

**Investigating the impact of school principals' role on quality
of teaching and learning
(A case study of a private school in Abu Dhabi)**

البحث في تأثير دور مدراء المدارس على جودة التعليم والتعلم (دراسة حالة
لمدرسة خاصة في أبوظبي)

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

This research investigates the effective role that school principal plays in improving the school at all levels, especially improving the quality of teaching and learning which leads to improve students' achievements. It also shows the roles and responsibilities of the current school principal and the different leadership styles that he applies in his school. It illustrates the impact of the school principal on teaching and learning and how he can address all the challenges that he faces in an MoE private school in Abu Dhabi.

The research also shows the impact of the relationship between the school principal and teachers on the quality of teaching and students learning. It also illustrates the forms of support that the school principal provides to everyone in the school community and its impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

The researcher prepared the research Statements and the survey Statements in a way that meets all challenges that the principal faces, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the school principal in raising the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements.

For accordance and completeness purpose, the researcher used the triangulation method in the research. A survey (quantitative data) was sent to 70 teachers in the school, also there were some structured interviews with some teachers, some parents and some students in order to get feedback about the school performance at all levels and their opinion about the school principal in particular. The researcher received 55 responses out of 70 teachers. The data analysis process showed that, the positive relationships between the school principal and all the stakeholders in the school such as, teachers, students, parents, middle leaders, etc... has an effective impact on the quality of teaching and learning, teachers' motivation, students readiness to learn as well as parents satisfaction. It also showed that the school principal has a direct impact on students' achievements and teachers' performance. Moreover, the school principal supported the school at all levels in order to address all the difficulties and challenges that face teachers, students and even parents, for example, the students come from different nationalities, and the school leadership team managed to make the school a model example of the peaceful coexistence.

At the end of the study, the researcher presented some recommendations for the school principal in order to move the school forward and meet the standards of the good schools according to the UAE Inspection Framework.

ملخص البحث

يبحث هذا البحث في الدور الفاعل الذي يقوم به مدير المدرسة في تحسينها على جميع الأصعدة وخاصة تحسين جودة التعليم والتعلم والذي بدوره يؤدي إلى تحسين إنجازات الطلاب ويوضح هذا البحث الأدوار والمسؤوليات المنوطة بمدير المدرسة الحالي وأنماط القيادة المختلفة التي يطبقها في مدرسته. ويوضح البحث كذلك تأثير مدير المدرسة على عمليتي التعليم والتعلم وكيف يمكنه مواجهة جميع التحديات التي يواجهها في مدرسة خاصة في أبوظبي وتتبع منهاج وزارة التربية والتعليم. يوضح البحث أيضاً تأثير العلاقة بين مدير المدرسة والمعلمين على جودة التعليم والتعلم وأشكال الدعم التي يقدمها مدير المدرسة لجميع أفراد المجتمع المدرسي وتأثيرها على جودة عمليتي التعليم والتعلم.

قام الباحث بإعداد أسئلة البحث وأسئلة الاستبيان بطريقة توضح التحديات التي يواجهها مدير المدرسة وكذلك الأدوار والمسؤوليات المنوطة به في تحسين التعليم والتعلم ورفع مستوى إنجازات الطلاب.

لأغراض التوافق والاكتمال استخدم الباحث طريقة التثليث في البحث حيث تم إرسال استبيان (بيانات كمية) إلى 70 معلم، وتم إجراء مجموعة من المقابلات مع بعض المعلمين والطلاب وأولياء الأمور وذلك للحصول على تغذية راجعة منهم حول إداء المدرسة والمدير على وجه الخصوص. تلقى الباحث 55 رداً على الاستبانة من أصل 70 تم إرسالها. وقد أظهر تحليل البيانات أن العلاقة الإيجابية بين مدير المدرسة وجميع المعنيين من معلمين وطلاب وأولياء أمور لها أثر فاعل على جودة التعليم والتعلم ودافعية المعلمين واستعداد الطلاب وكذلك رضا أولياء الأمور. وأوضح تحليل البيانات أيضاً أن مدير المدرسة له أثر مباشر على إنجازات الطلبة وداء المعلمين. علاوة على ذلك يدعم المدير المدرسة على جميع الأصعدة من أجل مساعدة الجميع على التغلب على التحديات حيث نجح فريق قيادة المدرسة جعل المدرسة نموذجاً للتعايش السلمي بين طلاب ومعلمين من عدة جنسيات مختلفة. في نهاية البحث قدم الباحث مجموعة من التوصيات لمدرء المدارس بغرض تحسين مدارسهم.

Dedication

This dissertation aims to illustrate the effective role that school principals have in improving the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. It also shows the great impact that school leaders can have on their students and as well as teachers. I hereby dedicate this work to all teachers in the school, and of course the school principal, hoping that he takes the results of the research into consideration.

I also dedicate this work to my parents, wife and my sons; your support, encouragement and faith in me helped me to achieve my dream.

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Chapter One:

1.1 Introduction

Governments all over the world believe that, education is one of the main priorities they have to focus on in order to establish well educated generations that are able to help achieve the goals of the country. Parents all over the world know that it is really important to invest in their children so; they are keen on educating them well. Therefore, there is a big focus on schools at all levels, especially the school leadership. This is because if the school has a successful principal who has a clear vision to move the school forward, the school will be successful at all levels especially teaching and learning. School principals face a lot of daily challenges and they are required to have smart solutions to address these challenges and other problems

The researcher is investigating the effective role of the school principal and the leadership style he/she uses in order to improve his/her school at all levels, especially teaching and learning which leads to improvement in students' achievements. Furthermore, the researcher is investigating all types of support the school principal provide to his/her teachers in order to help them improve their performance through constructive feedback and continuous professional development.

In this chapter, the researcher will talk about the background of the study, the education system in the UAE, the rationale of the study, the objectives of the study, the research hypotheses, the research questions, the significant of the study and the structure of the paper.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The school is one of the most complicated types of organizations. It has a special nature, for example, the stakeholders of schools are very different, students and teachers may come from different countries, cultures and backgrounds. However all those people work together in order to achieve one goal. That is one of the biggest challenges that face the school leaders as; they have to make all those different people work as a team.

The school leadership team should run the school following a range of successful leadership styles, which motivate both teachers and students to do their best in order to reach the highest level of performance that enables everybody to use his full potentials to improve the school in all areas.

The school principal plays the vital role in moving the school forward. One of the most common challenges that face school in the Middle East is that, there is a gap between the school leaders and teachers. Therefore, the school principal has to be accessible for teachers, students and parents all the time. He should focus on improving the school at all levels not just teaching and learning. He has the most effective impact on both teachers and students.

In addition to that, the school leadership is critical to the school success, improvement, and students' achievements as; it comes in the second place after the effective classroom practices among all factors that impact students' attainment and progress. (Conservancy.umn.edu, 2018)

The school principal has an effective impact on students, achievements and school success at all levels. Principals are widely seen as “instructional leaders” who are in charge of facilitating students' learning in classroom (Holden, 2018).

1.3 Background of the Study

The 21st century brought a lot of challenges to all people all over the world. Many concepts have been changed. Leadership is one of these concepts that witnessed a lot of changes, especially in the education field. A principal is a professional leader of learning who needs to have in depth understanding of the school community needs as well as set some success expectations and standards for students when they leave the school (Roebuck, 2011).

Governments and education specialist all over the world believe that high quality education is the only way that can help face all the challenges and solve all the worlds' problems through finding out smart solutions for the world problems and challenges. They also believe that the effective leadership is the main factor in improving the quality of teaching and learning that enables students to have great input in changing the whole world into better one. Therefore, education specialists began to create new leadership theories and styles which can cope with the new challenges of the 21st century.

Democratic or participative leadership is one of the common leadership styles that provide opportunities to everybody in the organization to participate in the decision making. It also emphasizes fairness and encourages creativity and values honesty and intelligence (Berlinsky, 2019).

Distributed leadership is also one of the most common leadership styles, it indicates school leadership team has several leaders, it is an organizational quality rather than individual attribute (Gronn, 2002).

According to Spillane (2012), the distributed leadership focuses on the leadership practices rather than the responsibilities and roles of leadership. It is a joint and extended leadership that help everybody to build the capacity for change and improvement.

In the researched school, the principal combines the two leadership styles, the democratic and distributed leadership. He gives opportunities for his people to have effective roles in school. He delegates roles and responsibilities to people and inspire them to complete the assigned tasks on time and effectively. He encourages everybody in the school community to share ideas and opinions with the leadership team and actually this will make everyone in the school feel responsible and have a role in the decision making process as well as feel valued by their superiors. Of course, this positive work atmosphere will lead to improvement at all levels, as teachers' work conditions affect teachers' job satisfaction which has a direct impact on students' achievement (Johnson, Kraft & Papay, 2011).

1.4 The Education System in the UAE

The UAE government has a very great vision for the country to be achieved by the year 2021. The vision has six main priorities and is based on the idea of booking a place among top and the best countries in the world by the golden jubilee of the country. Of course, the education system is one of the countries priorities 'first rate education system'. People at the ministry of education believe that, improving the quality of school leadership is the main way to improve the school in all areas such as, teaching and learning, teachers' performance and competency and students' achievements. They believe that school principals and other leaders in the school can achieve the vision which based on shifting from teaching into learning and making schools an active partner in all local community events (National Agenda, 2021).

By the year 2020, teacher's license will be a requirement for all teachers in the UAE. It has been launched in line with the UAE vision to ensure that students are receiving high quality education along with the best education standards (tls.moe.gov.ae).

In 2012, Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) identified some qualifications for school principals to meet as follows: firstly, recognized teaching qualification. Secondly, Masters degree from a recognized university. Thirdly, at least 5 years teaching and management experience. Fourthly, IELTS (academic) 6.5. ADEC also identified the professional standards which are the expected competencies for principals. ADEK set five key standards which are, leading strategically, leading teaching and learning, leading the organization, leading people and leading the community (ADEK policy, 2012).

1.5 The Rational of the Study

All my 22 years work experience is in the education field. I taught English for secondary school students for about twelve years in a number of public and private school in my home country and in the UAE. For the last 10 years, I had some different roles and responsibilities all related to leadership and continuous professional development of teachers. This gave me some good opportunities to work in some different schools which enabled me to experience different types of leadership styles and different school principals as well. This is why I chose to do my research on the effective role that the school leadership can have in developing the school at all levels, as I hundred percent believe that leadership is the main factor that makes an organization either a successful one or not.

1.6 Main Aim of the Study

The researcher aims to investigate the impact that the principal of a private school in Abu Dhabi has on improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievement. Therefore, the researcher focuses on the roles and responsibilities of the principal as a case, the leadership style, teachers' development through continuous professional development, students' achievements and the daily challenges that face the principal highlighting the influence of leadership on improving the school at all levels and quality of teaching and learning in particular.

The researcher will conduct a number of surveys, interviews with all stakeholders and lesson observations as well as analyzing the school data in order to measure the impact of school leadership on improving the school.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

- Investigate the effective role of the principal in improving the school at all levels
- Investing the leadership style of the principal that led to make the school a successful one
- Illustrate the direct role of the principal on students' achievements

1.8 Research Hypotheses

This research will investigate the following hypothesis:

- The effective school principal has a positive impact on students' achievements
- The effective principal inspires, motivates and supports his people through continuous professional development to have a role in achieving the aims and the vision of the school
- The effective principal has the capacity to address daily challenges and change them into successes through implementing a number of smart solutions

1.9 Research Questions

- What is the influence of the school principal on improving the quality of teaching and learning?
- What are the main roles and responsibilities of the principal as a school leader? What are the challenges he may face?
- What is the relation between the effectiveness of the school principal from one side and teachers' performance and students' achievements from the other side?

1.10 Significant of the Study

The role of the school principal has been and continues to be a very important topic for all those involved in the education system and policies all over the world. Therefore, a lot of case studies and researches have been conducted and many articles and books have been written to illustrate the effective role of the school principal. It is also clear that there is only a small number of researches about the principal's role in the Middle East schools particularly in the UAE. It has a special context that has several requirements that add more challenges and load to school principals.

The research is concentrating on the role of the principal in improving a private school in Abu Dhabi. It focuses on the daily challenges that he faces and how he addresses these challenges in order to improve the school and move it forward.

This research aims to highlight the highest standards of leading people, teaching and learning, the organization and leading strategically that a principal can implement to change his school in to a successful one.

This case study aims to create awareness among school leaders in order to self reflect on their leadership styles and practices that lead to improve quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements.

1.11 The Structure of this Paper

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction of the research, statement of the problem, background of the study, the education system in the UAE, the aims and purpose and the significant of the study.

Chapter two is the literature review which introduces the views, theories, and the other studies that related to the educational leadership and the distributed leadership in particular. It also illustrates the schools and the education system in the UAE according to the vision and the National Agenda 2021.

Chapter three illustrates the methodology that is used in this case study. It also shows the tools that have been used for data collection. The researcher used a mixed approach of data collection which includes

the qualitative and quantitative methods for more reliable information and results. An online survey has been sent to teachers, some structured interviews with the school principal, teachers and subject leaders have been held. Moreover, a number of unstructured interviews have been held with students, parents and other stakeholders. All these tools aim to collect data and opinions about the level of satisfaction on the principal's performance.

Chapter four shows the data analysis and the findings that are shown in tables and pie charts. In this part, the researcher will investigate the hypothesis and try to prove them.

Chapter five is the conclusion of the study that shows the findings, discussion, limitations and recommendations.

Chapter Two (Literature Review)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher focuses on reviewing relevant literature on leadership especially educational leadership and its direct impact on teachers' performance, students' achievements and whole school development and success. That is why; many books and articles have been published about leadership theories. This chapter introduces a review of the leadership definitions, importance, traits, strategies, styles, and theories.

Leadership is critical element to the success of any organization. In this chapter the researcher will cover all the areas related to educational leadership. The essential aim of the research is to study the impact of school principal's role in improving the school at all levels especially teaching and learning and students' achievements as well as the challenges that school principal faces. Furthermore, the researcher will cover some other aims related to the research itself.

In this chapter the researcher will present some other similar studies that have been done in other different countries that have the same concentration. Moreover, the researcher will show some authors' claims related to leadership theories.

2.2 What is Leadership?

There are many definitions for leadership, some definitions concentrate on the individual and personal characteristics rather than the leadership process itself. Cuban (1988) argued that, there are more than three hundred and fifty definitions to leadership, but there is no clear understanding that distinguishes between leaders and non leaders.

Here are some of leadership definitions:

- Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people in order to achieve a common goal (Ward, 2019).

- According to Kruse (2013), leadership is a process of social influence that maximizes the effort of others to achieve a goal. This definition has some key element, for example leadership stems from social influence not authority or power and requires other people to work towards the goal.
- Leadership is the ability to adapt the setting so everyone feels empowered to contribute creatively to solving the problems (Smith, 2010). He also said that leadership is an ability which means that the leader has a capacity to do everything using his skills and talents.
- The activity of leading a group of people or an organization or the ability to create a understandable and clear vision and share it with others in the work field so that, they can follow it willingly (Business dictionary, 2016).
- According to Bell (2016), it is really crucial for every organization to have a successful effective leader, which is difficult to find. The effective leaders share some common key elements and he also illustrated the 5 key characteristics that spotlight the effective leadership.

These elements are:

a) ***Ability to delegate tasks***

Any leader has his own particular vision that he or she wants the staff and the organization to achieve. Some leaders prefer to do every small thing themselves rather than sharing or delegating some workload to others. Effective leaders generate the team spirit by delegating tasks to the right people who complete them correctly and effectively.

b) ***Excellent Communication***

Effective leaders communicate with their people in different ways, face to face, via emails or telephone calls. It is really significant for leaders to ensure that all staff knows the purpose and the final goal of any task or project to be able to complete it successfully. Without this sort of effective communication, leaders will not be able to create a productive work environment.

c) ***Confidence***

Leaders are the backbone of the organizations; therefore, they have to show a great deal of confidence especially at the difficult times, so that their employees feel comfortable and secure in a motivated work atmosphere.

d) ***Honesty***

Honesty is a crucial part of effective leadership. Successful leaders have to build trust in their team members. When making a decision all people have to be able to believe that the leader will go ahead and keep his word, otherwise a distrust atmosphere will be created which can lead to many problems.

e) ***Creativity***

Effective leaders must be creative who have the ability to make creative decisions and find smart solutions when things do not go as planned. They also should provide opportunities for their team members to develop their skills in order to be a part of a creative organization.

2.3 Leadership Vs Management:

There is always a kind of controversy to differentiate between leadership and management or the leader and the manager. Many people just know that leadership is different from management, but they have not been able to understand the difference clearly. The two jobs of a leader and a manager are completely different based on their fundamental functions, outcomes and philosophies. A leader is completely different from a manager, they implement different approaches and use different methods to solve problems (Toor & Ofori, 2008).

Zaleznik (1977) said that, there is a difference between managers and leaders. Managers always seek stability and control and instinctively try to solve problems in a quick way, may before they get full understanding of the problem. On contrast, leaders are always willing to understand problems clearly. He also mentioned that business leaders are like scientists, artists and creative thinkers. He also illustrated that both managers and leaders make a valuable contribution to the organizations in different ways.

Some people think that leadership and management have the same synonyms. It is not true, because they have different indicators. Management focuses on controlling, planning and directing the organization, while leadership concentrates more on inspiring people and motivating them in order to establish clear vision help achieve the goals (Algahtani, 2014).

2.4 Leadership Role in Schools

Leadership has a great role in school improvement; its main role is to enhance the skills and capacity of all stakeholders to be able to move the school forward and achieve its goals and vision. Grace (1995) illustrated that, the existence of different forms of crisis such as, moral crisis, economic, legitimization crisis, political crisis and social crisis generate the conditions for leadership, and that is why there is a big interest in the study of educational leadership.

The educational authorities have two main objectives which are, enhance the efficiency of the education system and improve students' achievement, therefore they equip schools with effective leadership teams and models, that lead to improvement in the academic performance (Choi & Gil 2017).

Leithwood et al (2003) mentioned some claims about successful school leadership which are; school leadership comes in the second place after classroom teaching as influence on students' learning, approximately all successful school leaders use the same basics of leadership practices, school leaders can improve the quality of teaching and learning through having an effective impact on teachers' commitment and motivation, distributed leadership can have a big influence on schools and students and there is a big variation in leadership effectiveness due to the personal traits and characteristics

According to Bush (2005), there is a big awareness all over the world in educational leadership with the start of the 21st century. He also said that, the quality leadership and leaders are very crucial if the school wants to achieve the best possible outcomes. The skilled and effective leadership is highly required side by side with teachers' role if the school and colleges are to thrive. He also mentioned that, the traditional perspective in many countries is that the senior and middle leader teams in schools need only to be experienced and qualified teachers whereas, leadership is separate profession that requires specific skills and preparation.

If you scratch the surface of an outstanding school, you will find an excellent leadership, but when the school is a failing one, you will find a very weak leadership. There is much that we still do not know about effective educational leadership. School leadership is the main responsible for how well teachers teach and how much students learn (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Hopinks (2003) mentioned that, if schools are willing to change and improve, then new and alternative leadership approaches have to be implemented. He also said that to achieve deep and sustained educational reform, school leadership have to become principally concerned. Schools can be improved when leaders build the capacity for development and change and invest in teaching and enable others to be leaders (Harris, 2002).

2.5 The Key Roles and Responsibilities of the School Principal

To be an effective school principal is not an easy job as he or she is responsible for everything in school. There are nine roles and responsibilities which are, student's discipline, teachers' evaluation, develop and implement programs, review policies and procedures, schedule sitting, hire new teaching staff, parents and community relation and delegate tasks to others (Meador, 2019).

Lampkin (2017) mentioned that, school principals have a lot of responsibilities to conduct in order to develop a successful school and he illustrated five essential responsibilities:

- ***Creating a positive school culture:*** The school is a special place with delicate culture. The main purpose of the school is to teach students effectively. If the school principal managed to create a welcoming school environment as well as systematic and integrated opportunities for parents to be involved in school process, the parental involvement will increase. This sort of effective communication promotes the school culture.

- ***Creating a long – term plan for student academic success:*** students' achievement and progress are the key indicators that prove the effectiveness of the school leadership. Sometimes teachers do not realize the long- term success, therefore it is the role of the school principal to remind people that it is a marathon not a spring. It is important to ensure that all students are receiving the same quality education through

aligning the curriculum standards from grade to grade. Analysis of students' data and students' portfolios are good methods to track students' improvement.

- ***Cultivating leadership in others:*** It is really necessary for the principal to cultivate and prepare other leaders in school as he cannot monitor and track every single thing or to be everywhere to help everyone. The principal has to make use of the professional teachers through giving them opportunities to take lead in making some important decisions. It is the principal responsibility to provide professional training on problem solving skills that help them to be more independent and widen their knowledge.

- ***Managing people, data and process:*** Time management is a common problem in schools, so that teachers need to balance between work and life. Teachers do not want to spend extra four or five hours after school preparing activities and plan their lessons. It is the responsibility of principals to make their life easier by providing some tools that save their time and effort. This will have positive effect on the work environment.

- ***Improving leadership:*** The two fundamental factors of school success are teachers' efficiency and quality school leadership. Principals support teachers to teach their students better through providing them with all necessary tools. Principal will be successful when they keep in mind helping both teachers and students to be successful.

2.6 Characteristics of Effective School Principal

Leading a school is not an easy job, neither a job that everyone can do. There are some traits that effective school principals should master in order to be able to do their jobs effectively and successfully.

According to Okoli (2017), excellent school leaders should possess four main qualities which are: he or she has to be a visionary who has a clear vision as well as being a continuous learner who stands out among his colleges making them feel comfortable and motivated to improve their school. Also, a school principal should be a great listener showing care and willingness to hear others in the school and solve problems. He or she also has to be a bridge builder who is able to connect people together and gain their trust. Also, effective school principal must be fair and reliable in handling the similar situations and problems.

Effective school principals are those who share ideas, opinions, reflections and work experiences with their team members. They should arrive schools like a warrior on a steed (McEwan, 2003).

According to Hasan (2017), a good leader must have some qualities, such as empathy, integrity, passion, commitment, good communication skills, decision making capabilities, innovative and critical thinker. He also mentioned that if a leader lacks some of these qualities, then he/she might struggle in leading the organization.

MacBeath (1998) mentioned some laws of the effective educational leadership, the rule breaker which is the way to achieve things on time and policies can be implemented where there is a flexible attitude to the rule. He also mentioned that, a good school leader set unattainable goals to raise the level of expectations for the school. Another rule he mentioned is that a good leader is always led, which means that he/she should listen to the people around him/her, know them well and to be sensitive to feeling.

According to Kelly (2019), a good school principal should be visible and seen by everybody in school. He or she has to participate in all school events with teachers and students. He or she also should be dedicated to the school and all school decisions have to be made for the best of students.

2.7 Leadership as Influence:

The common factor that links all the leadership definitions is that leadership is a process of influence. This influence is done by a person or a group of people, therefore good leaders are those who successfully influence up, down and across the organization.

Influence is a continuous behaviour, not just one time event (Eggleston, 2016).

According to Weber (2018), one of the main factors that determine if the leader is a successful one or not is his or her ability to influence people to reach the goals of the organization.

Weber listed four fundamental factors that help leaders to influence others:

- ***Communication style***, which refers to the leaders' ability to communicate directions in an understandable way, as this will improve or weaken relationships.

- **Consistency**, as team members monitor the leaders' behaviour, therefore leaders should be consistent in the way they treat people. Also their actions should match their words
- **Compassion**, as leaders should care about their people and express their interest and appreciation in their progress and success
- **Connection to purpose**, which means to help team members connect their work to a purpose that help achieve a greater goal in this way leaders' influence will increase.

According to Kokemuller (2017), to be able to influence other is a great benefit for leaders. He also illustrated that influence is essential for those leaders who want to inspire and motivate their team groups in order to get them aligned with the vision and mission of the organization and complete tasks on time.

2.8 Leadership Theories:

There are many leadership theories, some of them are old, new and modern theories. These theories can be found in many books and articles all over the world, distributed, transformational, transactional, Behavioural and situational leadership theories are still the most significant theories that most of the organizations are applying.

Leadership theories aim to illustrate why and how some particular people become leaders, some of these leadership theories usually focus on the traits of leaders, while others try to identify the behaviour that leaders can adopt to develop leadership skills and capacity in the different situations (Cherry, 2019).

2.8.1 Distributed Leadership Theory

Distributed leadership is considered one of the most common approaches in the modern discourse; it is practice and impact rather than power and authority (Humphreys, 2010). According to Solly (2018), distributed leadership is not delegating tasks to others to complete for the leader, but the main aim of it is to increase leadership capacity, so that the school can improve in a right manner. He also said that the three fundamental principles to distributed leadership are autonomy, capacity and accountability and they have equal importance.

According to Bolden (2007), distributed leadership became very widespread in the last few years as an alternative to the model of leadership that focus on leaders' individual behaviour.

Distributed leadership mostly is interested in the practice of leadership rather than the specific responsibilities and role of leadership, therefore it counterweights with collective and shared leadership that enhance the ability for continuous improvement (Harris, 2014).

Distributed leadership is an alternative method to think about leadership practice, as it involves more than one person within the same context. He also mentioned that distributed leadership is a result of the interaction between the school leader, his or her followers and the school situations (Spillane, 2005).

2.8.2 Transformational Leadership Theory

According to Burkus (2010), transformational leadership is a new method of leadership that concentrates on how leaders can change and improve their followers in a positive way. He also said that transformational leaders do their best to transform others to help each other and the organization.

Transformational leadership is a style in which leaders motivate and inspire their team members without micromanagement in order to innovate. They also trust their workforce to make decisions and take authority in the assigned jobs to them (White, 2018).

Bass (1985) mentioned that, a leader has a big influence on his or her team members and they follow their leaders because of honesty and trust. He also indicated that leaders not only act as role models for their followers, but also they need to urge them to challenge the existing system.

Bass suggested four elements of transformational leadership:

- Idealized influence:

Transformational leaders act as role models with charismatic leadership where they can built trust with team members and in turn team members build confidence in them.

- Inspirational Motivation:

Transformational leaders should create a clear vision for the future of the organization, communicate the vision and expectations and show commitment to the goals. This side of transformational leadership requires excellent communication skills.

- *Intellectual Stimulation:*

Transformational leaders encourage creativity among their followers and support them by involving them in the decision making. They challenge assumptions and seek new ideas from their followers.

- *Individualized Consideration:*

Transformational leader should be able to determine what inspires and motivates every individual, and then provide one to one training to team members that help them grow and improve (Schlietz, 2019).

There is a need for courageous leaders who are able to empower their people to reach heights they thought impossible and for leaders to be a transformational leader they have to possess these qualities. They have to be courageous and ready to take new challenges, they should have the ability to inspire people, they should have a great deal of self motivation, they should have a clear vision and communicate it with others and they should have good personal interaction with their team members (Hogg, 2012).

2.8.3 Transactional Leadership Theory:

According to Burns (2003), transactional leadership happens when the leaders discipline or reward their followers based on the capacity of the followers' performance. The transactional leaders identify what needs to be done and rewards others.

Bass (1985) mentioned that, transactional leadership concentrates on exchange between leaders and their followers through motivating and rewarding them or punishing them.

To exchange between transactional leaders and their followers will fall in four possible dimensions:

- ***Contingent Rewards:*** leaders set smart goals for their subordinates and link these goals to a specific reward. It is the leaders' role to provide support for their subordinates to assist in the performance.
- ***Active Management by Expectations:*** Leaders focus on the expectation they set out, so that they can step in and prevent mistakes and help find solutions.
- ***Passive Management by Expectations:*** Subordinates have the power to do work as they like, leaders would intervene and introduce a punishment if they didn't meet the expectations.
- ***Laissez-Faire:*** leaders create a relaxed environment for their subordinates to be responsible for decision making (Anastasia, 2018).

According to Gaille (2018), transactional leadership has some advantages; for example, each employee knows well what he or she should do, motivates employees to get rewards when they meet the work expectations and presents short-term achievable goals that improve productivity. It also has some disadvantages, for example, the organization struggles when a leader leaves as transactional leadership focuses on creating more followers than leaders and transactional leaders are stuck to rules which limit innovation and creative thinking.

2.8.4 Situational Leadership Theory

Situational leadership is as the most practical theory. According to Anthony (2019), a situational leader modifies his style to suit to the level of the followers to be able to influence them.

Goleman (2002) showed six styles for situational leadership:

1-***Coaching leaders:*** the leader acts as a coach to develop skills and individual qualities. This style is good for those who are open to change and understand their limitations.

2- ***Pacesetting leaders***: it works well with highly motivated beginners, but sometimes it has negative effect on employees, as all the time they are required to meet the goals effectively and quickly without being directed.

3- ***Democratic leaders***: leaders offer opportunities for their employees to have a voice in all organization processes which make them feel responsible.

4- ***Affiliative leaders***: leaders focus on building confidence in the team members as well as ongoing motivation

5- ***Authoritative leaders***: those leaders are able to identify and solve problems and train their followers on this.

6- ***Coercive leaders***: this style of leaders is good at crisis or reform time, as they have a clear vision and tell their people what to do

Sisk (2018) claims that, situational leadership has some strength, such as, flexibility as; leaders can shift fluidly from one style to another and it is intuitive and easy to understand where employees feel valued. On the other hand, it has some weaknesses, for example, the rules and procedures may prevent employees from sharing important information about their work and also, this type of flexibility in leading may focus on immediate needs which may shift the attention from achieving the long –term targets.

2.9 Leadership Styles:

Definition:

Leadership style is an approach of giving directions, motivating people and implementing plans (Davis, 1993). In other words the leader should act as a role model for his or her followers and adapt his or her manner to direct, support and motivate others to achieve the goals of the organization.

There are some different leadership styles

2.9.1 Democratic Leadership (common effective)

Democratic leadership aims to create an environment where people are supported and empowered to be active contributors to the creation of the culture and relationships in the organization (Wood, 2005).

According to Cherry (2019), democratic leadership is also known as shared or participative leadership. All people have more participative role in decision making process. She also illustrated some characteristics of the democratic leadership for example, all team members feel more engaged and valued and encouraged to express their own viewpoints.

According to Jakhar (2017), democratic leadership is one of the most effective leadership styles, as it allows leaders to benefit from the individual talents and skills of their employees. He also, mentioned that, democratic leadership is a good way to achieve the full potentials of the team members as, it establishes an sense of commitment as well as fostering creativity.

2.9.2 Autocratic Leadership (rarely effective)

Autocratic leadership is hundred percent inverse of democratic leadership; the leader makes all the decisions himself without giving opportunities to team members to participate in decision making (Becker, 2019).

According to Kramer (2019), an autocratic leader controls every small thing in the workplace. She also mentioned that, autocratic leadership is known as authoritarian leadership and is connected with control and reliability. She also stated some of drawbacks of autocratic leadership style which are; getting stuck to old patterns without no space for creativity, innovation or collaboration and destroys the trust among the leaders and his or her followers.

Of course, autocratic leadership style is very disappointed and it affects both the people and the organization negatively, that is why it is important for leaders to foster sharing and engagement among all team members.

2.9.3 Laissez- Fair Leadership (sometimes effective)

According to Becker (2019), Laissez- Fair is a French term that means the least intrusive form of leadership. It also means let them do and the leaders who use this style provide their team members with a big authority to operate the organization. He also mentioned that trusting employees and letting them

work as they like may limit their development and decrease the opportunities for the growth of the company; that's why it is vital that leadership is monitored and checked.

There are some advantages of Laissez- Fair Leadership, for example it helps create a motivating and creative work environment where all employees have opportunities to improve their skills. On the other hand, it has some disadvantages, for example, lack of structure may prevent employees from achieving the goals especially the newcomers and may be some employees think that freedom is to be left without any sort of accountability or monitoring in order to ensure that they achieve the goals (Anastasia, 2017).

2.9.4 Strategic Leadership (commonly effective)

A strategic leader is someone who is decisive, flexible and preserving in facing the relapses, and also has the ability to respond strategically to the shifts in the environment. There are six main skills each leader should master in order to be able to think strategically and skip the unknown effectively, which are the ability to challenge, anticipate, learn, align, interpret and decide (Schoemaker, Krupp & Howland, 2003).

Strategic leadership is pivotal component in school development, as the main focus for school leaders in many countries all over the world in the last two decades has been the school improvement. Strategic leaders should be involved in direction- setting, transforming strategy into actions, aligning both the organization and people to the strategy and developing strategic abilities (Davies, B & Davies, B. J, 2004).

According to Juneja (2019), strategic leadership refers to the managers' capabilities to create a strategic vision as well as motivate others to get that vision. The essential target of strategic leadership is strategic productivity as well as develops an environment where employees anticipate the needs of the organization and leaders encourage them to follow their own ideas.

2.9.5 Transformational Leadership (sometimes effective)

According to Cherry (2019), transformational leadership is a style that can create effective changes in the followers. Transformational leaders are enthusiastic, passionate and energetic who focus on supporting all members to make success as well as being involved in all organization processes.

The employees who have a transformational leader have better health as having a clear vision gives a meaning to the work and promotes a healthy workplace (Zwingmann et al, 2014).

Transformational leaders work side by side with their followers to implement change, they:

- Have a Vision
- Meet the needs of all employees
- Excellent role models
- Empower their people to exceed the work expectations
- Motivate their follower to think out of the box through intellectual encouragement (Towler, 2019).

2.9.6 Transactional Leadership (sometimes effective)

According to Becker (2019), transactional leaders are very common these days. They make incentive plans in order to motivate their people to be able to complete their tasks and duties effectively. Transactional leaders identify roles and responsibilities for each single employee.

Transactional leaders are like military commanders in valuing order and structure. They are:

- *Inflexible*
- *Not willing to change*
- *Very detailed oriented*
- *Thrives in efficiency*

This style of leadership has some advantages, for example, it rewards individuals who follow instructions, encourages productivity and reproduces systems and structures when needed. On the other hand, it doesn't work in flexible environment, it limits creativity and it doesn't use real motivators only rewards employees with money (Mindvalley, 2018).

2.9.7 Coach – Style Leadership (common effective)

Coaching leadership style is a new style in which the coaching leader tries to get the best out of his team members or employees instead of just giving delegating tasks to them. There are some advantages of coaching leadership, for example, it enhances the sense of commitment in the employees, and leaders provide their employees with enough freedom to try doing the tasks. On the other hand, this style doesn't work with unmotivated employees as they will not do any effort to develop (Janse, 2019).

2.9.8 Bureaucratic Leadership (rarely effective)

Bureaucratic leadership focuses more on control and performance that is why it is similar to management rather than leadership. This leadership style doesn't encourage innovation or creativity as bureaucratic leaders follow the regulations and roles. The key strength of this style is that all employees know their own responsibilities which make them very focused and lead to success. On the other hand, the key criticism to this style is that it does not promote creativity or innovation which limits progress (Sandling, 2014).

2.10 ADEC Professional Standards for Principals:

The main purpose of school principal is to provide professional leadership and management for the school and establish a strong foundation to develop the school at all levels. Therefore, the principal is the leading professional in the school.

There are five key areas that represent the role of principal:

- ***Leading strategically:*** the principal is responsible for creating a collaborative school vision, setting and achieving ambitious objectives, Implementing ADEC's vision, inspire and motivate staff, plan strategically to improve the school and integrate technology as a learning tool.
- ***Leading teaching and learning:*** the principal is responsible for ensuring that all students receive high quality teaching and learning including those who has been identified as Special Education Needs,

implementing ADEC's curriculum, analyzing students' data to improve students achievements and evaluating teachers' performance.

- **Leading the organization:** the principal is responsible for providing a safe and healthy learning environment, strengthening the school capacity through working with others, sharing leadership and decision making and implementing change.

- **Leading people:** the principal is responsible for establishing effective teams, creating strong work relationships and making programs for teachers' professional development.

- **Leading the community:** the principal is responsible for establishing efficient and productive relationships with all stakeholders and external agencies, encouraging parents to be fully involved in school processes and incorporating the national culture and heritage into school (ADEC, 2015).

2.11 Similar Studies

2.11.1 “The effectiveness of school leadership on teachers’ performance and students’ achievement in Palestine”

There are many studies that have been conducted all over the world in order to investigate the role of the school leadership team, especially the school principal in developing teachers' capacities and performance as well as students' achievement and the school at all levels.

This study has been conducted in Palestine. It aimed to explore the relationship between schools' principals and teachers and its impact on students' achievement. It also aimed to find the ways by which school principals can improve the quality of teaching, illustrate the characteristics of successful leaders and find out the effective recommendations that help improve the quality leadership and education in the target area.

The researcher used the mixed approach “both qualitative and quantitative” in order to reach the findings and suggest some recommendations. The participants are 60 school principals and 60 teachers all from governmental schools. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews as two fundamental methods to collect data.

The researcher discovered that the school principal has many roles and responsibilities to do in order to improve the school at all levels, for example, he or she should have teaching background, support teachers' professional development, provide opportunity to teachers to be involved in decision making, conduct regular teacher's evaluation to ensure the quality of teaching that impact students' learning, maintain good relationships with teachers, keep parents involved in their children learning as well as school processes, provide all facilities and teaching and learning resources that facilitate and enhance students' learning and cooperate with all stakeholder to improve the school.

The researcher presented some recommendations, for example, principal should establish clear objectives and priorities allow people to be independent and creative, ensure that the data analysis process for both school and students' data is done on regular basis in order to inform next planning, build capacity in people in order to be successful and establish a clear direction for the followers and influence them to move in that direction (Abuaqel, 2015).

2.11.2 The role of leadership in school improvement: Evaluating improvement efforts of a school A case study of a private school in Jordan

This case study has been done in a British curriculum school in Jordan. The main purpose of this study is to investigate and understand the attitudes and effort of the senior leadership in setting a strategic improvement plan, and how leadership role impacted the school improvement at all levels during the implementation stage.

The study focused on presenting the key theories, concepts, styles and frameworks of educational leadership in improving the school at all levels. The researcher used the qualitative method to collect data. The researcher invited school teachers to participate in a questionnaire in order to get feedback about their conviction on leadership team efforts in improving the school. Moreover, the researcher interviewed the school principal in order to gain an overall opinion about matters in school. He also conducted some interviews with the other leadership team members.

The researcher recommended establishing a consistent and efficient school culture for all school processes and systems. He also recommended that it is important for all staff to understand the theories and strategies that school adopted (EITURK, 2017).

2.12 Conclusion

Leadership plays a vital role in the success or failure of any organization. It is not easy to lead people. Leaders should be equipped with the effective leadership skills that enable them to lead effectively and make success.

Leadership teams in schools are responsible for improving students' academic achievement as well as their personal, social and innovation skills. They are also responsible for improving teachers' performance through providing effective professional development training for teachers and teaching and learning resources that help facilitate learning to students.

Leaders use different leadership styles. Some leaders use one style while others apply more than one style in order to lead all people to achieve the goals.

In this chapter the researcher discussed the different roles and responsibilities of the leaders especially school principals and how these roles have a direct impact on students' learning and achievements.

Definitely, the researcher will benefit from the literature review, as studying the leadership style and theories and the significant characteristics of the effective principal will help the researcher to identify the leadership style that the principal uses. Moreover, it will help him in the coming chapters when he collects and analysis the data to get the findings.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to investigate the role of the school principal in improving the quality of teaching and learning with a great focus on students' achievement in a private school in Abu Dhabi.

This chapter presents the methodology of the research which includes the research design and methods of data collection and analysis and study framework that work towards the goal of the case study. Moreover, it will also investigate the challenges that school principals face when dealing with teachers, parents and other stakeholders. For more reliable data, the researcher used mixed method in the data collection process. The researcher used the qualitative and quantitative method for the purpose of methodological triangulation to ensure that reliable data is collected. An electronic survey was sent to all teachers as a quantitative method in order to understand their views about the school principal and the impact he has on improving their performance as well as improving students' achievements and the whole school processes. The school principal encouraged all teachers to participate in the survey and express their own viewpoints freely. There will be also some interviews with the principal, some teachers, students and parents.

The research was designed to prove the hypotheses and answer the questions of the study through using different approaches of data collection.

3.2 Purpose Statement

A purpose statement is the brain of the study that illustrates the primary goal of the research and shows what the study will accomplish (Simon, 2011). The purpose of this case study is to investigate the role of a private school principal in improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievement. Moreover, it aims to find out how the principal motivates his teachers in order to improve their performance. It also aims to discover the daily challenges that face the principal and how he handles them.

3.3 Research Hypotheses

It is really important for researchers to formulate the research hypothesis before working on a question, as it decides the direction of the study. It also impacts the design of the study (Flournoy, 2018).

According to Murphy (2019), a researcher needs to build strong testable hypothesis that can be proved or disproved as well as being reproducible otherwise both hypothesis and result will be ambiguous.

In this research, the researcher is going to examine the factors and reasons that stand behind the success of the school principals. In addition, he will test the leadership style that the principal uses.

This research study is going to examine the validity of these hypotheses

- a) The effective school principal has a positive impact on students' achievements
- b) The effective principal inspires, motivates and supports his people through continuous professional development to have a role in achieving the aims and the vision of the school
- c) The effective principal has the capacity to address daily challenges and change them into successes through implementing a number of smart solutions

The researcher puts some assumptions. These assumptions are linked directly to the key roles and responsibilities of the school principal which are raising students' academic achievements, improving teacher's performance and handling challenges. The researcher will test these assumptions in order to investigate the main goal of the study.

3.4 Research Questions

This research study will investigate the validity of the above hypotheses by answering these questions:

- What is the influence of the school principal on improving the quality of teaching and learning?
- What are the main roles and responsibilities of the principal as a school leader? What are the challenges he may face?
- What is the relation between the effectiveness of the school principal from one side and teachers' performance and students' achievements from the other side?

3.5 Research Design

What is the research design?

Akhtar (2016) mentioned that, research design is considered the structure of the research as it holds all the components of the research together. He also said that research design is the conceptual scheme within which research is done or in brief it is a plan of the proposed research work. It is very important as it gives the research good opportunity to move smoothly in the different research procedures which help gather much more information with a minimum disbursement of time and effort. Good research design should be flexible, efficient and appropriate.

A research design is a systematic approach that is used by a researcher in order to conduct a study.

Research design has four types:

- *Exploratory research*: explores something by answering Statements

- *Descriptive research*: answers Statements deeply
- *Explanatory research*: explains the subject matter and tries to answer Statements
- *Evaluation research*: measures the effectiveness of the program (Yousaf, 2018).

The researcher used a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research design. It is qualitative, as it describes the impact of school principal on students' achievements. It also tries to gain deep understanding of the relationship between the cause (principal's roles and responsibilities) and the effect (improving school at all levels especially teaching and learning and students' achievement). It is also quantitative, as it provides statistical meaning to the area of the research. The researcher used the quantitative research to study the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

In this study the researcher used a survey, structured and unstructured interviews in order to collect accurate data that help him examine the hypotheses and answer the questions.

The research interviewed some stakeholders including teachers, parents and students as well as sending a survey to the teaching staff in order to collect more information about the stakeholders' viewpoints regarding the school principal and his leadership style and manner in leading everything in the school including teaching and learning and people. This will also help the researcher identify the relation between his leadership style from one side and teachers' performance and students' achievement from the other side.

3.6 Case Study

A case study is defined as a systematic, intensive investigation of a single individual or group in which the researcher examines data relating to different variables (Heale & Twycross, 2017).

Yin (1984) (cited in Zainal,2007) said that a case study is a unique method of watching the natural phenomena that exist in a set of data.

There are some advantages of the case study for example, the investigation of data happens in a real environment. In addition to that, the case study approaches allow the researcher to use the triangulation method for data collection and analysis. On the other hand it has some disadvantages for example; a case study is sometimes accused of lack of accuracy as the researcher may allow unclear evidence or unfair views to impact both the results and conclusion. Moreover, it does not provide a strong basis for scientific generalization. It is also accused of being too long, difficult to conduct and producing huge amounts of documents (Yin,1984) (cited in Zainal,2007).

This research is considered a case study as, the researcher aimed to investigate the impact of a single school principal's impact on his students' achievements. The researcher made systematic investigation, as he used a mixed method of data collection and analyzed these data to get the results.

3.7 Research Methods

In order to get reliable and complete answers for the research questions, the researcher examined and studied the case study in the real environment of the researched school. The researcher used a mixed approach of data collection that includes the qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.7.1 Qualitative Method

It focuses on obtaining an understanding of the underlying reasons, motivations and opinions. It helps develop ideas or hypotheses for potential qualitative research as well as providing insights of the problem. There are some different methods of qualitative data collection including one to one interviews, focus group (group discussion) and observation. It has some limitations as, it is a time consuming process, it is not statically representative, difficult to investigate causality and it is difficult to verify the results of qualitative research (Radu, 2019).

3.7.2 Quantitative Method

DeFranzo (2011) mentioned that, quantitative research is used to identify the problem through generating data that can be transformed into applicable statistics. It is used to identify behaviours, opinions and attitudes. There are some different quantitative data collection method such as, the different types of surveys, including paper, phone and online surveys, formal observations and different types of interviews including face to face and telephone interviews

The researcher used the mixed approach in order to get more trustworthy data that help him achieve his goal behind the case study. He used the qualitative method as he interviewed some teachers, students and parents. He also used the group discussion method in order to save his time

The researcher also sent an electronic survey to all the teaching staff in order to get a clear idea about the role that the school principal has played in improving teaching and learning, students' achievements and the school performance at all levels.

3.7.3 Advantages of the Mixed Approach

- Using the mixed approach of research enables the researcher to tackle a wider and a more complete range of research questions. Also, the researcher has the ability to use the strength of one research method in order to address the weakness of the other method, as he or she makes a kind of integration between the two methods. Moreover, applying the mixed method enables the researcher to add insights and methods that may be neglected when using one single method only. One of the most important traits of applying the mixed approach which is an integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods is that, it allows the researcher to produce more complete knowledge that is needful for informing theory and practice (UK, 2017).

Triangulation is the process of mixing methods so that varied viewpoints highlight the topic. It aims at widening and deepening the researcher's understanding of the various aspects of the phenomenon (Olsen, 2019).

3.7.4 Disadvantages of the Mixed Approach

Mixed method research has some disadvantages. It is a time consuming as planning and implementation takes more time and resources. Moreover, it is always difficult to plan and implement one method by relying on the findings of another method (Denis, 2017).

In this case study the researcher decided to use the mixed method as; he will seek a lot of information from different data sources such as, surveys and interviews. Of course, using the mixed method will be helpful in interpreting and assessing the findings.

3.8 The Setting and the Sample of the Study

3.8.1 Research Setting

This research was conducted in a Ministry of Education (MoE) private school in Abu Dhabi. The school is located in the heart of Abu Dhabi Island. It is a big school with about 1900 students. All students are Arabs from different nationalities, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Iraq and Tunisia. It has about 110 teachers, 11 subject coordinators, two vice principals, one educational supervisor and six administrative staff. All of them are Arabs; the big majority of them are from Egypt and Syria, while there some from Jordan and Palestine.

The school is applying the ministry of education curriculum. The school is from KG- 12. In the last inspection done by Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) the school performance in all standards has been graded good.

3.8.2 Research Sampling

Sample is the subset of population. Sampling is very important for determining the accuracy of the results of the research as, if there is anything goes wrong with the sample, this will reflect on the final result (Singh, 2018).

Participants

The researcher sampled out 70 teachers to take part in this study. The participants are from different subject areas, different nationalities, different ages and different cultures and backgrounds. They teach from KG1 up to grade 12. A standardized survey was sent to all teachers. In addition, there will be face to face interviews with some parents, students and teachers. Moreover, there will be a structured interview with the school principal to talk about the challenges that he faces since he came to the school and how he managed to overcome all these challenges and pushes the school forward in order to achieve its goals.

3.9 Instrumentation

The researcher in this research adopted the mixed method, so he used the qualitative and quantitative methods in order to investigate the role that the school principal plays in order to make his school successful at all levels. The researcher has designed the research instruments based on the independent and dependent variables.

A variable is any factor that can be measured, controlled or changed in an experiment. The independent variable is the one that the researcher controls, for example, when we measure the impact of temperature on solubility, temperature is the independent variable. While the dependent variable is the variable in response to the independent variable, for example when measuring the impact of temperature on solubility, the dependent variable is solubility. In other words if the independent variable changes the dependent variable is impacted (Helmenstine, 2018).

In this study, there are three independent variables and three dependent variables:

3.9.1 Independent Variables

- The improvement of teachers' performance that led to improvement in teaching and learning
- The improvement of students' achievements
- The improvement of teachers' professional development

3.9.2 Dependent Variables

- The effective role of the school principal
- The principal faces a lot of daily challenges
- The leadership style

3.9.3 Structured Interviews

A structured interview is a kind of interviews in which the questions are predetermined. It also known as standardized, patterned, planned and formal interview (Martic, 2018). According to Surbhi (2017), a structured interview is a kind of personal interview, in which the interviewer prepare the questions in advance and is used in descriptive research to collect data as it is comparatively commercial and conclusions can be gotten easily.

- School principal interview

The researcher used the structured interviews as a qualitative instrument in this study. The interview has been conducted with the school principal. The main aim of the interview is to gather information about his roles and responsibilities, the challenges he faces and his contribution in improving the quality of teaching and learning, teachers' performance, students' achievements and the whole school at all levels.

The researcher booked a meeting with the school principal who was very welcoming, helpful and enthusiastic to participate in the study. The researcher prepared the questions in advance. The researcher designed his interviews questions based on the main areas of the school principal's roles and responsibilities, such as improving students' achievements, improving teachers' performance, daily challenges that he faces, teachers' professional development and the principal's leadership style.

A copy of the interviews questions and answers is attached to the research appendix

- The first area is about improving students' achievements. Of course, improving students' performance and both attainment and progress depends on some factors. It has a direct relation with teachers'

performance and professional growth. Moreover, it is considered the first main responsibility of the school principal, start from hiring good qualified teachers who have excellent subject knowledge, providing professional training for them to evaluating their classroom performance regularly. In addition to this, it is the school principal's responsibility to provide all the required teaching and learning resources that facilitate students' learning. Therefore, the principal have to do all these tasks in order to ensure that students are receiving high quality education and parents are satisfied with the school performance. Question one supports this area. This question represents the second independent variable (the improvement of students' achievement)

- The second area is improving teachers' performance. Teachers are considered the most important component of the education process. If they provide good teaching, this will impact students' learning positively. It is the responsibility of the school principal to provide continuous professional development to all teachers. It could be internal professional training program done by the school principal himself or the subject leaders or the school can send teachers for external professional training. Definitely, the school principal has to conduct lesson observations and learning walks in order to measure the impact of the professional training on teachers' classroom practice and provide teachers with constructive feedback that shows their strength as well as the areas for improvement. It is also one of the school principal responsibilities is to establish professional learning communities that provide opportunities for teachers to share the best practices which help improve teachers' performance. Question two illustrates the first independent variable (The improvement of teachers' performance that led to improvement in teaching and learning)

- The third area is the challenges that face the principal. The school principal first responsibility is to ensure that teachers' are doing their jobs effectively and students are receiving the best education. The principal faces a lot of challenges related to the anti change teachers who insist on using the old fashioned techniques of teaching. In addition to this, one of the challenges that face the principal is that, some students in the lower grades have literacy problems, as they have problems with reading and writing in both Arabic and English. Therefore it is a joint responsibility between the principal and his teachers. Question three shows the second dependent variable. (The principal faces a lot of daily challenges)

- The fourth area is the continuous teachers' professional development. It is really important for the school principal to ensure that all teachers have the capacity to teach students of the 21st century. Therefore, the continuous professional training is a must for all teachers. It provides good opportunities for all teachers to improve their classroom practice and share best practices with their colleagues. Question four illustrates the first independent variable. (Improving teachers' professional development)

- The fifth area is the leadership style that the school principal uses. He uses a mix of the democratic and distributed leadership. Regarding the professional behaviour, the school principal should be a role model for his people in order to be able to achieve the desired goals of the school together. Question five shows the second dependent variable. (Leadership style)

3.9.4 Unstructured Interviews

In the unstructured interviews the questions arise spontaneously and not predetermined in advance. It is known as informal, free- flowing and casual interviews which allow candidates to feel relax and more comfortable during the interview (Martic, 2018).

Structured interview is called the discovery interview a guided conversation. The interviewer asks open-ended questions that allow the respondent to talk deeply and that helps the interviewer collect qualitative data. It is flexible and can be adopted according to the interviewee's answers. It also gives the interviewer the opportunity to explore for more understanding and clarification (McLeod, 2014).

The researcher used the unstructured interviews a qualitative method of data collection. He interviewed some parents at school fortuitously. He also interviewed some students from different grade levels during the break times. The researcher interviewed four parents. All questions were about their satisfaction about the school as a whole, especially their children's' performance and achievements, teachers' performance and the support they receive from the school leadership team in particular the school principal. Parents were very helpful and talked freely expressing their opinions about the above areas. Similarly, the researcher interviewed five students and asked them about their attitudes and feelings towards the school. He also asked them about the types of academic, personal and social support they get from the school teachers and principal. They also were very helpful and talked about what they like most about school as well as providing some suggestions for the school leadership to carry out that will make them happier and more comfortable.

3.10 Teachers' Survey

The researcher used the survey as a main instrument in collecting quantitative data. He has designed his survey and sent it via email; he also gave each one of the selected participants a hard copy. For more confidentiality and to make them feel free and safe in expressing their own opinions about the school principal the researcher asked them not to write their names.

When the researcher informed the selected teachers, all of them were happy, helpful and enthusiastic to participate in the survey.

The main aim of this survey is to prove the hypotheses and answer the research questions that have been created by the researcher in chapter one. Therefore, the survey statements have been created to cover all the hypotheses.

The survey consists of ten statements that try to investigate the role of the school principal in improving the school at all levels especially teaching and learning and students' achievements. It also tries to explore the leadership styles that the school principal is implementing in his school and the impact they have on the school staff.

The researcher created the survey using Likert scale which is a five to seven point ordinal scale. Participants will use it to rank the quality from high to low. It is an ideal tool for helping participants answers complex questions (Liedke, 2019).

Statements one and two are linked to question one which is about the principal's influence on improving teaching and learning. The researcher wanted to collect information about the type of support that teachers receive regarding the improving their performance. For example, the type of feedback they get from the principal that shows them ways to improve their classroom practices, as well as the professional development that the school offers to teachers which considered vital for their professional growth and impacts students learning effectively. Definitely, the main responsibility of the school principal is to ensure that students are receiving effective teaching that helps them learn effectively.

Statements three and four are linked to hypothesis two which investigate the role of the school principal in motivating, inspiring and supporting his teachers in participating in achieving the school vision. The researchers wanted to collect information about if the school principal has a clear vision for school development and whether he communicated it with the school community, as well as providing them with real opportunities to be a part of the vision and participate in achieving it. He also wanted to gather information about the space of freedom that teachers get to participate in decision making process.

Statements five and six are linked to hypothesis number one which is about the effective role that the school principal can do to improve students' achievements. The researcher wanted to collect information about how the school principal ensures that students' attainment and progress is improving over time. Having a system in place to track students' achievements on regular basis is really crucial for both teachers and students. It is also important for the school principal to ensure that all teaching and learning sources and facilities are in place and used by both teachers and students to improve students' learning and achievements.

Statements seven and eight are linked to question three. The researcher wanted to gather information about the relationship between the school principal and his teachers and if it has an effective impact on the school performance as a whole especially students' achievements. It is really important for the school principal to behave in a very professional way as the school community keeps an eye on his behaviour.

Statements nine and ten are linked to hypothesis three and question two. The researcher wanted to know the role of the school principal in handling all the problems and the daily challenges. The principal should be clever and courteous in dealing with parents, teachers and even students, as they come from different societies and different cultures. One of the school principal major responsibilities is to build leadership

skills in his people by delegating some tasks to them and give them opportunities to take lead in school processes, policies and other events.

3.11 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for evaluating or reviewing documents. It takes a variety of forms. It is less time consuming and less costly than the other data collection methods (Bowen, 2009).

One of the effective tools that the researcher used in this study is the school document analysis. The researcher analyzed the following documents:

- *Students' achievement data*: he wanted to ensure that the school leadership team led by the school principal analyze students' data regularly in order to know if they are making progress over time or not.
- *Teachers' appraisal*: he wanted to ensure that the school principal established a system to evaluate teachers, setting targets for every individual teacher to improve his or her classroom performance and providing them with constructive feedback on how to improve.
- *Students' portfolios*: he wanted to ensure that students are making academic progress through the feedback they get from their teachers
- *Teachers' portfolios*: he wanted to ensure that teachers are tracking students' achievement over time and share this with the school principal
- *ADEK Inspection Report*: he wanted to know the school strengths and areas for improvement.
- *School Improvement Plan (SIP)*: he wanted to ensure that the school improvement plan addresses all the areas for improvement that have been identified in the inspection report.
- *School policies*: he wanted to know that school policies have been reviewed and adapted in line with the SIP priorities
- *Personal Development Plan (PDP) of the principal*: he wanted to ensure that the principal reflects on his performance and identify areas for personal development.

3.12 Research Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are the key indicators of the quality of a measuring instrument (Kimberlin and Winterstein, 2008).

Validity:

Validity indicates the extent to which the research instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. There are three kinds of validity which are, content validity, criterion validity and construct validity (Surbhi, 2017).

The researcher used the mixed method (qualitative and quantitative). The qualitative part in this study is valid for some reasons:

- 1- The research questions address the issues that affect Abu Dhabi Schools. The effective role of the school principal in improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements has a big attention and focus from the UAE ministry of education and ADEK.
- 2 - The research questions are taken from the research hypotheses which aim to prove or disprove them.

The quantitative part in this study is valid as the survey was developed according to the current status of the educational reform in the UAE and the researcher experience in the UAE schools and it will prove the research hypotheses.

- Reliability

Reliability means the extent to which the measurement tool gives the consistent results even if the measurement is repeated. There are three kinds of reliability, which are test- re- test reliability, internal consistency method and alternative forms .To evaluate these reliability approaches, two factors should be indicated separately which are stability that can be evaluated by comparing results of repeated measurements and equivalence that can be measured when comparing the observations of the same event by two different researchers (Surbhi, 2017).

The researcher used the mixed method (qualitative and quantitative). The qualitative part in this study which is the principal's interview is reliable because:

- 1- The interview questions are very clear and have been designed according to the roles and responsibilities of school principal.
- 2- It is one-to-one interview that help avoid any types of misunderstanding to the concept of the Statements

The quantitative part in this study is reliable as the pilot group was selected from currently UAE School working teachers.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

According to Bryman and Bell (2007), ethical considerations can be defined as one of the most important parts of the research and even dissertation may fail if it is missing. They also identified the most significant principles linked with the ethical considerations in dissertations:

- Participants should be highly respected and ensure that they will not face any form of harm
- The researcher should get the participants' consent before participating in the study
- Research data should be confidential
- Participants' privacy should be ensured
- All kinds of communication regarding the research should be happened with transparency
- Misleading data should be avoided

As a researcher the first step I took was that I booked a meeting with the school principal and I gave him an idea about my study and I asked him if he wants me to bring an official consent letter from BUID, but he said no need for the letter. He was really helpful and appreciated the study I'm doing. He permitted me to conduct interviews with different stakeholders and send the survey to teachers. I also talked to teacher and gave them an idea about the goal behind my study and I clarified to them that, they are free to participate or not.

I got permission from all participants to record their interviews

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter shows the methodology, instruments, framework and research design. The researcher will use the triangulation method for conformity and completeness purposes. This research is a combination of both descriptive and exploratory study. The researcher will send a survey by email to teachers. The survey covers all areas that the researcher wants to investigate. He also will interview the school principal and will ask him certain questions to investigate how he supports teachers, students and parents. The researcher will also interview some teachers, parents and students to know their opinion about the principal's performance.

Chapter Four: Results and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will display the qualitative and the quantitative data that has been collected from the teachers' survey, principal's interview and parents' interviews. The data will be analyzed to validate or reject the research hypotheses.

The researcher used tables and pie charts to display the teachers' responses that illustrate their viewpoints regarding the school principal performance.

The researcher used Google forms in order to create the survey. The survey was sent to teachers via emails which made the process easier and quicker. In addition to this, the researcher interviewed the school principal discussing all roles, responsibilities and challenges that face him.

In this chapter the researcher displayed the demographic data about the survey participants as well as the parents who participated in the interviews. He also displayed the teachers' responses to the survey using the quantitative terms to interpret these responses. He also used tables and pie charts to help illustrate teachers' responses which helped in the data analysis process.

The researcher used the triangulation method in data collection process. He sent a survey to teachers in order to collect quantitative data. He also conducted structured interview with the school principal as well as some unstructured interviews with some parents and some students in order to collect some qualitative data.

4.2 Quantitative Data Results

Demographic Data

Demographic data is a collection and analysis of the general traits of a certain group of people. In other words, it is the study of population based on some factors such as, race, age and gender. It is used by government and nongovernment organizations to find out more about the characteristics of a certain population as; this is useful for policy development and business in marketing process (Chappelow, 2019).

Here is some demographic data about the teachers who participated in the survey

Table 4.1: Teachers' Data

Teachers' Data	
Age	Between 26 and 55 years
Nationalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different Arab Nationalities (22 Egyptian, 8 Jordanian, 13 Palestinian, 9 Syrian, 3 Iraqi)
Years of Experience	Teaching experience ranges between 4 up to 20 years 16 teachers have 4 years teaching experience, 9 teachers have 10 years teaching experience, 17 teachers have 12 years teaching experience, 13 teachers have more than 15 years teaching experience
Number of teachers participant	55 teachers from all subject areas, all from the same school

Source: Author

There are 110 teachers in the school. The survey was sent to seventy of them via email. Fifty five teachers completed the survey and sent it back to the researcher. In the following table the researcher will illustrate the quantitative terminology he used in order to analyze teachers' responses.

Table 4. 2: Quantitative Terms Interpretation

Terms	Interpretation
Almost All	Greater than 90%
Most	from 75% to 90%
Large Majority	From 61% to 74%
Majority	From 50% to 60%
Large Minority	From 31% to 49%
Minority	From 16% to 30%
Few	Up to 15%

Source: Author

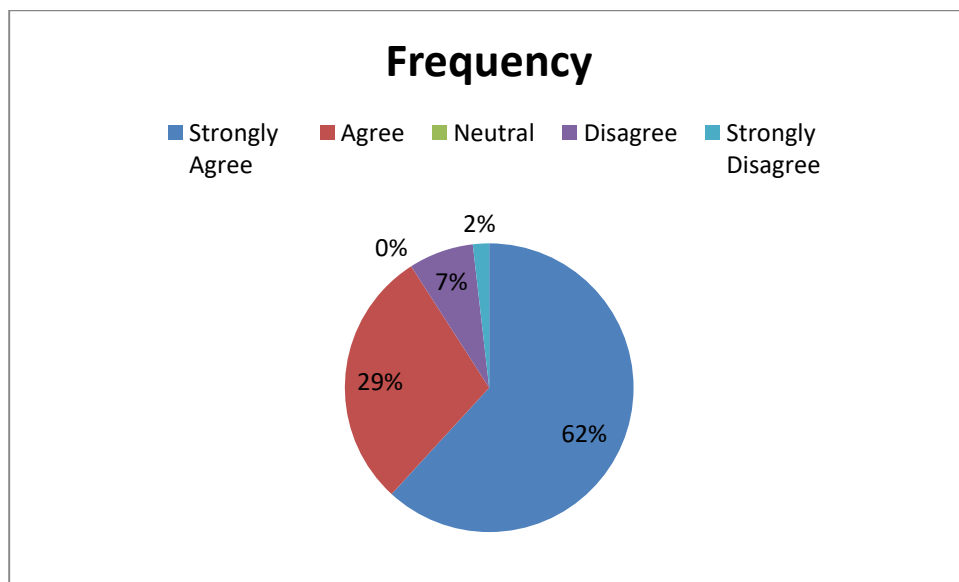
**Table 4.3: Teachers' Responses-
Statement 1** The school principal provides you with constructive feedback about your classroom performance

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	34	61.818182
Agree	16	29.090909
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	4	7.2727273
Strongly Disagree	1	1.8181818
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie Chart 4.1: Teachers’ Responses Statement 1

The school principal provides you with constructive feedback about your classroom performance



Source: Author

The first Statement of the survey shows that large majority of teachers strongly agree that the school principal provides them with constructive feedback about their classroom performance, while minority of them agrees and only few teachers disagree. This illustrates that the principal gives immediate, regular and constructive feedback to teachers on how to improve their performance.

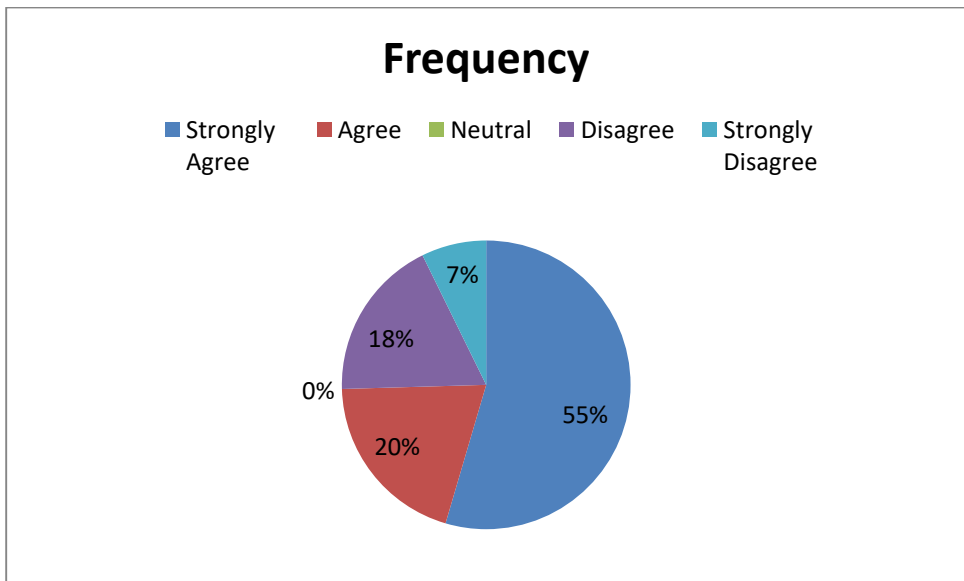
**Table 4.4: Teachers' Responses-
Statement 2** The school principal
is keen on your professional
development

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	30	54.545455
Agree	11	20
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	10	18.181818
Strongly Disagree	4	7.2727273
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.2: Teachers’ Responses - Statement 2

The school principal is keen on your professional development



Source: Author

The teachers' responses to Statement 2 show that the majority of teachers strongly agree that the principal is keen on their professional development, while minority of teachers agree and disagree. Therefore, most

teachers confirm the role of the principal in offering teachers with opportunities for professional development.

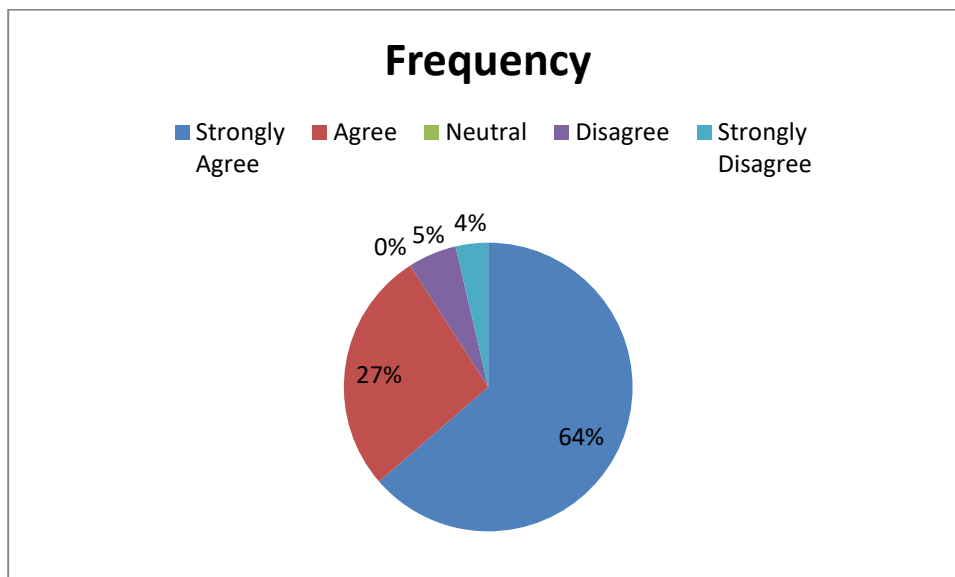
**Table 4.5: Teachers' Responses-
Statement 3** The school principal motivates you and gives you an opportunity to participate in decision making

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	35	63.636364
Agree	15	27.272727
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	3	5.4545455
Strongly Disagree	2	3.6363636
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.3: Teachers' Responses - Statement 3

The school principal motivates you and gives you an opportunity to participate in decision making



Source: Author

The teachers' responses to the third statement show the principal's leadership style which gives all people opportunities to take part in decision making, as all most all participants range between agree and strongly agree, while few of them disagree.

Table 4.6: Teachers' Responses

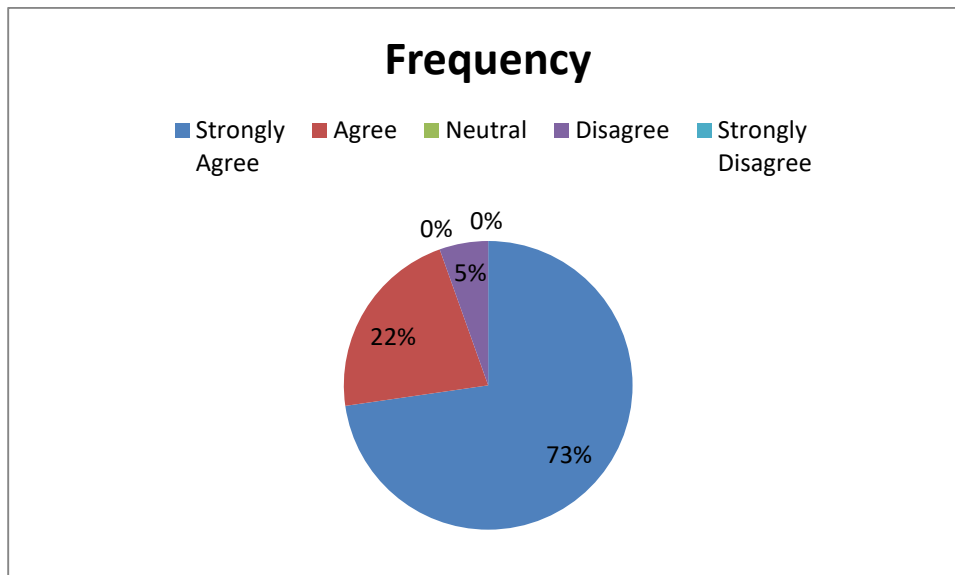
– **Statement 4:** The school principal has a clear vision for school development and shares it with everybody in school

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	40	72.727273
Agree	12	21.818182
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	3	5.4545455
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.4: Teachers' Responses - Statement 4

The school principal has a clear vision for school development and shares it with everybody in school



Source: Author

The teachers' responses to statement 4 prove that the principal has a clear vision and he communicates it with teachers to be a part of it, and that is one of the main characteristics of the effective principal. The figures show that almost all teachers range between agrees and strongly agrees.

Table 4.7: Teachers' Responses

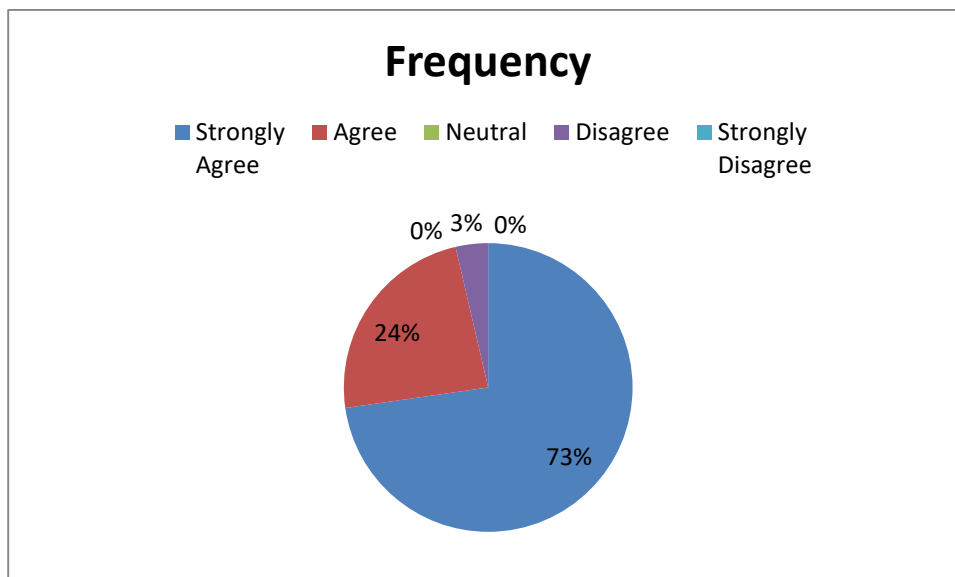
–**Statement 5:** The school principal tracks students' progress over time

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	40	72.727273
Agree	13	23.636364
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	2	3.6363636
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.5: Teachers' Responses - Statement 5

The school principal tracks students' progress over time



Source: Author

The fifth statement refers to the main purpose of the study which is the principal's role in improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements. One of the most important things he should do is to track students' progress over time. The teachers' responses show that almost all teachers range between agrees and strongly agrees that the principal track students' progress.

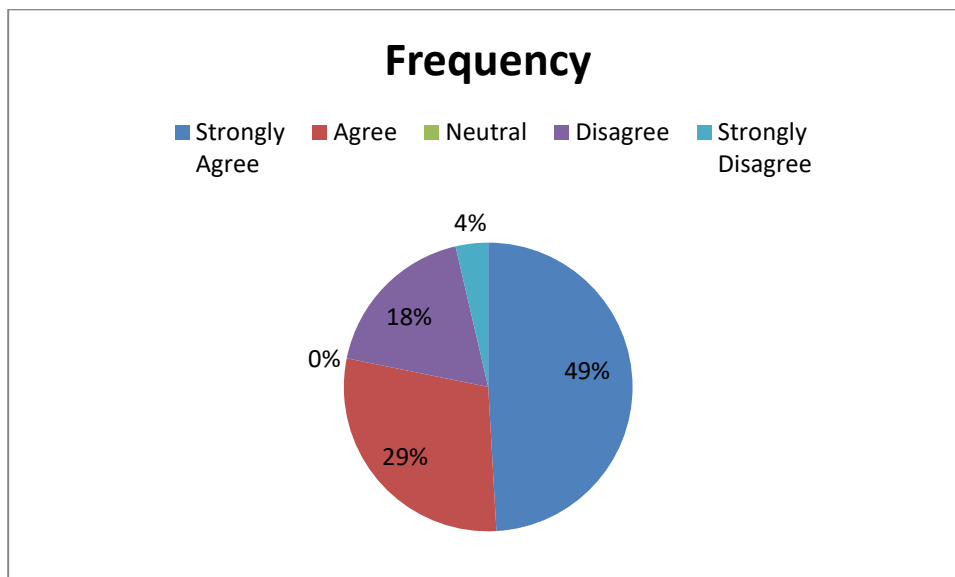
Table 4.8: Teachers' Responses - Statement 6: The school principal is supportive and provides all teaching and learning resources required for students' learning

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	27	49.090909
Agree	16	29.090909
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	10	18.181818
Strongly Disagree	2	3.6363636
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.6: Teachers' Responses - Statement 6

The school principal is supportive and provides all teaching and learning resources required for students' learning



The sixth statement shows that most teachers range between agree and strongly agree regarding the principals' role in providing all teaching and learning resources to both teachers and students. Minority of teachers range between disagrees and strongly disagrees.

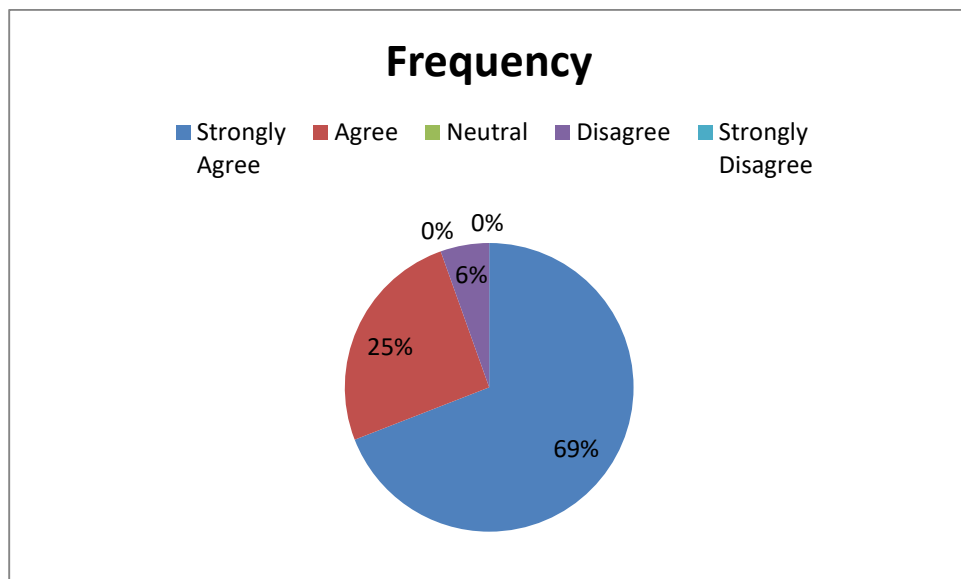
Table 4.9: Teachers' Responses - Statement 7: The school principal provides opportunities for you to take lead in some school events and processes

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	38	69.090909
Agree	14	25.454545
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	3	5.454545
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.7: Teachers' responses - Statement 7

The school principal provides opportunities for you to take lead in some school events and processes



Source: Author

The seventh statement is about the distributed leadership and how the principal builds leadership capacity in his people. Large majority of teacher strongly agree that the principal gives them opportunities to take lead in school process and events and minority agree while few teachers disagree.

Table 4.10: Teachers' Responses

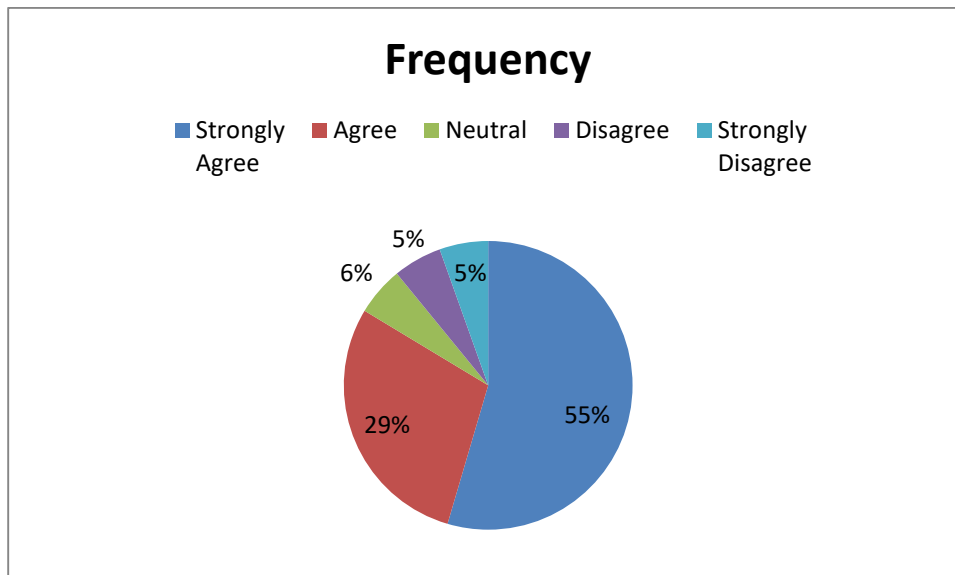
- **Statement 8:** The school principal manages all school processes and addresses all challenges on time

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	30	54.545455
Agree	16	29.090909
Neutral	3	5.454545
Disagree	3	5.454545
Strongly Disagree	3	5.454545
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.8: Teachers' responses - Statement 8

The school principal manages all school processes and addresses all challenges on time



Source: Author

The eighth statement is about the principal's role in managing the daily school processes and address challenges. Teachers' responses show that most teachers range between agrees and strongly agrees that the principal manages and addresses the challenges effectively.

Table 4.11: Teachers' Responses

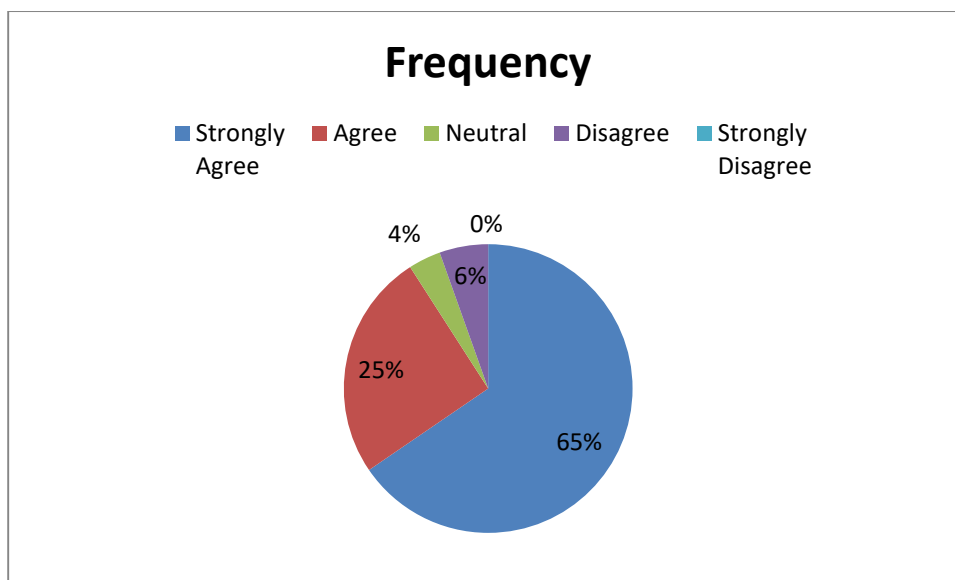
- **Statement 9:** The school principal is a good role model for school community to emulate

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	36	65.454545
Agree	14	25.454545
Neutral	2	3.636363
Disagree	3	5.454545
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.9: Teachers' responses - Statement 9

The school principal is a good role model for school community to emulate



Source: Author

The ninth statement is about the principal professional behaviour and if teachers see him as a good role model or not. 90% percent of teachers which represents most of teachers range between agree and strongly agree that the principal is a good role model for the school community to emulate.

Table 4.12: Teachers' Responses

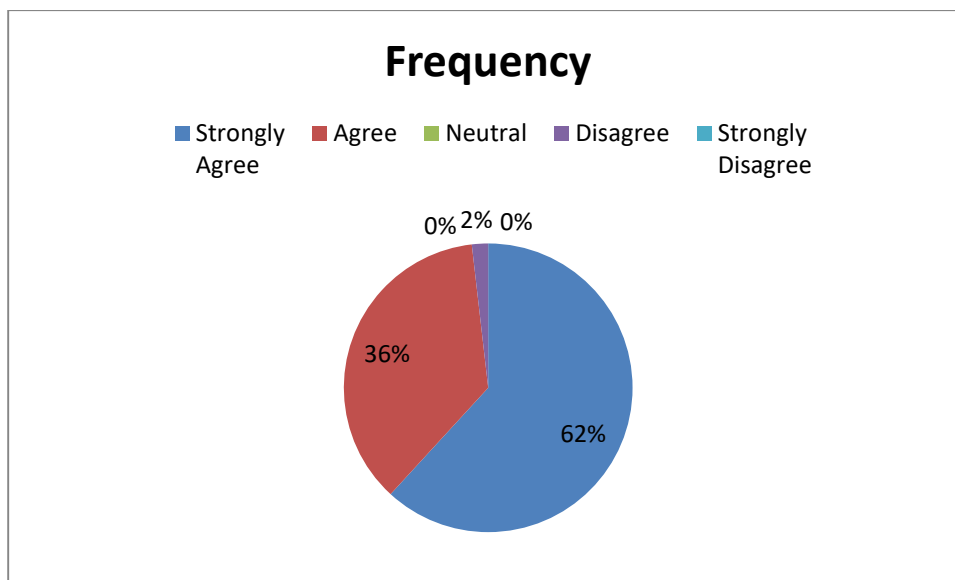
-Statement 10: The school principal managed to build first class work relationships that help teachers improve

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	34	61.818182
Agree	20	36.363636
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	1	1.8181818
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.10: Teachers' Responses - Statement 10

The school principal managed to build first class work relationships that help teachers improve



Source: Author

The tenth statement is also about the leadership style that the principal uses with his teachers. The data shows that almost all teachers range between strongly agree and agree that the principal established excellent work relationships with teachers. Definitely, these positive relationships had effective impact on the work atmosphere where teachers did their best to improve.

4.3 Quantitative Data Analysis

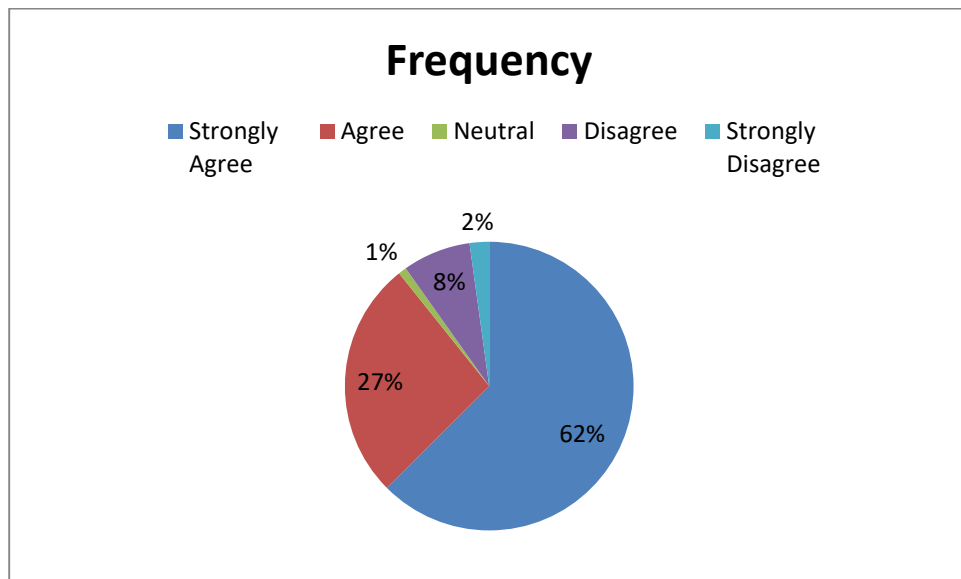
As mentioned above in chapter four (4.2), the researcher sent the survey to seventy teachers via email. Fifty five of them completed the survey and sent it back to the researcher. The below table and pie chart shows the total number of responses ranked from high quality to low quality according to Likert scale

Table 4.13: Total Teachers' Responses

Valid	Frequency	Percent %
Strongly Agree	344	62.545455
Agree	147	26.727273
Neutral	5	0.9090909
Disagree	42	7.6363636
Strongly Disagree	12	2.1818182
Total	550	100

Source: Author

Pie chart 4.11: Total Teachers' Responses



Source: Author

- The quantitative data shows that

- large majority of teachers strongly agree with the survey statements
- Minority of teachers agree with the survey statements
- Few teachers range between neutral disagree and strongly disagree

From the data analysis we can see that, most teachers range between strongly agree and agree, while few of them range between neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Definitely this reflects the level of teachers' satisfaction about the principal's leadership style, role in improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements, philosophy in addressing challenges and leading people and the whole school.

4.4 Qualitative Data

The researcher conducted some unstructured interviews with four parents. The questions were designed to measure the level of their satisfaction regarding their children academic achievements, the type of support their children receive from the senior leadership team, how the school principal meet their needs and the type of feedback they get from school about their children academic progress, personal and social development and behaviour.

Demographic Data:

Table: 14 Parents' Data

Parents Data	
Number of Parents	4
Gender	3 male & 1 female
Nationality	Egypt, Jordan, Palestine
Age	Between 35 and 50
Occupation	1 dentist, 2 accountants , 1 Lawyer

The researcher also interviewed some students from different grade levels in order to know their opinion about the school principal, if he meets their needs or not, and if they feel comfortable at school or not and why.

The qualitative data shows that:

- Most teachers said that the principal is very supportive and keen on their professional development. One teacher said that “the thing I like most about our principal is that he always encourages and motivates us to improve our classroom performance and provide effective feedback to us”
- “The principal key focus is students’ achievements and sees this as the main task for both school leadership and teaching staff” said by one of the teachers.
- One teacher said that “I think the most important thing is that our principal has a good vision for the school and he gives everybody some responsibilities”

4.5 Summary of the Findings (Quantitative, Qualitative)

After the data analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher found that the data achieve the main aim of the research which is investigating the role of the school principal in improving the whole school especially teaching and learning and students’ achievement. This data also answered the research questions and showed that the school principals’ has a great influence on the quality of teaching and learning and students achievement. It also illustrated the relationship between the effectiveness of the school principal and teachers’ performance and students’ achievement as well. Furthermore, it showed the key roles and responsibilities of the school principal and how he faces and handles challenges.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher displayed the collected data and the findings of the analyzed data. He proved the research hypotheses and answered the research questions which helped him to achieve the main aim of the research which is to investigate the impact that the principal of the researched school has on improving the quality of teaching and learning and students’ achievement.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher displayed the key findings of the researcher that are aligned with the main aim of the research which is to investigate the impact of the school principal on improving the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievement. . He also illustrated the limitations that faced him while doing the research. He also provided some recommendations for further studies as well as some implications of the research findings to policy makers and school principals.

5.2 Key Findings

After the data analysis processes, the researcher came up with some key findings as follows:

- 1- The effective leadership represented in the school principal is the key element for the school success at all levels.
- 2- The school principal's key job is to ensure that students are receiving high quality education and they are making progress over time
- 3- There is a direct link between teachers' continuous professional development and good quality teaching and learning.
- 4- The principal faces many challenges related to students' learning, teachers' performance, parents' satisfaction and he has to deal with all these challenges at once in order to make all stakeholders happy and satisfied.
- 4- There are some issues that the school principal has no control on. For example the allocated budget for buying teaching and learning resources or the budget for continuous professional training, the principal has to adhere to the allocated budget and achieve the goals of the school without any decrease in the quality.
- 5- Students' achievements and parents' level of satisfaction are the real key indicators for the school performance.
- 6- There is a direct correlation between the principal's professional behaviour and teachers' behaviour.
- 7- The principal's vision is the light that shows everyone in the school the right way he or she should follow in order to achieve the school vision and goals.
- 8- The school principal has a direct influence on teachers' performance and students' achievement.

9- Leadership qualifications, experience and approach affect the principal's effectiveness.

5.3 Limitations

There are some limitations in this study as follows:

- 1- The sample that participated in the survey is fifty five out of the seventy that received the survey, while the total number of teachers is 110 which is considered 50% of the whole staff
- 2- The sample that participated in the unstructured interviews is very few as the researcher has a limited chance to meet only four parents
- 3- The study has been done in only one private school in Abu Dhabi, so that the proved hypotheses could not be generalized to all UAE schools.
- 4- The study has been conducted in few months which mean that the study variables could be changed during the school year.
- 5- The study concentrated on only one of the main roles of the school principal which is the principal's role in improving the quality of teaching and learning.

5.4 Implication to Policy and Practice

It is really important for policy makers who are responsible for writing the professional standards for school principals to ensure that the main responsibility is to secure high quality teaching and learning. It is also significant to provide professional training to school principals on the professional standards and this training should be done by policy makers. It is also important for principals to self reflect on their practice on regular basis in order to discover the areas of leadership they need to improve.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

The researcher suggested some recommendations as follows:

- 1- It is important to do parallel studies in more schools all over the UEA with wider samples, as this help collect more reliable and accurate data.

2- Further studies should be conducted within a longer time frame that enables the researcher to measure all factors that affect the effectiveness of the school principal throughout the school year.

3- Further studies should be done on all educational leadership areas not only one specific area.

5.6 Conclusion

Successful school requires successful leadership; therefore the school principal plays the most effective role in school success. He is the one who inspires, encourages and motivates everybody in school. He establishes a professional work atmosphere that helps everyone use his full potentials in order to help achieve the vision of the school. He acts as role model for both teachers and students.

Every principal has his own leadership style; however it is really important for the school principal to provide opportunities for teachers to have a voice at school. They should be involved in school process and decision making, as the principal is required to cultivate leadership in them.

The school principal is fully responsible for students' achievements, as he should ensure that they receive high quality education in line with the 21st century skills. He is also responsible for improving teachers' performance through offering continuous professional development, lesson observations and constructive feedback that shows teachers their strengths and areas for improvement.

The researcher discovered that the school principal faces a lot of challenges regarding students' achievement, teachers' performance, parents' satisfaction and shortage in teaching and learning resources. The principal has to address all these challenges. In this study the principal combines two leadership styles together as he uses the democratic and distributed leadership and shifts between them according to the situation.

To answer the research questions the researcher used the triangulation method (qualitative and quantitative). He interviewed the school principal in order to investigate his roles and responsibilities. A survey has been sent to teachers in order to know their opinions about the principal performance at all levels. In addition to this, unstructured interviews with some parents and some students were done in order to measure the level of their satisfaction about the principal and the school, as a whole.

In conclusion, the researcher found that the school principal has a direct influence on students' academic, personal and social development. He also has a direct influence on teachers' performance and motivation. Finally, the recommendations show that, it is really important to do the same study in a big number of schools in the UAE in order to get more reliable and more accurate data.

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Appendices

Appendix A

الجامعة
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دبي



The
British University
in Dubai

Teachers' Survey

no	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The school principal provides you with constructive feedback about your classroom performance يقدم لك مدير المدرسة تغذية راجعة بناءة عن أدائك الصفّي					
2	The school principal is keen on your professional development مدير المدرسة حريص على التطوير المهني الخاص بك					
3	The school principal motivates you and gives you an opportunity to participate in decision making يقوم المدير بتحفيزك ويمنحك فرصة للمشاركة في عملية صنع القرار					
4	The school principal has a clear vision for school development and shares it with everybody in school لدى مدير المدرسة رؤية واضحة لتطوير المدرسة ويشاركها مع الجميع بالمدرسة					
5	The school principal tracks students' progress over time يقوم مدير المدرسة بتتبع تقدم الطلبة بمرور الوقت					

6	<p>The school principal is supportive and provides all teaching and learning resources required for students learning</p> <p>مدير المدرسة داعم ويوفر جميع مصادر التعليم والتعلم اللازمة لتعلم الطلبة</p>					
7	<p>The school principal provides opportunities for you to take lead in some school events and processes</p> <p>يُتيح لك مدير المدرسة الفرص للقيام ببعض الأدوار القيادية في المناسبات والعمليات المدرسية</p>					
8	<p>The school principal manages all school processes and addresses all challenges on time</p> <p>يقوم مدير المدرسة بإدارة جميع العمليات المدرسية ويعالج جميع التحديات في الوقت المحدد</p>					
9	<p>The school principal is a good role model for school community to emulate</p> <p>يعد مدير المدرسة نموذجاً جيداً يحتذى به من قبل أفراد المجتمع المدرسي</p>					
10	<p>The school principal managed to build first class work relationships that help teachers improve</p> <p>نجح مدير المدرسة في بناء علاقات عمل من الدرجة الأولى تساعد المعلمين على التحسن</p>					

Appendix B



School principal interview:

Name: Mr. Nabil

Date: 2nd September 2019

Interviewer: Tamer Elaraby

Question 1: What do you do to raise students' achievement in all subject areas?

Response: It is my first responsibility to ensure that students' attainment and progress is good. I conduct lesson observations regularly. These observations give me a clear idea about the quality of teaching that students receive. I'm also keen on giving teachers immediate feedback about their practice showing them the area they need to improve. We also established an effective data analysis system to analyze students' data at the end of each term and this help us a leadership team to see the quality of students' achievement over time. I also do my best to provide effective teaching and learning resources in order to enhance students' learning.

Question 2: How often do you evaluate teachers' performance? And what actions do you take after the evaluation process?

Response: I conduct lessons observations for all teachers. Some of these observations I do them myself, while most of them are joint ones with subject coordinators. I attend two lesson observations for each teacher in each term. This observations followed by immediate constructive feedback to teachers to help them improve their performance. Evaluating teachers' performance help me identify the areas for development to be included in the professional training program.

Question 3: What are the challenges you face? And how do you address them?

Response: To be honest I face a number of challenges such as, underperforming students, anti change teachers, demanding parents and ADEK requirements. I do my best to handle all these challenges with the support from the senior leadership team and the middle leaders. For the underperforming students, we put them into a programme where they receive additional support outside the classroom beside the classroom support through differentiated learning. For the teachers who refuse to change their traditional way of teaching, the subject myself and subject

leaders help them through co-planning, lesson observations and feedback. I also try to meet parents' needs and keep them involved in their children learning. I also ensure that the school is meeting ADEK and the MoE requirements regarding the curriculum implementation, assessment ...etc.

Question 4: What type of support do you offer to your teachers regarding their professional development?

Response: Since I came to the school in 2014, teachers' professional development was and still is one of my big focus areas. I established a good system for this in line with Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) requirements. All teachers should receive 30 hours professional training throughout the academic year. The training program is designed according to the self evaluation, recommendation of the last inspection report, lesson observations and daily learning walks. I'm also keen on providing teachers with immediate constructive feedback on how to improve their classroom practice. We also managed to build professional learning communities across the whole subject areas in order to share the best practices among the different departments.

Question 5: What is the leadership style do you apply in your school? What is the impact of your leadership style on teachers and students?

Response: I always try to involve everybody in the school processes and decision making. I believe in delegation of tasks as the best way to build leadership in your team members. I encourage everybody at school to have his own input to school. Since I joined the school, I was keen on establishing good and strong work relationships with everybody in school based on mutual understanding and respect. My office is open to everybody and I'm accessible for teachers, students and parents. I think this sort of democratic leadership is important and has an effective impact on the attitudes both teachers and students.

Principal's signature



Appendix C



Parents' interview (1)

Parent's Name: Fathi Hassan

Job: Accountant

Nationality: Egyptian

Age: 43

Son/Daughter name: Ahmed Fathi

Grade: 7

Class: 7C

Question 1: Do you feel welcome when you come to school?

Yes, all people in the school community are very helpful. It is easy for me as a parent to see the principal and talk to him about anything related to my son.

Question 2: Do you get regular feedback about the academic achievement of your son?

Yes, I come to the school regularly to meet my son's teachers who give me full feedback about his academic level and his behaviour as well. Also, parents meeting s are good chance to get overall feedback. The school also sends the report cards at the end of each trimester.

Question 3: As a parent what do you think of the school principal? Do you find him helpful to you and your son? How?

I think he is really a good principal. I can see many positive changes to the school environment, good systems in place and a plenty of learning resources.

Yes, he is very helpful to me for example; when he sees me in school he always welcomes me and offer to help me or directs me to the person who can help me. For my son, he loves the principal very much and says that the principal usually come to our classroom to encourage us to study well and promises to give us rewards.

Question 4: What about the communication between school and home? Does the school communicate with you regularly and effectively?

One of the really good things about school is the communication system they have in place. Before the start of the academic year the school sends us the calendar for the entire year. They also share all the school policies with us. Moreover the school principal is very keen talking to us about school vision and goals during parents meetings. Further to this, as I said before the school gives us regular feedback about the academic level and behaviour of my son

Question 5: Do you think that your son is making academic, social and personal progress in school?

Yes, at the beginning of the school year, the school principal said that the school will have a program for supporting low achievers as well as a program for expanding the skills of gifted students. I can see a range of extra curricula activities during the school day and I think it has good impact on students' personal and social skills.

Parent's signature

Fathi Hassan

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Parents' interview (2)

Parent's Name: Amani Mokhtar

Job: Dentist

Nationality: Egyptian

Age: 36

Student name: Moustafa

Grade: 4

Class: 4A

Question 1: Do you feel welcome when you come to school?

Yes, to be honest I love coming to the school and meet the teachers and the admin staff as they are very nice people and treat parents well

Question 2: Do you get regular feedback about the academic achievement of your son?

Yes, I usually contact the teachers of my son to get feedback about academic level. The school also sends me the report cards after the term exams. They really helpful , sometimes I have no time to come to school and get feedback about my son, so I contact the social worker who sends me a written report by all my son's teachers.

Question 3: As a parent what do you think of the school principal? Do you find him helpful to you and your son? How?

He is very welcoming and nice. He always tries to meet the needs of parents. Every year he adds new things to the school for example; there are two new science labs this year. He is also very keen on students' safety and academic progress. The principal is very helpful to all parents and students. I think all students love him as a father.

Question 4: What about the communication between school and home? Does the school communicate with you regularly and effectively?

I'm very satisfied with the communication system at school. It is very organized and if I have any problem, the school contacts me immediately to solve it. The school has a very interactive

website which helps me to track my sons' classroom assignments and homework. The school also shares the academic year calendar with us.

Question 5: Do you think that you son is making academic, social and personal progress in school?

Yes, because my son does not like math and finds it difficult, but last year his math teacher helped him a lot. Sometimes he gives him additional support in the break time. I think now he is making significant progress in Math. The school also involves students in all national events which are really good for building their personalities.

Parent's signature

Amani Mokhtar

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Parents' interview (3)

Parent's Name: Zuhair Ibrahim

Job: Lawyer

Nationality: Jordanian

Age: 48

Student name: Meera

Grade: 10

Class: 10 A

Question 1: Do you feel welcome when you come to school?

Of course, all people at school are nice and helpful especially the school principal that stands in front of the main gate every morning welcoming students and parents. Definitely, this creates a good atmosphere.

Question 2: Do you get regular feedback about the academic achievement of your son?

Yes, I come to school twice a day as; I drive my daughter to school and back to home. This gives me a good chance to meet her teachers and get feedback about her. The school also sends the report cards and it is easy for me ask about my daughter's behaviour at any time.

Question 3: As a parent what do you think of the school principal? Do you find him helpful to you and your son? How?

The school principal is very reachable to everybody which is really good as, in some school the principals put barrier between them and parents. His office is open to parents even to go and say hello and have a cup of coffee, of course this sort of relationships make you as a parent feel comfortable. Yes, he is very helpful to parents as he gives us all the information and guidance regarding our children's education. He involves us in all school events. He always talks to students during the assembly and breaks encouraging them to study hard. Finally, the principal save no money or effort to improve the school which is clear to everyone. He provides a lot of resources that facilitate students' learning

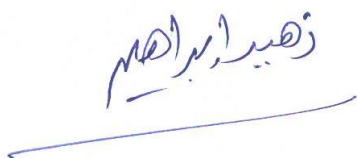
Question 4: What about the communication between school and home? Does the school communicate with you regularly and effectively?

As a parent the communication between school and me is a vital thing. I'm really happy and comfortable with the school communication system. You can find answers to all your questions in a short time. I get regular feedback about my daughter's academic achievement and behaviour.

Question 5: Do you think that you son is making academic, social and personal progress in school?

Yes, the thing I like most about the school is that, they have a lot of activities and events which give students opportunities to develop their social and personal skills. Regarding the academic progress, My daughter is actually making progress across all subject areas especially Physics and Math.

Parent's signature





Parents' interview (4)

Parent's Name: Mohamed Sabri

Job: Accountant

Nationality: Palestinian

Age: 40

Student name: Tariq

Grade: 9

Class: 9 C

Question 1: Do you feel welcome when you come to school?

Yes, the people at school are respectable and nice. The principal is really nice; he stands in front of the gate in the morning and shake hands with students and parents.

Question 2: Do you get regular feedback about the academic achievement of your son?

Yes, the school sends me the report cards of my son. It is also easy to talk to teachers and get feedback. Sometimes I call the social worker and ask him to send me a report about my son's behaviour and academic level and to be honest he is very helpful. I think the school principal is urging everybody at school to be helpful with parents.

Question 3: As a parent what do you think of the school principal? Do you find him helpful to you and your son? How?

To be honest I like his way in dealing with parents. He is very reachable; his office is open all the time to parents. He is a good listener to parents. He involves us in all school events. He is keen on our satisfaction. Everyone can easily see that the school is moving forward over time. My son also loves the principal, he always says that the principal is very kind to students and always encourages them.

Question 4: What about the communication between school and home? Does the school communicate with you regularly and effectively?

I'm really satisfied with the communication system at school. They keep in touch with us all the time. They invite parents to all school events. They also send surveys to us to see if we are happy

or not and ask for our suggestions. If I have any problem regarding my son, they do their best to solve it.

Question 5: Do you think that you son is making academic, social and personal progress in school?

Sure, he is making progress at all levels. I can easily see this. He participated in school events. He loves to go to school and this is a good indicator for his progress.

Parent's signature

Mohamed S.