadership ask of him- regarding new initiatives or CPD they wanted to try. This reveals two things- Principal A is comfortable with taking risk, and trusts his staff. Schools C has a similar approach, by letting teachers lead CPD and participate in school development. Empowerment was a key theme in the literature review of leadership best practice in teacher development (Wei 2009, The Wallace Foundation 2012). While Principal A, B and C, show evidence of empowering teachers in their schools to a large degree, Principal D, E, and F show evidence of empowerment but in a more regulated way. Again, several items can play a role in this difference, including- length of time a Principal has been at the school, the strength and quality of the teaching staff, and the level of improvement needed. In addition, leadership in Schools A. B, and C are able to engage in risk more readily than Schools D, E, and F, as the inspection rating may allow Principal's leadership or line manager to allow them more autonomy and trust in the decision making.

While the study did not set out to compare the sets of schools, ABC and DEF, the data reveals that best practice and Principal's decision making is correlated to the schools level of excellence. Through this data, we can conclude that best practices vary depending on the needs of the school and the staff. While all Principals held characteristics of transformational leadership, those that needed to make greater improvements, did have elements of transactional leadership in their methods. Thus, it can be suggested that the use of common

best practices should be implemented and calibrated toward staff and school, and are context-based.

2) What strategies are being used to diagnose teacher needs, provide supports, and hold teachers accountable to high standards?

Overall the data reveals that all leaders essentially use a similar process of diagnosing needs through data collection in informal and formal observations and walk-throughs by various leaders. All of the professional development opportunities are informed by the data from these walk-throughs and from the inspection report, most poignantly in schools D, E, and F. All of the schools engage in progress monitoring and continuous feedback. Principals A and C use their initial observations and data collection to determine teachers area of expertise, so that they can develop those teachers as CPD leaders in a particular area. Principal B utilizes initial observation feedback to identify potential staffing of middle leadership, she also believes that observations should be conducted for a full lesson. Principal D utilizes staff surveys frequently to determine what development opportunities teachers want. Principal E and F use the diagnostic data to inform goals setting and CPD planning.

The supports for staff were similar across schools. Most leaders had no more than a one year strategy, as some stated the transient nature of the UAE teacher and policy changes does not allow for long term planning. When teachers were not performing to high standards, all schools place teachers on a variety of action or improvement plans-which include mentorship, active monitoring, and in some cases a CPD plan. All had meetings with leadership in order to set benchmark targets, SMART goals, and establish mentorship. Feedback was emphasized by all leaders as a key growth tool for underperforming teachers. Peer observation was also emphasized by all leaders as a best practice for all teachers, no matter what the performance level of the teacher is. Principal D noted that all teacher development needed to be individualized, and noted that personal growth for the teachers was just as important as for the students.

Based on the quantitative portion of the questionnaire, refer to Figure 8, Principals A, B, C, D, and F have rated teachers high in the top development areas in the emirate, which suggests

that teachers, especially in A, B, and C, are performing above UAE standards and therefore teachers that are 'underperforming' could look different at the various schools. This data, again, brings to light the difference in a developing school and a school that exceeds expectations, teachers will be rated using the UAE inspection framework formally, but it can be implied that there are growth rating scales being utilized in developing schools, which could be the case of School D. Yet when looking at School E, the leadership is potentially applying the Inspection Framework more realistically.

When comparing the Principal ratings of teachers to the inspection report ratings and commentary on teacher strengths and recommendations for growth, it is evident that School D, E, and F will likely have a greater amount of teachers considered below standards. While School A, B, and C reports offer a greater number of strengths, of which their teachers would be working toward enhancing and excelling beyond the set UAE standards. The role of the Principal for school D, E, and F is one that could benefit a weaker group of teachers, in which they would need to foster growth through support and incentives or encouragement, which School D and E mention in their responses. The professional development needs of School D and E suggest there are basic professional development that is needed; such as classroom management, unpacking standards, writing objectives, understanding the lesson observation rubric, planning, assessment, and cultural awareness. If these opportunities are indeed a response to diagnostics, then teacher development will take time to progress. If we compare these professional development opportunities to School A and B: collaborative learning, literature circles, special education needs, responsiveness classrooms, and various external opportunities, it can be inferred that more rigor is required to develop teachers from School A and B, depending on the quality of the sessions and accountability and support after.

Accountability measures are in place at all schools according to Principals. School A has a team approach to accountability, as they are all working toward the school goals. School B, D, and F have a required amount of CPD hours that are scheduled and tracked. School B and F requires staff to keep a portfolio of best practices. School E works with the education management company to develop accountability measures. Middle leaders have a large role in ensuring teachers are working toward their goals and have evidence to do so.

Accountability seems to be the most uniform responses. All Principals set high expectations and work with their teachers and teams regularly in order to ensure teacher development is being implemented.

3) What obstacles do leaders face in developing high-quality teachers?

Teacher turnover rate is one of the main obstacles for Principals. Turnover rates ranged from 18%-24% in Schools A, C, D, E and F. While School C only had an 11% turnover rate. Principals A and C both responded that they have minimal obstacles to providing quality development, Principal A mentions the high turnover rate is a result of the transience of teachers in the country. Principal C notes that there was "no excuse" not to develop, and that her teachers were "willing and enthusiastic"- which could impact their turnover rate. School D identified the obstacle as their large turnover rate of 21%. School B, E, and F listed the most challenges: turnover rate, staff motivation, transient population, high turnover rate, inability for older teachers to adapt to change, lack of time. School E and F both mention a lack of resources and budget. School F also mentioned that the experience of middle leadership is not sufficient enough to engage and develop leaders. Principals E and F are both in their first year at the school, and therefore have inherited teachers, middle leaders, and previous practices and routines, which will take time for them to replace and develop. School A and C have been established at their school for three or more years, and therefore some of their lack of obstacles reported could come from being established. It can also be inferred that School A and C have a budget that benefits their needs, even though Principal A did list his only obstacle as a larger budget. The outside opportunities of development offered by School A and C- including renumeration for extra tasks for teachers, contribution to Masters programs, THRASS, and external IB workshops- could have an impact on their overall success. It might also be possible that these schools spend money on recruiting high quality individuals that share in their beliefs and practice on arrival to the school- which would allow for a more rigorous and autonomous teacher development program to ensue.

4) Do schools with strong leadership excel in the key areas of emirate- wide scrutiny: Innovation, Critical Thinking, Lesson Planning, Student Engagement, Responding to Student Outcomes, Designing Interventions, Providing for the needs of SEN students, Providing for

the needs of G&T students, Classroom Management, Student-Centered Learning, Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning, and Parental Engagement?

As can be seen in Figure 8, there are little areas in which these schools report to rate themselves at Very Weak, Weak, Acceptable or Good. As stated earlier, Schools A, B, and C are excelling in the majority of these areas, while the developing schools perform at varying rates above Acceptable. Despite inspection report feedback of Schools D, E, and F, leadership seems to have a clear understanding of where their teachers are performing, which will lead to stronger growth and development.
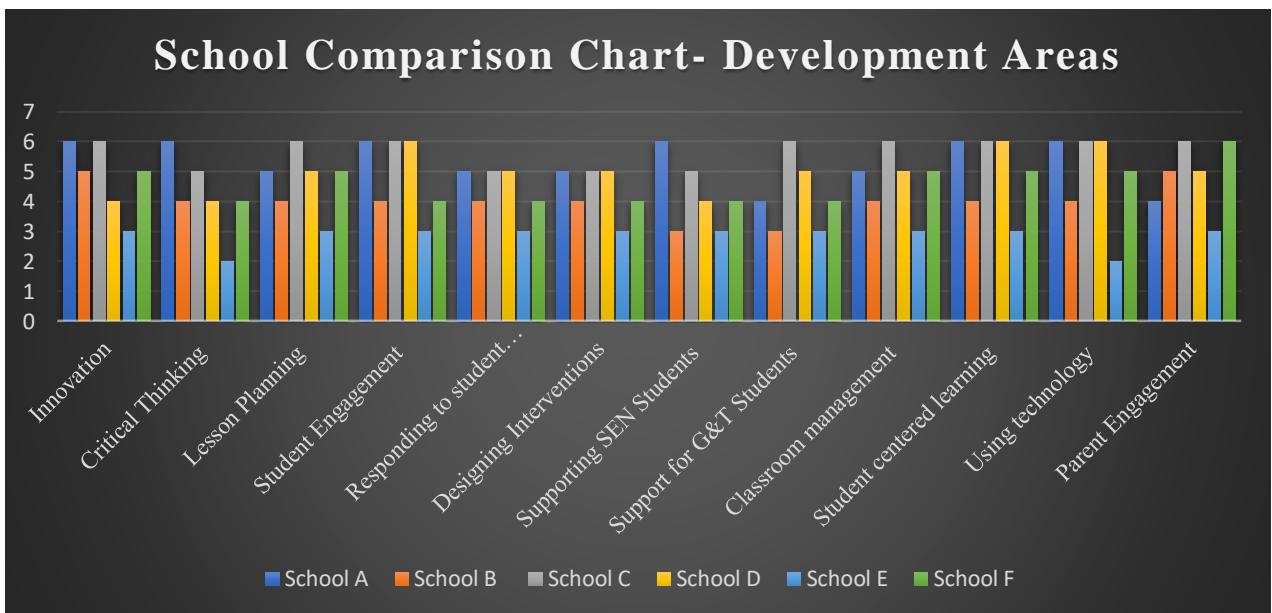

Figure 8. School Comparison of Teacher Ratings in the areas of Scrutiny by Principals

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Implications of the study

The findings in this study are intended to add and narrow the current research on teacher development in the UAE, to private schools in Abu Dhabi. Furthermore, the study aims to share best practices with leaders that work in the current context. While teacher development research is plentiful, within the context of the UAE there is much that remains unexplored. A recurring mention within the research is that there are large teacher turnover rates in all schools, including those rated as outstanding. In addition, diminished motivation was reported amongst teachers in lower performing private schools. This study identifies potential practices which are leading to success in schools and growth, in the effort to spur on further research which can dissect the root of the turnover and motivation problem. Unintentionally this study reveals the disparity between private schools, in teacher capacity, resources, budget and continuity. Therefore, there is a need to identify the antecedent to this. This information also lends to the research on the application of transformational leadership in the UAE.

5.2 Findings and Conclusions

The goal of this study was to explore, in depth, the practices of transformational leaders in the emirate of Abu Dhabi in the area of teacher development. The UAE has high expectations and ambitious goals for educational leadership in the emirate, and therefore strong leadership is in high demand. The transience of the population and the diversity of teacher backgrounds make it difficult at times to develop a strong teacher development program. While the findings drew out the disparities among private schools, it also lends to the discussion on what leadership styles are most suited for the context. The study presents evidence that developing schools and new leadership need to take time to apply some of the common best practices applied to teacher development, as time is needed to develop trust and instill vision and motivation in staff.

Findings from all the schools show that the leaders that are making notable progress or that are maintaining, and exceeding government expectations believe in distributing leadership

and empowering the people that they work with, while it may be at varying degrees. As established in the literature review, countries that are spending quality time on quality development are creating teacher leaders. Evidence from this study suggests that when the teachers are part of the school development process, which for some could be as simple as implementing inspection report recommendations, they are more invested in their own development.

In conclusion, the sampling of private schools in Abu Dhabi with transformational leadership are making adequate to good progress on their goals.   Therefore, it can be hypothesized that similar leadership, employing similar practices at varying appropriate degrees, can drive change or excellence at similar schools. The performance of these leaders and schools on the key areas of scrutiny also show evidence that the leaders exhibit strong practices in teacher development and have adapted their practices to the school context.

5.3 Limitations

Limitations of the study hindered some of the depth that was originally intended. The leadership sample contained six leaders, and a larger sample could have provided more trends and comparisons regarding teacher development.

The greatest limitation was the coronavirus outbreak, closing schools and creating less accessible data. The original intention of the study was to have teachers at each school complete a tandem survey, as their input would have given more insight into the teacher development. The study is missing the teacher perspective, which is critical to getting a consistent evidence of practices and outcomes.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Study

This study can be the foundation for comparative research on teacher and leadership perspective on teacher development. The teacher perspective was absent in this research. Further research could also further investigate the cultural implications of applying western pedagogical methods to the UAE context. In addition, another suggestion for further study would be look at each school as a case study to examine more closely the practices that are leading to success.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A: MLQ Leadership Questionnaire Rater Form

MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
Rater Form (5x-Short)

Name of Leader: _____ Date: _____

Organization ID #: _____ Leader ID #: _____

This questionnaire is to describe the leadership style of the above-mentioned individual as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.** Please answer this questionnaire anonymously.

IMPORTANT (necessary for processing): Which best describes you?

___ I am at a higher organizational level than the person I am rating.
___ The person I am rating is at my organizational level.
___ I am at a lower organizational level than the person I am rating.
___ I do not wish my organizational level to be known.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits the person you are describing. Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

THE PERSON I AM RATING. . .

1.	Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts	0 1 2 3 4
2.	Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate	0 1 2 3 4
3.	Fails to interfere until problems become serious	0 1 2 3 4
4.	Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards	0 1 2 3 4
5.	Avoids getting involved when important issues arise	0 1 2 3 4
6.	Talks about their most important values and beliefs	0 1 2 3 4
7.	Is absent when needed	0 1 2 3 4
8.	Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems	0 1 2 3 4
9.	Talks optimistically about the future	0 1 2 3 4
10.	Instills pride in me for being associated with him/her	0 1 2 3 4
11.	Discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets	0 1 2 3 4
12.	Waits for things to go wrong before taking action	0 1 2 3 4
13.	Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	0 1 2 3 4
14.	Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose	0 1 2 3 4
15.	Spends time teaching and coaching	0 1 2 3 4

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

16. Makes clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved 0 1 2 3 4
17. Shows that he/she is a firm believer in "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." 0 1 2 3 4
18. Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group 0 1 2 3 4
19. Treats me as an individual rather than just as a member of a group 0 1 2 3 4
20. Demonstrates that problems must become chronic before taking action 0 1 2 3 4
21. Acts in ways that builds my respect 0 1 2 3 4
22. Concentrates his/her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures 0 1 2 3 4
23. Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions 0 1 2 3 4
24. Keeps track of all mistakes 0 1 2 3 4
25. Displays a sense of power and confidence 0 1 2 3 4
26. Articulates a compelling vision of the future 0 1 2 3 4
27. Directs my attention toward failures to meet standards 0 1 2 3 4
28. Avoids making decisions 0 1 2 3 4
29. Considers me as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others 0 1 2 3 4
30. Gets me to look at problems from many different angles 0 1 2 3 4
31. Helps me to develop my strengths 0 1 2 3 4
32. Suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments 0 1 2 3 4
33. Delays responding to urgent questions 0 1 2 3 4
34. Emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission 0 1 2 3 4
35. Expresses satisfaction when I meet expectations 0 1 2 3 4
36. Expresses confidence that goals will be achieved 0 1 2 3 4
37. Is effective in meeting my job-related needs 0 1 2 3 4
38. Uses methods of leadership that are satisfying 0 1 2 3 4
39. Gets me to do more than I expected to do 0 1 2 3 4
40. Is effective in representing me to higher authority 0 1 2 3 4
41. Works with me in a satisfactory way 0 1 2 3 4
42. Heightens my desire to succeed 0 1 2 3 4
43. Is effective in meeting organizational requirements 0 1 2 3 4
44. Increases my willingness to try harder 0 1 2 3 4
45. Leads a group that is effective 0 1 2 3 4

Appendix B: Preliminary Survey (Participants completed an online version of the survey)

Teacher Development: Needs and Strengths in Abu Dhabi

Thank you for taking part in this survey on Teacher Development in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Please rate the following areas to the best of your ability.

Q1   I understand that this survey is voluntary and for research purposes only. The names of participants will be confidential and will not appear in the report. *

○ Acknowledged and I agree to participate.
○ I decline to participate.

Q2   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Parental Engagement: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q3   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Innovation: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q4   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Critical Thinking:

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q5   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Lesson Planning: ○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q6   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Student Engagement:

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q7   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Responding to Student Outcomes: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q8   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Designing Interventions *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good

○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q9   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Providing for the needs of SEN students *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q10   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Providing for the needs of Gifted and Talented students: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q11   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Classroom Management: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q12   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Student-Centered Learning: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q13   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Using Technology in the classroom: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q14   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area- Creating Assessments: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q15   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Collaboration: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q16   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Data Analysis: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q17   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Curriculum Design: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q18   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Classroom Culture: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q19   How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Cultural Awareness: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q20 How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Progress Monitoring: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q21 How would you rate overall teacher performance in the following area-Time Management: *

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Thanks for taking this survey!

Appendix C: Teacher Development Questionnaire for Leaders (participants completed online)

Teacher Development Questionnaire- For Leaders

Thank you for participating in this study on teacher development in the UAE. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Q1   What school are you currently leading?

Q2   What is your nationality?

Q3   How many years have you served as a school leader?

○ 1-3 years
○ 4-6 years
○ 7-10 years
○ More than 10 years

Q4   How many years have you served as a school leader in the UAE?

○ First year
○ 1-3 years
○ 4-6 years
○ 7-10 years
○ More than 10 years

Q5   Where did you receive your school leadership training?

Q6   How would you rate the effectiveness of your current teacher development program in your school?

○ Very Effective
○ Effective
○ Somewhat Effective
○ Minimally Effective
○ Ineffective

Q7   Describe ways in which you diagnose teacher needs?

Q8   Do you have a long-term strategy for teacher development and if so can you describe?

Q9   What in-house Professional development opportunities have you provided to your staff thus far?

Q10   What external development opportunities have you provided to your staff thus far?

Q11   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Innovation

- ○ Very Weak
- ○ Weak
- ○ Acceptable
- ○ Good
- ○ Very Good
- ○ Outstanding

Q12   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Critical Thinking

- ○ Very Weak
- ○ Weak
- ○ Acceptable
- ○ Good
- ○ Very Good
- ○ Outstanding

Q13   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Lesson Planning

- ○ Very Weak
- ○ Weak
- ○ Acceptable
- ○ Good
- ○ Very Good
- ○ Outstanding

Q14   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Student Engagement

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q15   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Responding to Student Outcomes

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q16   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Designing Interventions

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q17   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Providing for the needs of SEN students

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q18   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Providing for the needs of Gifted and Talented students

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q19   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Classroom Management

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q20   How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Student-Centered Learning

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q21 How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Using Technology to Enhance Student Learning

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q22 How would you rate your staff in the following area:

Parental Engagement

○ Very Weak
○ Weak
○ Acceptable
○ Good
○ Very Good
○ Outstanding

Q23 What methods or strategies used to develop teachers do you find most useful? Can you describe the strategy or method?

Q24 If a teacher is not performing to standards, what steps does leadership take to support the teacher?

Q25 What accountability measures are in place to ensure interventions or professional development is being implemented?

Q26 How often do lesson observations occur, and by whom ?

Q27 What obstacles do you face as a leader in developing your teaching staff?

Q28 Additional comments or explanations:

Thanks for taking this survey!