

**A Study on the Perceptions of Emirati Students on  
Teaching as a Possible Career Choice**

مهني كخيار التدريس عن الإماراتيين الطلاب انطباعات حول دراسة

محتمل

by

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of young Emirati high school and college students towards teaching as a career choice, and to reveal the changes that need to be done to the educational system in the UAE that could help in making teaching a more appealing career choice to these students. The problem addressed in this research paper is the lack of motivation among young Emirati students to join the field of teaching resulting in a severe shortage of nationals in this field. Mixed sequential methodology is used in this research, with the quantitative stage at the beginning followed by the qualitative stage. It was concluded that the main reasons why teaching is not a preferred choice for young Emiratis are the low status of teachers in society and their difficult working conditions. Recommendations to all stakeholders involved in the educational system are provided at the end of this paper.

## ملخص

المتحدة العربية الإمارات في والكليات الثانوية المدارس طلاب انطباعات استكشاف هو الدراسة هذه من الغرض الإمارات دولة في التعليمي النظام على إجراؤها يجب التي التغييرات ومعرفة ، مهني كخيار التدريس عن تتناولها التي المشكلة .الطلاب لهؤلاء جاذبية أكثر مهنة التدريس جعل في تساعد أن يمكن والتي المتحدة العربية إلى أدى مما التدريس مجال إلى للانضمام الشباب الإماراتيين الطلاب لدى الحافز نقص هي البحثية الورقة هذه المرحلة مع ، البحث هذا في مختلطة متسلسلة منهجية استخدام يتم .المجال هذا في المواطنين في حاد نقص التعليم كون عدم وراء الرئيسية الأسباب أن إلى الدراسة خلصت وقد .النوعية المرحلة تليها البداية في الكمية تقديم تم .الصعبة عملهم وظروف المجتمع في المعلمين قيمة ضعف هو ، الإماراتي للشباب مفضلاً خياراً .الورقة هذه نهاية في التعليمي النظام في المشاركين المصلحة أصحاب لجميع اقتراحات

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. The Research Problem

The problem addressed in this research paper is the lack of motivation among young Emirati students to join the field of teaching. According to a report published by Dubai statistics center (2011), 52.8 % of the teaching force in the Government schools in Dubai in the academic year 2011-2012 are Emiratis while only 20.6% of the teaching force in the private sector in the same year are Emiratis (DUBAI STATISTICS CENTER 2011). Undergraduate disciplines in UAE universities that are directly related to education are not popular either. Of all the students from all the nationalities enrolled including Emiratis, only 2% joined Education field (KHDA 2014). In addition to that, there is a general atmosphere of dissatisfaction among current Emirati teachers. Members of the UAE's Federal National Council in one of its meeting sessions recently have expressed their concerns about the current status of Emirati teachers stating that many Emiratis are turning away from this profession because of the low salaries, demanding work requirements and modest retirement plans (Salama 2017). It was stated by one of the council members in this same session that the numbers of Emirati teachers that have resigned have doubled between the years of 2014 and 2015 alone due to work overload and lack of possible future growth opportunities (Salama 2017). Approximately 20 percent of Emirati teachers leaving the profession every year measured during the period of 2008 to 2012 and that all the efforts to attract more students into the profession seem to be unsuccessful (Sharif, Hossan & McMinn 2014). The educational system in the UAE has achieved tremendous growth in aspects related to expenditure on education, students enrollment in schools and universities, however a key challenge to this growth is the extreme shortage of qualified teachers with the UAE alone needing about 14000

teachers over the next five years (ALPEN CAPITAL 2016). ALPEN CAPITAL report (2016) also emphasizes that while this shortage of teachers is a global issue and is not limited to the GCC area, it is made worse here because the majority of teachers are expatriates and of transient nature coupled with the fact that citizens of GCC countries are not inclined to choose a career in education. Teaching profession has a distinct nature to it, in that continuity and growth in one's career is a must for the benefit of students in terms of on going assessment and curriculum development, a feature that will be severely affected with the temporary aspect of hiring expatriate teachers on temporary basis (Al Lawati 2014).

## **1.2. Significance of the Study**

There are practically no studies found in literature that tackled the root of this problem, which is the reasons behind the lack of motivation among young Emirati students to join the teaching force or even their perceptions about teaching as a career. Such claim may seem an exaggeration until one tries to find such studies in the databases of different available libraries. Therefore such study becomes a necessity as only when the reasons behind the problem are identified that we can begin to try and approach a solution to this problem.

The audience targeted in this study comprises of all stakeholders in the Emirati educational system in general, but more importantly are the educational policy makers in the UAE. Having a local work force in the educational sectors in the UAE is crucial to build a strong and sustainable educational system that can educate and prepare generations for the challenging times ahead, a goal that cannot be achieved by having expatriates that are hired on temporary basis comprise the majority of teachers, school administrators and curriculum developers. The findings of this paper will be used to

develop a set of recommendations to the educational policy makers, school administrations, and colleges offering educational degrees. These recommendations are based on the students responses about the aspects of the teaching career that prevent them from considering it as a career option, and what are the changes that need to happen to the educational system in the UAE that would encourage them to consider the teaching career.

### **1.3. The Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of young Emirati high school and college students towards teaching as a career choice, and to reveal the changes that need to be done to the educational system in the UAE that could help in making teaching a more appealing career choice to these students.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

The quantitative phase of this study, which is its first phase, hypothesizes that teaching as a career choice is not popular among Emirati youth due to the perceived difficult working conditions and the less appreciated social status the teacher holds in the Emirati society. The second phase, which is the qualitative phase, is centered on carrying out interviews with respondents based on their answers to the first phase. More clarifications are sought after in this phase through answering more in depth questions. To achieve this purpose, answers to the following questions from the point of view of young Emirati students are sought:

- What are the characteristics associated with a good teacher from the perspective of young Emirati students?

- How many of the sample population's teachers have shown these characteristics?
- Who are the people that affect and shape the opinion of the Emirati youth about their future career plans?
- How far are young Emirati students are planning to go in terms of their academic achievement and what are their most chosen majors of study?
- What aspects of the teaching career do students find attractive?
- What are the reasons that could keep young people in the UAE from choosing teaching as a career?
- What are the sources that students in the UAE are getting most of their information about teaching from?
- What possible changes to the UAE's educational system could possibly encourage more young people to join the teaching field?

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Never has there been a time such as the last few decades where preparing a generation of qualified and motivated teachers is more important. The decline in oil prices and the shift towards finding new income resources have emphasized the importance of the rising power of what is now called knowledge economy (Levine 2006). Countries are now gearing towards raising young children with the ability of critical thinking and creative problem solving. Children who will nurture to be independent individuals capable of fitting into a world full of new job titles that are not yet known. As a result, the need grows for those teachers who are not only qualified to teach their subjects and secure good scores in exams for students, but also who are passionate about their profession and are eager to raise generations of such capable students. The quality of the future we and the generations to come will live in will only be as good as education is right now.

### **2.1. Shortage of Quality Teachers; a Global Issue**

Severe shortage of qualified teachers is now a problem facing not only developing countries, but also countries that are developed and are considered international hubs when it comes to education, United States of America is an example with an estimated yearly teacher vacancies of over 200000 due to increasing numbers of teachers' retirement, and new students enrollment caused by immigration and population increase among other factors (Levine 2006) which forces schools to fill the gap with the necessary numbers of under qualified teachers (Ingersoll 2003). Ireland is facing a serious shortage of qualified teachers in spite of the considerable increase in the numbers of teachers over the last few decades which is not enough however to keep

up with the increasing number of student enrollments (Coolahan 2003) and similar problems are also facing the schools in various cities in Australia (Preston 2000).

In reality, teachers' shortage is not only caused by increasing number of students and teachers' retirement, but also due to teachers leaving the profession because of their lack of satisfaction with it and their pursuit of better paying and more comfortable careers (Ingersoll 2003). Even graduates of Education Colleges who are taught to become teachers don't always end up as teachers such as the case stated in Ingersoll's paper (2003) where only 42 percent of the year 1993 Education Colleges graduates in USA worked as teachers one year after they have graduated, which indicates that that the problem is not in the numbers of those who can be teachers, but rather in those who are willing to become teachers.

A teacher is more than just an individual who is responsible for delivering a set of objectives within a curriculum to students so that they can pass exams, but rather is an individual who is in close contact with students and thus takes a great part in shaping their opinions and how they view themselves in the future (Aral et al. 2009).

Education has shifted from focusing on the abilities and knowledge teachers must acquire into what abilities and knowledge students now a days must possess, hence the focus of the current educational systems and curricula on the learning outcomes and key learning indicators rather than the learning objectives (Levine 2006). However, and as a matter of fact, current teaching training is not yet equipped to prepare teachers that are qualified to achieve these objectives.

## **2.2. Motivation Behind Choosing Teaching as a Career**

Having students that are talented, creative and devoted to their profession choose teaching as a career, depends on their impressions of how valuable and attractive this career is to them (Balyer & Özcan 2014). To employ the smartest and finest, teaching career has to have a higher status profession and what adds to the social standing of teachers needs to be understood (Dolton & Marcenaro-Gutierrez 2013).

There are various reasons why a person would choose teaching as his or her future career, having a satisfactory and growing income is not one of them. The income gap between the teachers' earnings and the earnings of those who worked in other professions is significant even for those who graduated in the same year, a gap that increases every year (Liu et al. 2000). Choosing teaching as a career is becoming even more costly in recent years with increasing college tuition fees and having to pay for the training and certification needed to become a teacher, a situation that made choosing teaching seem more like a sacrifice than a conscious and responsible career choice (Liu et al. 2000). Individuals who make a conscious choice to become teachers are therefore not extrinsically motivated, but rather have intrinsic motivations such as having a meaningful and valuable job that serves their community, working with and having an effect on the lives of young children, enjoying their work and teaching a subject they are interested in (Liu et al. 2000). Some of the participants in a study worked as engineers, lawyers and IT professionals who gave up their old jobs for the lack of motivation and chose teaching instead sacrificing up to fifty percent of their income with this move and having to cut on expenses or take extra jobs because of it (Liu et al. 2000).



A study conducted in 2014 in Turkey on the reasons why students may have chosen teaching as a career categorized these reasons as 1- altruistic-intrinsic motivations, such as the love for children and the great appreciation for the impact of such a career on their lives, 2- extrinsic motivations, such as being drawn to the short working hours, long vacations and job security, 3- or the influence of other people such as parents, relatives, other teachers and friends (Balyer & Özcan 2014). The results of that study concluded that those students who chose teaching career did that for a mixture of reasons and motivations that could be intrinsic, extrinsic or influenced by others without inclination towards a certain category of motivations, and that governments however should regulate who joins the teaching career based on the standards, priorities and goals set by those governments. In other words, the study concludes that it is the duty of the government to choose candidates suitable for the teaching positions irrespective of the motivations of those candidates that may or may not resonate with the goals of those governments.

Measuring the motivations for choosing teaching, as a career is not as easy as it may seem however. Hakki (2015) conducted a study, also in Turkey, that compared the importance of altruistic motivations of 248 students who are studying English major to become teachers using different instruments. Quantitative instruments used (FIT-scale) resulted in a much higher rank given to the altruistic motivations than the qualitative instruments (self reported study). The writer justified this discrepancy by the effect of the social desirability bias that was evident in the quantitative instrument results as the population surveyed was inclined to give more altruistic reasons for their career choice when the different factors was presented to them in the survey.

When they were asked to write their motivations however as part of the qualitative part of the study, these altruistic motivations seemed to gain less importance.

The Varkey GEMS foundation, part of the GEMS Varkey group which is a leading global educational provider conducted a study that surveyed samples of 21 countries from a round the world with one of its goals is to investigate the perceptions of teaching as a career choice among parents and students (Dolton & Marcenaro-Gutierrez 2013). How the public viewed teaching varied enormously among the countries surveyed, with people in the US, Brazil, Turkey and France comparing teachers to librarians, New Zealanders comparing them to nurses, Japanese comparing them to government employees and only in China teachers were compared to doctors. It was also concluded that in the majority of the countries surveyed, people thought that teachers should be paid between 1 to 40 percent higher of their current pay.

### **2.3. Educational Systems and Teacher Status in Top Scoring Countries in TIMSS Assessments**

In trying to get an understanding of what educational authorities must do to attract and retain the best teachers, one needs to take a look at the experiences of successful countries in this field, mainly focusing on the aspects of these experiences related to teachers and their well being and motivation. A good indicator would be the results of the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) assessment results. Upon reviewing the results of math and science assessments for grades 4 and 8 from the years 2007, 2011 and 2015 it was evident that five countries were repeatedly scoring among top five countries participating in these assessments and

these are Singapore, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei and Japan (Timssandpirls.bc.edu, 2018).

Singapore has applied an educational reform by getting rid of a centralized style to decentralizing the education system by offering school leaders a larger independence and autonomy (Tan & Conway 2010). Singapore's famous "Teach Less, Learn More" leadership vision aims at by 2006 teaching will move away from the rigid standardized testing, and more towards preparing students for life skills and future jobs (Tan & Conway 2010, Tan & Gopinathan 2000 and Luke et al 2005). This new policy has given rise to what is called Independent Schools where leadership have the power to select and recruit qualified staff, to choose how to utilize and reward those staff and to manage the curriculum and the way it is taught (Tan & Gopinathan 2000). It also gives rise to the increase in competitiveness between those independent schools where all stakeholders including teachers take part in putting continuous school improvement plans (Tan & Conway 2010). In 2002, the Singapore Ministry of Education founded the Centre for Research in Pedagogy and Practice (CRPP) with an allocated budget surpassing the spending of educational research in the UK, Canada or Australia by far (Luke et al 2005). The goals of this center are to construct a complete domestic educational infrastructure and enhancing the ability in educational research, and to prepare a new cohort of educational researchers, teachers, policymakers and creative curriculum originators from Singapore in particular and Asia in general (Luke et al 2005). In a 2005 Parliament session in Singapore, the Minister of Education then, Mr. Shanmugaratnam stated that students need to get involved in more project based learning to learn the creative skills needed for the future, and that to achieve this, the curriculum was reduced in a calculated way to

give more time for schools to introduce their own creative programs and for teachers to prepare higher quality lessons and to reflect on and therefore improve their practices (Ng 2008).

Hong Kong, another top ranked country for several years in TIMSS exams (Timssandpirls.bc.edu, 2018), has started its educational reforms in the 1990s influenced by the democratization of government that was taking place and the pressure of globalization (Law 2004, Cheng 2009). Agencies -that are led by elites with a broad global stance and international relations- were hired to force the ministry of education in Hong Kong to make the changes needed in the educational system including the participation of all stakeholders in formulating the new policies which added to the authenticity and the credibility of the new changes and its popularity among the people (Law 2004). These hired agencies conducted many workshops and gatherings to discuss and review suggested reforms with all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, students and parents, and these changes were communicated directly to the governments instead of the ministry of education avoiding the certain obstacles to change placed by the old educational bureaucracies (Law 2004, Morris & Scott 2003). These changes were built on transforming the economy from manufacturing based to knowledge-based economy, and included removing the conservative borders that usually exists between subjects and following a more life related integrated knowledge approach, and dropping the traditional learning indicators that are based on rote memorization and following assessments that are based on critical thinking, life skills and collaborative learning (Law 2004, Cheng 2009). To achieve these goals, teacher training and qualifying occupied a top priority with authorities requesting teachers to have essential competences in information

technology, language and pedagogical knowledge proficiency before even joining the teaching force (Law 2004, Morris & Scott 2003, Cheng 2009).

Republic of Korea, yet another staple in the top five scoring countries in international benchmarking exams, was the subject of a book written by Dr. Michael Seth in 2002 with the title *Education Fever*. The book begins with describing the shock the author had when he went to Republic of Korea to work as an English Professor in one of its universities, saying that there is a national fascination with education that all students from all age groups take studying for after school hours into evening schools and during weekends. The author describes how within only five decades and after Republic of Korea's independence from Japan in 1945, the number of universities increased from only one that catered mainly Japanese students to over 180 colleges and universities with enrollment numbers that greater than many European countries and that from a less than five percent of population that didn't have more than a form of primary education to more than ninety percent of them with a high school certificate. The rapid economical development in Republic of Korea grew parallel to that of educational progress with Koreans enjoying a sophisticated educational system with standards and achievements above those nations with similar income per capita (Seth 2002). The author emphasizes that a major factor of Republic of Korea's educational reform was its ability to come up with a uniform educational standards and curricula that catered to all population and not just the lucky few which is evidenced by the amount of funding the country spends on education. One of the pillars of Republic of Korea's educational reform was improving the quality of teachers by investing in their training and preparation which resulted in producing a workforce that raised the level of Republic of Korea from one of the neediest

countries in the world right after its independence from Japan in 1945 to a current industrial hub (Seth 2002). Teachers' social status in the Republic of Korea is highly appreciated that most parents would encourage their children to consider teaching as a career choice (Dolton & Marcenaro-Gutierrez 2013).

Japan's economical achievements coupled with its students' top performance in international achievement exams were the focus of the world's nations as they tried to analyze the secrets behind such success (Bjork & Tsuneyoshi 2005). The educational system in Japan moved from focusing on challenging assessments and demanding curriculum in the 1970s into less formal teaching hours and a curriculum with decreased content that focuses on critical thinking skills which provided teachers with ample time to prepare lessons based on these skills and to reflect more on their practices (Bjork & Tsuneyoshi 2005).

The educational reforms that took place in Honk Kong, Singapore, Japan, and the Republic of Korea as was discussed above, all have aspects in common that focused on abandoning the content based curriculum and exhausting teachers with long working hours into focusing more on teachers' skills and preparation to convey content and curriculum that targets critical thinking skills needed for the inevitable shift to a knowledge based economy. It was understood by the educational authorities in these countries that no educational outcomes and achievements would ever be obtained if teachers didn't meet a specific sophisticated set of qualifications and that more should be done to encourage and motivate high caliber candidates into the profession. Korea and Japan were part of a recent study (Akiba et al. 2012) that examined the relationship between teachers' salary increases and the achievements of

the students in math and science exams. It was concluded that there is a positive correlation between the experienced teachers' salary increases and students' performance in those exams (Akiba et al. 2012). This supports the idea that rewarding teachers who choose to stay in their profession for years will motivate those teachers and makes them feel appreciated for their efforts, the thing that will positively reflect on the educational system in general.

#### **2.4. Education Sector in the GCC Area and Perceptions of Teaching as a Career**

ALPEN CAPITAL, which is a chief financial consultancy firm to institutions in the GCC area and other parts of the world, have published a report in 2016 describing the outlook of the Education Industry in the GCC area. Several facts and figures were listed in the report that showed the extent of support and commitment that the governments of these countries are gearing towards the Education Sector. For example, the UAE has allocated about 21.2% of its expenditure budget in 2016 to education, a percentage highest than that of developed countries such as the US or the UK and is second in the GCC area after Saudi Arabia (ALPEN CAPITAL 2016). The UAE has the highest number in the world of schools offering international curricula with the total number of students in the UAE is expected to increase at an annual rate of 4.1% from 1.1 million in 2015 to 1.4 million in 2020 (ALPEN CAPITAL 2016). Interestingly enough, the report highlights a key challenge to this growth being the extreme shortage of qualified teachers with the UAE alone needing about 14000 teachers over the next five years. The report emphasizes that while this shortage of teachers is a global issue and is not limited to the GCC area, it is made worse here because the majority of teachers are expatriates and of transient nature coupled with

the fact that citizens of these countries are not inclined to choose a career in education (ALPEN CAPITAL 2016).

In a report conducted by Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Authority, KHDA, in 2014, it was stated that Emiratis make up 43.2 percent of the total of 52,586 students enrolled in the 57 higher education institutions in Dubai, during the academic year 2013/2014 at which the data were taken. Of all the students from all the nationalities enrolled including Emiratis, only 2 percent joined Education field (KHDA 2014). The most popular field of study was Business Administration with 44 percent of all students joining Dubai's higher education institutions by the time the report was conducted, enrolled in that field (KHDA 2014).

In Dubai for example, the percentage of Emirati teachers working in the top private schools preferred by Emirati parents doesn't exceed 0.5% of all teachers working in those schools, even in schools with majority of Emirati students (KHDA 2012). In general, according to Dubai Statistics Center (2011), 52.8% of teachers working in the government schools in Dubai are Emiratis and the percentage drops to 20.6% in the Private schools of the emirate. Across all the emirates, national teaching force does not exceed 4% (Sharif, Hossan & McMinn 2014). This creates a cultural challenge, as these Emirati students are taught by expatriate teachers that come mostly of contradictory backgrounds to these students and are often times blamed for affecting the local values and traditions (Weber 2011). The situation seems even more adverse with approximately 20 percent of Emirati teachers leaving the profession every year measured during the period of 2008 to 2012 and that all the efforts to attract more students into the profession seem to be unsuccessful (Sharif, Hossan & McMinn 2014).



Gulf Talent, which is a major online recruitment company in the UAE, came up with a study to investigate the preferred employers among a group of Emirati undergraduates and some who have recently graduated. The study was conducted over the course of two years before it was published in 2013 and the sample included more than 200 male and female Emiratis who listed their preferred employers without being given a list to choose from (Talent 2013). Out of the 40 different employers listed, only three educational institutions were mentioned where Abu Dhabi Educational Council (ADEC) ranked 26<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Education (MoE) ranked 30<sup>th</sup> and The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR) ranked 35<sup>th</sup> (Talent 2013). However, judging by the minimum salary expectations, which were in the range of 19,000 – 40,000 AED, teaching was less likely to be one of the careers in the minds of those who actually chose these three educational institutions (Talent 2013). The study also listed some of the aspects that Emirati citizens look for most in their employer of choice, and those included a challenging work atmosphere, professional development, the company's public image, suitable package, conservative work environment and the presence of other Emiratis (Talent 2013).

In light of the declining oil prices, and the shift of the GCC governments in general to a more diverse knowledge based economy (Weber 2011), a special attention should be geared towards attracting and retaining qualified nationals to work in all aspects of the field of education such as curriculum development, teaching, and administration. The progress the UAE has achieved in the education sector is undeniable, with a phenomenal growth from having 74 government schools in the country in 1971 catering only 32800 Emirati students to 747 government schools in 2001 with 322250 Emirati students (Harnish 2003). Given the demographics challenges that the UAE faces to its nationalization plans as less than 2% of the working population are local,

and less than 14% of the total students across the UAE are nationals (Randeree 2009), it is understandable that the Emiratis will not be able to make a majority of the teaching workforce, however, there should be more efforts into encouraging more nationals to join the educational field.

Educational decision makers in the Gulf Countries have been working constantly on coaching and qualifying local citizens to take on teaching jobs in the government schools by encouraging students to join colleges offering majors in education.

However, registration in these institutions is still low and the number of graduates is substantially less than the needed cadre required to fill teaching positions with citizens in public schools (Gardner 1995). Most of the students enrolling in these educational colleges are females who prefer to either choose a more relaxing career that probably pay more or stay home after graduation (Gardner 1995). Al-Lawati (2014) published a paper to explore the motivations behind national teachers in the Gulf countries leaving their teaching positions for office jobs or even to stay home after spending years in the teaching field. He argues that the reasons behind these choices vary between hoping to find a less stressful job to disputes with the school's management and feeling that they don't enjoy or even like this job any more, which affects their level of performance and the way they deliver their subjects.

Teaching profession has a distinct nature to it, in that continuity and growth in one's career is a must for the benefit of students in terms of on going assessment and curriculum development, a feature that will be severely affected with the temporary aspect of hiring expatriate teachers on temporary basis (Al Lawati 2014). When expatriate teachers conclude their contracts and leave to their home countries, educational systems lose much needed qualified, experienced and trained teachers.

Students in the GCC countries have constantly scored low in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) exams in spite of having qualified teachers that are properly certified in the schools that have participated in those exams (Wiseman & Al Baker 2013) which can only be explained by the lack of continuity and consistency in the teaching practices offered due to the large expatriate teacher turn over. Faculties of Education in Universities should focus on attracting and retaining Emirati students and promoting the importance teaching profession among families as these institutions make the foundation for establishing strong Educational Systems (Aral et al. 2009).

A policy paper issued by Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr Al qasimi Foundation in 2017 have given some suggestions for educational policy makers in the UAE to improve Emirati teachers' job satisfaction in light of the increasing attrition and early retirement among those teachers (Nethercott & Buckner 2017). These recommendations include:

- Reviewing and working on enhancing the factors that motivate Emirati youth to join and stay in the teaching profession such as modifying their current pay scale to be comparable to the higher salaries obtained by Emiratis working in other fields, as well as their compensation packages and other benefits.
- Providing more opportunities of professional development, coaching and training for teachers, which help increase their job satisfaction.
- Subsidizing fees needed for further education and allowing teachers to pursue their Masters and other higher education degrees while still in the job by facilitating the customization of their working hours to fit their studies as well as partnering with higher education institutions to provide credit hours certification for professional development hours attended.

- Promoting teaching as a career as an option among school students by requesting universities that offer B.Ed. programs and veteran teachers to carry out recruitment campaigns in those schools which will enhance the teachers image and their social status among those students.
- Raising the social status and the worth of teaching as a career among the public through the media by covering the beneficial of aspects of teaching and its valuable contributions to the society. Establishing teacher reward programs that are highly publicized and funded from governmental institutions will also help making teaching a more attractive and respected profession.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. The Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Emirati high school and college students towards teaching as a career choice, and to reveal the changes that need to be done to the educational system in the UAE that could help in making teaching a more appealing career choice to these students. The quantitative phase of this study, which is its first phase, hypothesizes that teaching as a career choice is not popular among Emirati youth due to the perceived difficult working conditions and the less appreciated social status the teacher holds in the Emirati society. The second phase, which is the qualitative phase, is centered on carrying interviews with respondents based on their answers to the first phase. More clarifications are sought after in this phase through answering more in depth questions. To achieve this purpose, answers to the following questions from the point of view of young Emirati students are sought:

- What are the characteristics associated with a good teacher from the perspective of young Emirati students?
- How many of the sample population's teachers have shown these characteristics?
- Who are the people that affect and shape the opinion of the Emirati youth about their future career plans?
- How far are young Emirati students are planning to go in terms of their academic achievement and what are their most chosen majors of study?

- What aspects of the teaching career do students find attractive?
- What are the reasons that could keep young people in the UAE from choosing teaching as a career?
- What are the sources that students in the UAE are getting most of their information about teaching from?
- What possible changes to the UAE's educational system could possibly encourage more young people to join the teaching field?

### **3.2. Research Design**

This research paper is following a worldview of that of a social constructivist, who is looking to explain a phenomenon through the lens of the participants of the research (Creswell 2009). The survey used in the first phase of the research contains questions that have various choices and the possibility of participants adding their own input to almost all questions in the survey. The second phase of the study, which is based on interviews with some of the participants, has several open ended questions and the chance for participants to express their opinions freely and openly. Therefore, the research will not start with a theory, but rather uses the views of the participants and the results of the analysis of both phases of the research to reach to a theory that could explain the problem. The study therefore follows a cross-sectional type, where multiple groups of the sample are taking part in the study at close intervals of time (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). Such approach allows a quick and economical conduct and boosts higher participation in spite of its limitation in observing changes of opinion patterns over time (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007).

The research followed a sequential explanatory mixed methodology with a quantitative initial phase followed by a qualitative phase. Explanatory approach is

better suited for cases such as the case studied in this research; there is a phenomena that is being observed and is taking place which is the lack of interest from young Emiratis towards joining the teaching career, and the purpose of the study is to find explanations to this phenomena by trying to reveal the perceptions of these young Emirati students towards this profession (Creswell 2009). Mixed methods in research allow for a broader perspective and a more accurate exploration of the motives behind the responses provided (Creswell 2009).

The sequential explanatory strategy is a common approach for mixed methodology research designs especially for the sequence followed here in the current research, which starts by a quantitative phase that yields the majority of the data generated from the research, followed by a qualitative phase that builds on and tries to explain and gauge the results of the initial phase (Creswell 2009). This strategy is also useful in case the initial phase of the research resulted in unpredictable data that needs further explanation. It is also an easy straightforward approach that occurs over two distinct phases that can be described and analyzed clearly with one probable drawback which is it's lengthy implementation being carried out over two sequential phases (Creswell 2009).

### **3.3. Instruments Applied**

The survey used in the first phase of this study is a pre-existing survey that was conducted and used by the State of Florida's Department of Education in 1984 to measure the factors that may influence the career choice of high school students and how they view teaching as a prospective career choice to them. Hence the instrument used in this study is an intact instrument (Creswell 2009) with validity and reliability that is established by the Education Standards Commission of Florida (Florida State

Dept. of Education 1985) which is the single receptacle of all the data from the schools and institutions of the state of Florida ("Florida Department Of Education" 2018). At the time the mentioned survey was conducted, the Sate of Florida was witnessing an extreme shortage of teachers of math, science and English and the prospects of enough numbers of future teachers weren't promising (Florida State Dept. of Education 1985). All the elements and questions used in the Florida State Department of Education survey are still applicable today, not only in Florida-USA but anywhere else as well. Surveys are efficient tools to come up with generalizations that are verified by large amount of reliable data that include facts, personal information, attitudes and past experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). For the sake of the current research, all the survey questions were put in an online format via Google Forms instead of the paper based survey used back then, keeping the same format, questions and scales used. Internet based surveys or questionnaires have several advantages over the paper based instruments such as reduction of expenses as the cost of paper and printing is eliminated, it also saves the time needed to print, distribute and analyse the data as hosting websites nowadays do all the analysis and graphing of data needed, they allow a bigger and wider participation as the link to the survey can be emailed easily all over the world in places that are difficult to reach, the ability to be completed anywhere and not just in an office or school, and at the time of convenience to the participants, they allow for a more reliable responses in the absence of the researcher's effect, they are less likely to contain missing responses as the respondent can not move to the next question without answering the previous, and finally less human error is likely to occur as such when the data is manually entered (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007).



The survey used is of a semi-structured format where most of the items used were closed questions mixed with few open questions which agrees with the mixed methodology used in this research. The closed questions used were of several types such as dichotomous questions that are useful to gather clear and definite answers to questions about demographics, gender, strong opinions about future plans or specific aspects of a career choice. Other types of closed questions used were those that used ordinal scales such as ranking and rating scales questions, and these are useful when respondents do not necessarily have strong opinions about the questions being asked, thus allowing them to express their feelings about the matter with various degrees of priority and preference (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). Open-ended questions were also used in the survey questionnaire in instances when respondents could have other options than the ones provided by the closed end questions and when their honest and personal input was required. Open-ended questions are ideal for studies where the sample population is not particularly large as gathering and sorting the answers can be a tedious task if the sample was enormous (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). These were incorporated in the survey by providing a space for the online questionnaire where respondents can type in their answers to the questions asked.

The second phase of the study was interviewing part of the respondents to the survey conducted in the first phase. An interview is an effective tool of gathering data as it involves all human senses and allows for a deeper questioning and thus more accurate answers although it has its own restraints such as the interviewer bias and the difficulty to set up multiple interviews in terms of practicality and cost (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). The qualitative data obtained by the interviews are a

source of authenticated, rich account and clarification of progressions happening in narrow contexts (Miles & Huberman 1984). According to Patton's categorization of interviews (cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007), the interview conducted in this study follows a standardized open-ended format where questions and their order are predetermined, an approach that has several advantages according to Patton including the ease at which responses can be compared and later collected and analyzed, all preset questions will be answered, decreases possible interviewer bias while the possible lack of flexibility being a main disadvantage. Trust between the interviewee and the interviewer was present as the researcher was the person who conducted the interviews and participants are familiar with her being a teacher in the school. The purpose of the research was again explained to the participants after being explained in the first phase of the research. Participants were then informed that the interview is composed of ten questions and that the interviewer will write down their responses and their identities will remain anonymous. Questions in the interview were determined after phase 1 responses were analyzed, and the points that needed more clarifications were determined.

### **3.4. Sampling and Population**

The population targeted in this study is Emirati youth who are either currently in high school or just graduated from it. The reasoning for this is that the purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Emirati high school and college students towards teaching as a career choice, and to reveal the changes needed to the educational system in the UAE that could help in making teaching a more appealing career choice to these students. Therefore, choosing a sample from high school students and some of those who recently graduated from it seems to serve that

purpose. Once the population is defined, the stage of choosing a sample comes next (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007) and the strategy followed is that of a single-stage sampling procedure as the researcher had access to choose a sample from all the students in the school (Creswell 2009). The issue of time needed to answer the survey questions was key on choosing a sample of students that have the time during a school day to answer the questions. Time wasn't an issue for those students who have recently graduated from the school, as the link to the survey was emailed to them and the majority of them were able to answer the survey questions at their convenience. The school's administration advised that we approach students during their extra curricular classes so that formal classes are not disrupted. Inspecting the classes' timetable was a practical solution to locate such classes and thus a class of each grade level from grades 10 to 12 was chosen at random to take part in the survey during these extra curricular classes. The total sample size was 61 students, which concedes with the minimum sample size of thirty generally accepted by researchers for the sake of statistical analysis carried on when conducting studies in the field of education (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007).

### **3.5. Context**

The school where the survey was conducted is a public school governed and run by the UAE Ministry of Education catering for over 700 Emirati female students from grades 8 to 12. The approval to conduct the survey was granted by the administration of the school provided that the identity of the school and the respondents stay anonymous in line with school's general policy of taking part and helping general research related to educational aspects.

The data were collected on intervals, as classes were visited at different times and students were asked to participate in the survey by clicking on the survey link that was posted online. The research topic and purpose was thoroughly explained to the students before asking them to take part. It was clearly stated to the students that participation in the survey is completely voluntary and though they are encouraged to, they have the choice to decline. The classes were chosen at random and the final population size was 61 respondents that varied between grades 10, 11 and 12 and some recent graduates from the same school who are currently studying in universities in the UAE and abroad. After phase-1 has concluded and responses were analysed, the second phase of conducting some interviews with a random sample of the previous respondents was done. The interviews helped in clarifying the motives of part of the responses to the survey in phase-1 of the survey.

### **3.6. Procedure**

The school at which the study was conducted was chosen based on convenience, as it is the school where the researcher works. This study targets Emirati students, thus a government school is most convenient as these cater exclusively for Emirati students. The administration of the school gave its approval to conduct the research based on its familiarity with and trust in the researcher, on the condition of anonymity of both the school's identity and that of the participants, and that no formal lessons should be disrupted in the course of the study. The classes timetable was examined and the classes where chosen so that the sample surveyed included participants from all grade levels in high school which are grades 10 to 12. The survey was conducted in 40 minutes for each of those classes during their extra curricular periods over a two-week's time frame. The purpose of the study and its significance was explained to the

students prior to asking them if they wish to take part in it. All students chosen agreed to take part in the study and they were asked to click the link to the survey, which was posted on the researcher's personal blog. The sample also included graduates of the school that are now studying in different colleges in the UAE and abroad and these were contacted by private messages on their Twitter account and they have agreed to take part in the study and thus the link to the survey was sent to them using the same means of social media. The responses were recorded on line and downloaded and analyzed. The second phase of the study comprised of conducting interviews with a sample of the participants was carried out subsequently. Again, interviews were conducted during extracurricular classes and in the lessons where the assigned teacher was on sick leave. The interviews were conducted individually. The purpose of the research was again explained to the participants after being explained in the first phase of the research. Participants were then informed that the interview is composed of ten questions and that the interviewer will write down their responses and their identities will remain anonymous. The interview took place in a corner of the class of a good distance away from the other students. Students were free to elaborate in their answers while the interviewer took note of their responses.

### **3.7. Ethical Considerations**

As respondents have the right to stay anonymous when conducting a study (Creswell 2009), the identities of participants, and the school where the study took place are kept anonymous. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants before they took part in any of its elements and they were encouraged to do so but never coerced. No papers were found in available literature that had the same purpose of this study specific to the United Arab Emirates. Participants did not lose any teaching

time since they have answered during their extra curricular activities time and during instances where the teacher was absent. During interviews, participants were encouraged to speak their true opinions and that their identities will be hidden. The interviewer maintained a friendly attitude with neutral expressions during questioning in the interview so that participants will not feel judged or uncomfortable.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### 4.1. Phase-I Findings

#### 4.1.1 Demographics and Background Information

The demographics section of the survey was at the second part of it. Students were asked about the city where their school or university is located. As most of the sample where students from the same school located in the city of Ajman, the majority of respondents wrote Ajman. The other students are currently university students who are studying in various cities as indicated in table-4.1.

School Location		Grade Level		Academic Average Score		Monthly Family Income	
Ajman	77 %	G10	27.8 %	100 - 93	41 %	15000 AED or less	4.9 %
Sharjah	9.9 %	G11	16.4 %	93 - 86	47.5 %	30000 AED or less	27.9 %
Dubai	8.2 %	G12	32.8 %	86 - 75	11.4 %	50000 AED or less	18.0 %
Abu- Dhabi	3.3 %	University	23.0 %	<75	0.1 %	More than 50000 AED	16.4 %
UK	1.6 %					I don't Know	32.8 %

Table-4.1: Participants' Demographics.

The current academic level of the students in the sample varied between grade-10 up to a college level. While most of the students are high school students, their grade level was distributed between grades 10,11 and 12.

Over half of the sample indicated a positive academic performance with grades that ranged between A and C, which is to be expected as the school where the survey was conducted focuses on preparing students for technical and highly skilled careers. It was noted that although the survey was written in English, not in the students' Arabic

mother tongue, they had no problems in understanding and responding to the questions. The household income of the students' families varied with most of them reporting a monthly income between 30000 to 50000 AED inline with the reported average of 42440 AED monthly income of Emirati families in 2014 (Dubai Statistics Center 2014).

<b>People who had the greatest influence on students' plans after graduating high school. (Students can choose several options)</b>		<b>People who had the greatest influence on students' career plans. (Students can choose several options)</b>	
Mothers / Female Guardians	60.7 %	Mothers / Female Guardians	50.8 %
Fathers / Male Guardians	47.5 %	Fathers / Male Guardians	39.3 %
Friends	41.0 %	Media Persons	32.8 %
Teachers	37.7 %	Siblings	31.1 %

Table-4.2: People who influenced students the most.

Table-4.2 shows the results when students were asked to rank their most influential persons from a list when it comes to their after graduating high school and career plans. The majority of students indicated that their female guardians were the most influential in these terms closely followed by their male guardians. Friends and teachers were frequently chosen as well when it comes to after school plans in general. Media's impact on students' career decision was evident as media's influence was frequently chosen in that regard, which is to be expected in our current social media dominated era. Students were asked to write any other influential people that were not mentioned in the list and the responses varied between leaders of the country, scientists posting on social media, characters from TV shows, celebrities, famous engineers, Prophets, historical figures, and young politicians.



<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	<b>Most Influential Person</b>	<b>Second Most Influential Person</b>
Didn't Complete High School	6.6 %	13.1 %
Graduated High School	18.0 %	32.8 %
Some College Courses	3.3 %	8.2 %
College Degree	50.8 %	19.7 %
Graduate Degree	14.8 %	14.8 %
Don't know	6.6 %	11.5 %

Table-4.3: Highest academic level of people who influenced students the most.

Table-4.3: represents the educational background of the most influential person students chose. More than half of students indicated that their most influential person has a College degree and about third indicated that their second most influential person had a high school certificate. Since most students have already chosen their mothers or female guardians to have the most impact when it comes to their future plans it can be concluded that most of the students' mothers or female guardians were more educated than their male counterparts.

Students were then asked to write the most recent job held by the persons who they chose to have the greatest and the second greatest influence on their career plans and answers varied with the most common responses being teachers, school administrators, army and police officers, bank employees, business owners, engineers and stay at home parent. Students needed to write their responses rather than choose from a list in this case. One student, whose mother works as a teacher, expressed how unfortunate it is that her mother has this job.

Table-4.5 shows the level of education students are planning to achieve in the coming years. Most students are planning to complete at least a Bachelor degree and some aspire to complete their Masters and Ph.Ds.

<b>The highest level of education students are planning to achieve.</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
High school certificate	3.3
Military Service	1.6
Bachelor degree	37.7
Masters and/or Ph.D.	57.4

Table-4.4: Highest academic level students are planning to achieve.

#### **4.1.2. Students' Perspective on Teaching as a Career**

In this section, students were first presented with a list of characteristics associated with an effective classroom teacher and were asked to choose how important this trait is to them. As shown in table-4.5, students' top choice was to have a teacher who explains the lessons well and have a respectful and fair treatment to the students. Least popular choices included making students work hard, giving students homework and complementing good performance.

<b>Characteristics if a Good Teacher:</b>	<b>Percentage of Students that chose this trait as being very important</b>
Explains lessons well	95.1 %
Fair treatment to all students	91.8 %
Helps weak students discretely	88.5 %
Respectful to all students	83.6 %
Excellent subject knowledge	82.0 %
Daily lesson Planning	70.5 %
Maintains students' interest by using different instructional techniques	65.6 %
Enjoys teaching	59.0 %
Views students as individuals rather than learners only	54.1 %
Disciplines students well	52.5 %
Smart and fun	50.8 %
Marks assignments and returns them to students quickly	49.2 %
Assigns homework to complement learning	45.9 %
Believes that in order to learn, students need to work hard	41.0 %
Complements students on good performance	36.1 %

Table-4.5: Students' perspective of what makes a good classroom teacher.

When students were asked to state their opinion about how many of their teachers in the last five years reflected these characteristics in their teaching, most students indicated that very few teachers did when it came to the characteristics students viewed as most important (Table-4.6).

<b>Students' view of how many of their teachers in the last five years showed these characteristics in their teaching.</b>	<b>Most of Them (%)</b>	<b>About Half of Them (%)</b>	<b>Just Few of Them (%)</b>
Maintains students' interest by using different instructional techniques	11.5	39.3	49.2
Smart and fun	11.5	41.0	47.5
Views students as individuals rather than learners only	18.0	36.1	45.9
Enjoys teaching	18.0	42.6	39.3
Disciplines students well	31.1	45.9	23.0
Helps weak students discretely	36.1	42.6	21.3
Believes that in order to learn, students need to work hard	27.9	52.5	19.7
Explains lessons well	21.3	63.9	14.8
Daily lesson Planning	32.8	52.5	14.8
Marks assignments and returns them to students quickly	26.2	59.0	14.8
Fair treatment to all students	41.0	44.3	14.8
Complements students on good performance	37.7	49.2	13.1
Excellent subject knowledge	37.7	50.8	11.5
Respectful to all students	50.8	41.0	8.2
Assigns homework to complement learning	47.5	44.3	8.2

Table-4.6: Percentage of teachers who demonstrated characteristics of a Good classroom teacher

Students were asked about what they think the average salary of a beginner Emirati teacher in a public school is, for which the answers averaged around 20000 AED, which is about the same salary Emirati teachers get in their school.

Students were then presented with a list of factors that are considered staple aspects in the teaching career and were asked to indicate if these factors were encouraging, discouraging or having no effect in teaching being a possible career choice for them.

The most encouraging factors students chose that would possibly make them choose teaching as a career were helping others, raising the level of education in the UAE and making a positive impact on people especially on young children. They also considered teaching a subject that they are interested in and find important that they can teach in an innovative way a significant factor. Other encouraging factors were if teachers were offered regular salary increases and if they had a higher and more respected status in society. Factors that students considered discouraging to them from becoming teachers included the daily working hours in school and the time required for lesson planning, teachers' salaries, recommendations of their close friends and family members, the possibility of being transferred away from their residence and the school's environment in general. Factors like having teachers or counselors recommending teaching as a career, the ease of finding a job and job security had no effect on most students' decisions on choosing teaching as a career.

When asked how likely are they going to choose teaching as a career, most of the students indicated a negative response, as shown in table-4.7.

<b>How likely are students going to choose teaching as a career?</b>	
1. Very likely	13.1 %
2. Maybe	42.6 %
3. Not likely	44.3 %

Table-4.7: The Probability of students choosing teaching as a career.

The next question in the survey probed students to come up with and write their own reasons for not considering teaching as a career. The following points sum up their responses:

- Teaching is a difficult and demanding job that requires many hours of work during and after school hours.
- Teaching involves repeating lessons, which I find boring.
- The attitude of young generation towards teaching and their lack of respect to teachers.
- There are other higher paying careers that are needed in the UAE such as engineering.
- Educational authorities preference to hire expatriate teachers over nationals.
- I don't have the personal traits required in teachers such as patience and the ability to work with young people especially teenagers that are known for their rebellious nature and disrespect to teachers.
- No positive outcomes or privileges.
- The rigid guidelines in the current educational system that limits creativity and acts as a barrier against teachers trying to help students grow.
- Disconnection between educational authorities and teachers.
- The daily routine.
- My family members' negative view on teaching.
- I don't like my teachers.

In the next question, students were presented with a list of suggested changes to the educational system and they were asked to specify how important these changes are in making teaching a more attractive career choice to them. Above 70% of students indicated that giving enough respect and value in society to the teaching profession and students displaying more respect to teachers are very important changes that would make teaching a more interesting career choice to them. A similar percentage of students chose salary increases with experience as another important change. Rewarding good teachers and reducing the yearly vacations accompanied by salary increase were changes that most students considered to be somehow important. Students were then asked to suggest changes that they believe would make teaching a more attractive career choice to them. The following points sum up their responses:

- Carrying out workshops to train teachers on new teaching techniques.
- Having fewer periods to teach in a day so that teachers can finish the required work while in school rather than taking home extra work.
- Less exams especially for lower grades and more time for hands on activities and lab work.
- Give teachers freedom in the way they teach and the way they deal with students.
- Teachers should be valued and appreciated for the work they do.
- Change the way teachers and students view marks as a measure of knowledge.
- Change curriculums to be more flexible and reasonable in the amount of information students are supposed to know.
- Increasing the salary of a teacher.

<b>Would students consider teaching as a career if the changes they believe the most important were actually made?</b>	
1. Yes	29.5 %
2. Maybe	55.7 %
3. No	14.8 %

Table-4.8: Percentage of students that would consider a career in teaching if changes were made.

Table-4.8 shows the percentage of students that would consider teaching as a career if these changes were made.

Towards the end of section I of the survey, students were asked to choose from a list what are the resources that they got most of their information about teaching as a career from. About half of the students indicated that mothers or female guardians are their major sources of information, closely followed by their class teachers and then by their friends, siblings and media resources.

At the end of this section of the survey, students were asked if they would like to receive more information about the teaching career, most of them said they don't.

<b>Would students like to receive more information about teaching?</b>	
YES	44.3 %
NO	55.7 %

Table-4.9: Percentage of students who like to receive more information about teaching.



## **4.2. Phase-II Findings**

There were 40 students who volunteered for the interviews. The interviews were carried out individually in a corner of the classroom during extracurricular classes. According to Patton's categorization of interviews (cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007), the interview conducted in this study follows a standardized open-ended format where questions and their order are predetermined. A table represents each question below. At times, the sum of the responses –presented by numbers between brackets- would be more than 40 in cases where the interviewee had several options for a single question.

Q.1. In what ways did the people students chose as having the most influence on their future plans, affect them?	
Mother and Father (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Inspiring</li> <li>• Choosing what's right for students; guidance</li> <li>• Encouraging</li> </ul>
Mother (16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always around and close</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Gives direction and purpose</li> <li>• Motivates and encourages students</li> <li>• Being strong and independent</li> <li>• Caring and kind</li> <li>• Solve students' daily problems</li> <li>• Ambitious and inspiring</li> </ul>
Present and past public figures (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their strong personality</li> <li>• The decisions they made and their way of thinking</li> <li>• Inspiring</li> <li>• Persistence in delivering their message</li> </ul>
Family and Friends (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Strong personality</li> <li>• Independence and confidence</li> </ul>
Teachers (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Encouraging students to follow their dreams</li> <li>• Taught students useful lessons for their life</li> </ul>
No one affected me (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students say they have always been different from their parents</li> <li>• No one has a special influence, they are all the same</li> <li>• It's difficult to choose one</li> </ul>

Table 4-10: Who are the people influence students and how?

Q.2. How are teachers affecting your future plans and career choices?	
Positive Effect (25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing their life experiences and their own career path</li> <li>• Making students realize their specific academic strengths and thus guiding them towards their most suitable career choice.</li> <li>• Students respect and appreciate their opinions</li> <li>• They are very supportive and encouraging</li> <li>• Students admire their positivity and hard work</li> <li>• They taught students how to think and take decisions about their future</li> <li>• They made students think of possibly choose teaching as a career in the future</li> </ul>
Negative Effect (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers don't have any effect on students' future plans</li> <li>• Teachers that don't know how to explain the subject made students avoid choosing a career that focuses on that subject.</li> <li>• Only by giving students enough marks to pass the subject</li> <li>• They discourage students from pursuing the career they like because they say it's boring.</li> <li>• Teachers stress students out.</li> </ul>
Mixed Effect (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only teachers that are passionate about their work inspire students.</li> <li>• Some teachers were motivating but others were not</li> <li>• Students have had good teachers but they don't influence their career plans.</li> </ul>

Table 4-11: Teachers' effect on students

Q.3. How are friends affecting your future plans and career choices?	
My friends don't have a positive effect (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends can be a source of confusion when it comes to the best career choice</li> <li>• Friends don't have an effect when it comes to career paths, it's the students' own decision to make</li> <li>• Friends can be a source of pressure with their negative views on certain careers</li> </ul>
My friends have a positive effect (11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivate students to follow their dream careers</li> <li>• Their opinions matter</li> <li>• Success stories of their friends' family members</li> <li>• Friends can know students better than they know themselves</li> </ul>
Some friends have a positive effect (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends who are mature have positive effect while others are just distracting</li> <li>• Students take the advise of the friends who are good at their studies</li> </ul>

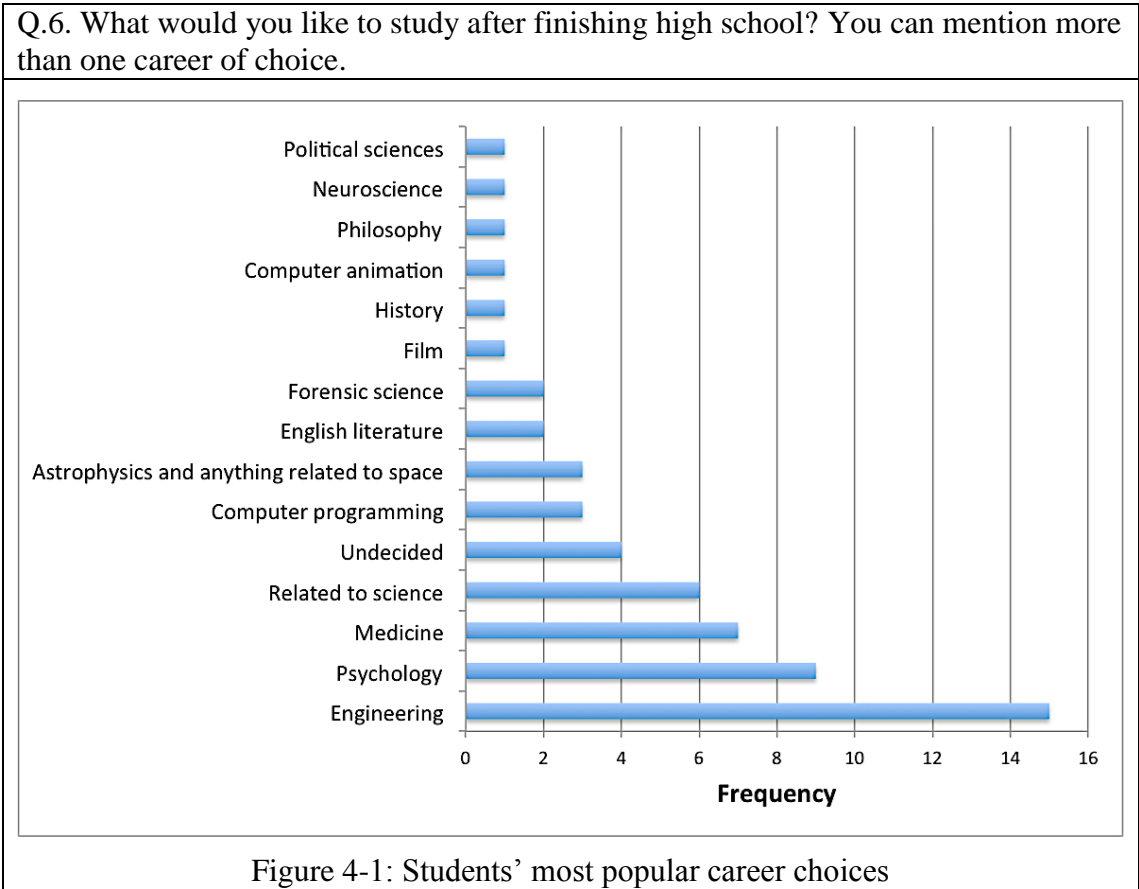
Table 4-12: Friends' effect on students

Q.4. How's the media affecting your future plans and career choices?	
<p>The ways students described media's effect on them (28)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The media focuses on what jobs the country needs in the future</li> <li>• All higher education institutions have media platforms that highlight the departments and specializations they offer which helps students make decisions</li> <li>• Social media influencers act as role model to the young generations with their success stories</li> <li>• Television shows that focus on specific careers such as medical practitioners, lawyers, crime investigators, Internet hackers and police officers encourage students to join the same career paths.</li> </ul>
<p>The ways students described how media has no effect on them (12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students don't care about or watch media channels</li> <li>• Media follows success, so if students themselves become successful then media will focus on them</li> <li>• Media is a waste of time where people get busy stalking other people</li> <li>• Media just adds up to the pressure of doing and looking a certain way</li> </ul>

Table 4-13: Media's effect on students

Q.5. How are your brothers and sisters affecting your future plans and career choices?	
The ways students described their siblings' effect on them (22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students learn from the experience of their siblings and their career choices</li> <li>• By having siblings who are hard workers that have jobs and continue their studies in the same time</li> <li>• By encouraging students and motivating them to follow their dreams</li> </ul>
The ways students described how heir siblings have no effect on them (18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students, who reported being the eldest, said their younger siblings had no effect on their career plans.</li> <li>• Some students reported that their siblings just don't have any effect on their future plans</li> </ul>

Table 4-14: Siblings' effect on students



Q.7. Explain the reasoning behind your choice in the question above.

Below are some of the aspects students found attractive in their preferred career choice(s):

- Not being confined to a single place. Freedom to move between projects.
- More attractive as a career choice to those students who are good in science but don't want to study "just" science.
- There is a great demand for Emirati engineers
- Liking the subjects taught while studying this major.
- It's humane nature.
- Being affected from early age by how the media glamorizes some careers like doctors.
- How psychology is a career that makes you understand people around you more.
- Being encouraged on this choice by parents, family and friends.
- Being of interest to students.
- Being able to exercise and apply ones talents.
- The ability to save lives and cure people.

Table 4-15: Students' motivations behind their preferred future career choice

Q.8. Is teaching a possible career choice for you? Please explain your answer.	
No (18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is not an interesting career</li> <li>• Teachers are not paid fairly</li> <li>• Teaching is a very stressful job that involves working from home and during weekends.</li> <li>• It is a job full of boring routine</li> <li>• It is a hard job where teachers struggle to deliver the concept to all students and make sure that all understand it</li> <li>• It needs a high level of interaction with people more than what some students can tolerate</li> <li>• It is difficult to discipline misbehaved students</li> <li>• The exhaustion their teacher relatives are showing</li> <li>• Students don't respect teachers</li> </ul>
Maybe (16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A possible career choice if all other choices are exhausted</li> <li>• It seems interesting to some students who are hesitant because they are shy or not confident that they can do it.</li> <li>• Only possible if teaching at university level.</li> <li>• Teachers themselves give conflicting advise, as some encourage students to be teachers and others say it's such a tiring and stressful career discouraging students from becoming teachers</li> <li>• Teaching is an interesting option, but not under the current educational system</li> <li>• Teaching is an interesting option, but no one seems to appreciate it</li> </ul>
Yes (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having devoted and hard working teachers encourages students to become teachers</li> <li>• The importance of education and hoe educators affect students' lives</li> <li>• Having the characteristics required to be a teacher such as patience</li> </ul>

Table 4-16: Students' perceptions on becoming teachers



## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Emirati high school and college students towards teaching as a career choice, and to reveal the changes that need to be done to the educational system in the UAE that could help in making teaching a more appealing career choice to these students. The quantitative phase of this study, which is its first phase, hypothesizes that teaching as a career choice is not popular among Emirati youth due to the perceived difficult working conditions and the less appreciated social status the teacher holds in the Emirati society. The second phase, which is the qualitative phase, is centered on carrying interviews with respondents based on their answers to the first phase. More clarifications are sought after in this phase through answering more in depth questions.

To achieve this purpose, answers to the following questions from the point of view of young Emirati students are sought:

- What are the characteristics associated with a good teacher from the perspective of young Emirati students?
- How many of the sample population's teachers have shown these characteristics?
- Who are the people that affect and shape the opinion of the Emirati youth about their future career plans?
- How far are young Emirati students are planning to go in terms of their academic achievement and what are their most chosen majors of study?
- What aspects of the teaching career do students find attractive?
- What are the reasons that could keep young people in the UAE from choosing teaching as a career?

- What are the sources that students in the UAE are getting most of their information about teaching from?
- What possible changes to the UAE's educational system could possibly encourage more young people to join the teaching field?

## **5.1. Discussion**

### **5.1.1. The characteristics associated with a good teacher from the perspective of young Emirati students**

The top five teacher characteristics surveyed students chose were the ability to explain the lessons effectively, treats all students fairly, helps weak students discretely, respectful to all students and the excellent knowledge in subject matter. These characteristics coincide with those found in literature as attributes to effective teachers (Hamachek 1969, Howes, Whitebook, & Phillips 1992, Goldhaber 2002). Factors such as marking students' work promptly, complementing students on their good work and assigning homework were least important according to the surveyed students. However, most of these students think that about half of the teachers or few of them only have demonstrated these characteristics in the last five years of students' lives. This is of no surprise as educational systems worldwide compromised teacher quality for quantity due to the severe shortage of teachers and the need to fill urgent teaching positions (Richardson & Watt 2006). Goldhaber (2002) states that studies in the USA show that most of the students in education majors are in fact the lower scorers in the SATs exams. He also reveals that research found that teachers' quality is the most imperative factor that a school can control which affects students' performance.

### **5.1.2. People that influenced the Emirati students' future plans the most**

More than half of the students surveyed chose their mothers or female guardians as the most influential figure in their lives, closely followed by their fathers or male guardians. When asked about the academic level achieved by their parents, students indicated that about 66% of their most influential parents have a college or graduate degree while 35% of their second most influential parents have such academic level. The household income of the students' families varied with most of them reporting a monthly income between 30000 to 50000 AED inline with the reported average of 42440 AED monthly income of Emirati families in 2014 (Dubai Statistics Center 2014). In the interviews, students were asked to describe the ways in which their parents have this effect on their future plans, for which the answers revolved around their parents being close to them –especially mothers–, helping them in choosing the right future path, and being encouraging and supportive in general.

The other significant sources of influence to students surveyed were friends, teachers, media and siblings. In interviews students were asked to clarify how these groups affected their future plans.

**Teachers:** Most students have a positive viewpoint about their teachers, describing them as supportive people in their lives who share their experience with them so that they benefit from it. Students also seem to realize and appreciate the hard work teachers put into the profession and yet maintaining their positivity. Most students also mentioned that a teacher can have an insight on which career is suitable for them based on their performance in school. Some students however seemed to be frustrated by their teachers, describing them as a stress factor in their lives and that they don't explain lessons while. Few students had mixed reviews stating that only teachers who are passionate about what they do affect them positively. This generally positive

opinion about teachers' effect is interesting because in spite of it, the majority of students are not considering teaching as a career.

**Friends:** Most respondents clarified that their friends' effect on their career plans does not exceed them being a motivating and encouraging factor in their lives, and that their future plans and career choice are their own decisions to make.

**Siblings:** Only those students with older siblings reported a positive effect of their brothers and sisters on guiding them towards choosing the right career path. Students value their older siblings' opinion about what major to study after completing high school and what career to choose.

**Media:** Most students seemed to be impressed by how the media depicts some careers in different media outlets. Television shows that focus on specific careers such as medical practitioners, lawyers, crime investigators, Internet hackers and police officers do elevate the value of these jobs in students' perspectives and encourage them to join the same career paths. Some students also mentioned the importance of the awareness campaigns that higher education institutions launch on their social media outlets about the departments and majors offered in their institutions. Other students mentioned that they don't follow media channels and they find them to be a waste of time.

### **5.1.3. Emirati students' academic aspirations and their chosen majors of study**

About 38% of the students surveyed stated that they would pursue a Bachelor's degree and about 58% of them said they would pursue a graduate degree such as Masters or PhD. When asked in the interviews about what career options and majors of study they are considering, the top five options were engineering, psychology, jobs in the medical field, jobs related to science and computer programming. Careers related to teaching and education, were not in the list of careers that students desire joining.

The factors that affected their choice according to the students are encouragement from family and friends, being of interest to students, freedom of movement and flexibility.

#### **5.1.4. Aspects of teaching career Emirati students find attractive**

The most attractive factors students surveyed chose that would possibly make them choose teaching as a career were helping others, raising the level of education in the UAE and making a positive impact on people especially on young children. They also considered teaching a subject that they are interested in and find important that they can teach in an innovative way a significant factor. Other encouraging factors were if teachers were offered regular salary increases and if they had a higher and more respected status in society.

#### **5.1.5. Reasons that keep young people in the UAE from choosing teaching as a career**

Factors that students considered discouraging to them from becoming teachers included:

- Teaching is a stressful and demanding job that involves long daily working hours besides the time needed to prepare lessons and grade assignments after school and during weekends.
- Teachers are not paid fairly and there are other higher paying careers that are needed in the UAE such as engineering.
- The limited chances of being promoted and moving forward in the future career ladder.

- Discouragement of their close friends and family members from becoming teachers and their negative view on teaching as a career in general especially from family members who are working as teachers.
- The possibility of being transferred away from their residence.
- Teaching is a difficult and demanding job that requires many hours of work during and after school hours.
- Teaching involves a tedious routine and having to repeat lessons every year which students find boring.
- The attitude of young generation towards teaching and their lack of respect to teachers.
- It needs a high level of interaction with children and having to discipline misbehaved students, which is more than what some students can tolerate.
- The rigid guidelines in the current educational system that limits creativity and acts as a barrier against teachers trying to help students grow and the disconnection between educational authorities and teachers.
- Educational authorities preference to hire expatriate teachers over nationals.
- Teaching is not an interesting career choice for the students with some of them reporting not even liking their teachers.
- It is a hard job where teachers struggle to deliver the concept to all students and make sure that they all understand it.

### **5.1.6. Sources that students in the UAE get most of their information about teaching career from**

About half of the students surveyed indicated that mothers or female guardians are their major sources of information about teaching career, closely followed by their class teachers and then by their friends, siblings and media resources. As stated above, students' friends and family members discourage them from becoming teachers and they have a negative view on teaching as a career in general especially those who are working as teachers.

### **5.1.7. Changes to the UAE's educational system that could possibly encourage more young people to join the teaching field**

About 85% of the students surveyed stated that if the following changes in the educational are to happen, then teaching career would be a possible choice for them, which is a significant increase from the 55.7% that stated they may consider teaching as a career within the current status. The suggested changes chosen and given by the students are:

- Giving enough respect and value in society to the teaching profession and students displaying more respect to teachers.
- Revising the current teacher pay scale and having regular salary increases with experience.
- Rewarding good teachers.
- Carrying out workshops to train teachers on new teaching techniques.
- Having fewer periods to teach in a day so that teachers can finish the required work while in school rather than taking home extra work.

- Less exams especially for lower grades and more time for hands on activities and lab work.
- Giving teachers freedom in the way they teach and the way they deal with students.
- Change the way teachers and students view marks as a measure of knowledge.
- Change curriculums to be more flexible and reasonable in the amount of information students are supposed to know.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

It is concluded that the hypothesis tested in the quantitative phase of this study which states that teaching as a career choice is not popular among Emirati youth due to the perceived difficult working conditions and the less appreciated social status the teacher holds in the Emirati society is true. This conclusion was also supported by the interviews that were carried out in the second qualitative phase of the study.

Teaching career among the Emirati society is not valued enough to encourage young students to join this career, which is evident by the fact that students who consider their parents, family and friends their top reference, don't consider teaching as one of the possible career choices they may take. Students also believe that teaching is a stressful and demanding job that involves long daily working hours besides the time needed to prepare lessons and grade assignments after school and during weekends and that teachers are not paid fairly.



### **5.3. Limitations**

The study conducted has the following limitations:

- 1- The sample size is limited to 61 respondents in the quantitative phase and 40 respondents in the qualitative phase which although concedes with the minimum sample size of thirty generally accepted by researchers for the sake of statistical analysis carried on when conducting studies in the field of education (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007) it is considered small.
- 2- The sample came from one school with all female students. Including more schools with male participants would have provided a more generalized conclusion. However, gaining approval from the schools' administrations for individual researchers proved to be a challenging task and sometimes impossible.

### **5.4. Recommendations**

To elevate the teachers' quality and to have students of high caliber choose teaching as a career, the status of this profession in society has to be elevated (Dolton & Marcenaro-Gutierrez 2013). Authorities and policy makers have to target those aspects that motivate students to join this career (Richardson & Watt 2006). Therefore the following actions are recommended for each stakeholder involved:

#### **5.4.1. Recommendations for Governments and Policy Makers**

- Governments should establish a pay scale for teachers comparable to other higher paying jobs such as engineers and medical professionals. This increase should be linked to the teachers' qualifications and maintained by the teachers' satisfactory performance.

- Introducing an incentive scheme separate from the teachers' monthly salary.
- Effective teacher screening procedures before hiring should be implemented, and only those who are qualified should be accepted as teachers. Such screening should include aspects like the teacher's psychological health and fitness to deal with children, excellent pedagogical and subject knowledge and proper teaching certification.
- Giving teachers enough time during working hours to work on their lesson planning, marking and other duties so that the work they take home with them is minimal, as the case in most other professions. This can be done reducing the numbers of weekly teaching periods. Relieving teachers of administrative duties such as breaks and bus time supervision and limiting those to counselors and administrative staff will also help in this matter.
- Involve teachers in the decision-making process in aspects of curriculum, teachers' evaluation procedures and student assessments.
- Governments should support funding of training sessions and continuous education programs for teachers who are interested in further learning possibilities.
- Governments and the Ministry of Education should put more efforts into promoting the teaching career among high school students as well as the Emirati public in general.
- Restructure the holidays in the academic calendar so that teachers and students have short midterm holidays to recharge in the middle of a long term, without necessarily increasing the total number of holiday days.
- Take inspiration from the experiences of successful educational systems whose students keep outperforming other nations on international assessment tests such

as Finland, Singapore and Hong Kong. Finland for example has totally revamped its educational structure and implemented changes that are based raising the teacher's status in society and applying strict criteria for individuals to be accepted as teachers.

#### **5.4.2. Recommendations for Schools Administrations**

- Recognizing and rewarding exceptional teachers on regular basis.
- Providing help and support for new teachers and help them adapt to the school's environment more quickly.
- Effective tackling of students' behavioral issues and not tolerating lack of respect for teachers.
- Carrying out professional development sessions to increase the efficiency of teachers and introduce them to various teaching techniques to avoid boredom in class.
- Facilitating the permissions needed for school teachers to leave early or come late to work while they are pursuing professional development or higher education programs. Relieving teachers of administrative duties such as breaks and bus time supervision and limiting those to counselors and administrative staff will also help in this matter.
- Use events such as parents meetings and coffee mornings to enhance the relationship and the trust between the teachers and the general public.
- Provide teachers with confidence and autonomy in the way they deal with students and explain the subject.

### **5.4.3. Recommendations for Educational Colleges**

- Colleges offering educational degrees should promote this major among high school students by carrying out awareness sessions in schools and during career fairs.
- Educational colleges should provide training sessions to teachers and professional development programs with reduced costs and easy payment plans.
- Partnering with different local media outlets such as television and radio stations, newspapers and magazines to promote teaching as a career and highlight its value in the society.
- Partnering with top international universities to provide and develop programs that qualify and prepare the best teachers in the profession.

### **5.4.4. Recommendations for Teachers**

- Teachers need to be aware that they need to avoid expressing their negative impressions about the system and their feeling of exhaustion in front of the students. Such practices will not solve the teachers' problems, but rather convey a discouraging message to the students from ever thinking of becoming teachers. It will also affect the general learning atmosphere that should be built on teacher's enthusiasm and positivity.
- Teachers should work more on their professional development to gain skills that will help them get more relaxed such as how to organize the work efficiently, how to discipline disruptive students, and how to conduct enjoyable lessons that involve all students.
- Teachers should also get involved in activities during weekends or after working hours that help them get distracted from the stresses of their career and get

energized. Such activities include voluntary work, sports activities and joining art classes.

#### **5.4.5. Recommendations for Media Outlets**

- Local media production companies should partner with governmental educational institutions and universities to make documentaries and television shows that center around the teaching career and focus on its noble side, as well as portraying exceptional Emirati teachers and their achievements.
- Entertainment Shows that feature games and knowledge testing competitions with teachers being mentors or participants will also help tremendously in increasing the popularity of teachers among young people and the society in general.
- Work on making advertisement campaigns that change the stereotypical image of the teacher who is portrayed in the media as an employee who's always stressed out, that yells at the students, not in good shape, poor and miserable.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: The Survey

### Teaching As A Career

Section I

\* Required

**1. A.How important is each of these characteristics in your definition of a good classroom teacher? \***

*Check all that apply.*

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
1. Seems to enjoy teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Explains the subject clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Plans the daily lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Treats students for the respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is witty and humorous (smart and fun).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Makes you work hard so you will learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Returns student work promptly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Takes an interest in the students as individuals not just as learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Disciplines students effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Presents the subject content in a variety of ways so student stay interested in learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Works with students who need help or request help without embarrassing or criticizing them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is knowledgeable in the subject he or she teaches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Treats all students fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Praises good student performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Gives homework that help students learn the subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. **B. Which are the five (5) characteristics that you consider most important from the list above? Please tick the numbers of these five characteristics below. \***

*Check all that apply.*

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

3. **C. In your opinion how many of your classroom teachers from grade 8 through now showed the following characteristics? \***

*Check all that apply.*

	Most of them	About half of them	Just a few of them
1. Seems to enjoy teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Explains the subject clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Plans the daily lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Treats students with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is witty and humorous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Makes you work hard so you will learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Returns student work promptly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Takes an interest in the students as individuals not just as learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Disciplines students effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Presents the subject content in a variety of ways so students stay interested in learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Works with students who need help or request help without embarrassing or criticizing them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is knowledgeable in the subject he or she teaches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Treats all students fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Praises good student performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Gives homework that helps students learn the subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. **D. People often influence the future plans of students by giving them advice or making suggestions to them. How much have the following persons influenced your plans for after high school? Place an X in the one column that describes their amount of influence. If you have not had contact with some of the persons listed below place an X in the column labelled "Doesn't Apply". \***

*Check all that apply.*

		No Influence	Some Influence	Great Influence	Doesn't Apply
1	Your father or stepfather or male guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Your mother or stepmother or female guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Guidance counselor / Occupational specialist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Coach(es) or music director(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Classroom teacher(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Your own friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Sister(s) or brother(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Friends of your family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Relatives ( Not including parents, sisters or brothers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Military Recruiters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	College recruiters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Recruiters from vocational, technical schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Your employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Religious/ Spiritual Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. **Others? Please add below**

\_\_\_\_\_

6. **E. Teenagers often want to follow the career paths of people they admire. Because you admire them, you decide you like to do what they do. We call these people 'role models'. How much has each of these adults been a role model for your career plans? Place an X in the one column that best describes how much of a role model that person has been for your career plans. If you have not had experience with some of the persons listed below, place an X in the column labelled "Doesn't Apply". \***

*Check all that apply.*

		Not At All	Somewhat	A Great Deal	Doesn't Apply
1	Your father or stepfather or male guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Your mother or stepmother or female guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Coach(es) or music director(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Classroom teacher(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Your own friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Sister(s) or brother(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Friends of your family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Relatives ( Not including parents, sisters or brothers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Your employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Person from the Media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. **Others? Please add below.**

\_\_\_\_\_

8. **F. What do you think the monthly salary is for an Emirati public school teacher in the UAE?**

\*

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9. **G. As things stand now, what is the highest level of education you plan to complete? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than high school graduation.
- High school graduation.
- Vocational, trade or business school after high school.
- Graduation from junior or community college/ institute.
- Military service followed by college or vocational, trade or business school.
- Graduation from college (Bachelor degree)
- Complete a graduate or professional degree (Masters or Ph.D.)

10. **H. listed below are reasons other young people have given for choosing teaching as a career. Some of these reasons might encourage you to choose teaching as a career, some might discourage you from choosing it, and some might have no influence on your choice. Place an X in the one column that shows how you feel about each reason.\***

*Check all that apply.*

		Would Encourage Me	Would Have No Influence	Would Discourage Me
1.	Working with children or young people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Working in the subject area that is of special interest to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Helping others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Using my special skills or talents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Being able to find a job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Being respected by members of my local community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	The starting salary for teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	The daily working schedule of a teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Having friends or relatives recommend teaching as a career.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Helping a child or young person gain confidence in him/ herself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Teaching students a subject that I consider important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Improving the quality of education in the schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Applying my knowledge and experience in a creative way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Having job security.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Being respected by students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Periodic salary raises while teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	The annual work schedule (e.g. summer vacations off, long holiday breaks).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Having a teacher or counselor advise me to become a teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Having a positive effect on the life of a child or young person.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Working in a learning environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Making a positive change in society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Showing what "really creative teaching" is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Being able to work in a variety of geographic locations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Being respected by society.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	The opportunity for advancing in the profession after several years of teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Having time on the job to do day to day planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Would Encourage Me	Would Have No Influence	Would Discourage Me
27 Having the support of my parents to choose teaching as a career.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. I. As things stand now is teaching in any grade from kindergarten through to high school possible career choice for you? \*

*Check all that apply.*

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

12. J. Please explain what would keep you from choosing teaching as a career. \*

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13. **K. Below is a list of changes that will affect the career of teaching. In your opinion, how important is each of these changes in making teaching a more appealing career choice? Teaching would be a more appealing career choice to me if: \***

*Check all that apply.*

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
1. The starting salary teachers were increased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The work year for teachers will increase to 12 months (with a related increase in salary).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Effective teachers were recognized and rewarded for their efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Disruptive students were disciplined effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Ineffective teachers were required to improve their teaching or leave teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The physical appearance of schools and classrooms were improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The requirements to enter the teaching profession were as demanding as they are for other professions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Students showed more interest in learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Teaching jobs were easy to find.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The teaching profession was as respected as other professions are.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The salary after several years of teaching was higher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. There were more equipment or newer equipment in schools to help students learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Students showed more respect to teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Other changes were made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. **Please write in your own recommendation for a change.**

---



15. **L. From the list of changes in question K., please select the five changes that you consider to be the most important ones on the list. Please tick the numbers of those five changes below.\***

*Check all that apply.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

16. **M. If the five changes you have just selected as most important were actually made, would you be more likely to choose teaching as a career? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

17. **N. Young people get information about careers from a variety of people or school programs or media. How much information about teaching as a career has each of the following sources given you? If you have not had any experiences with some of the sources given below, place an X in the column labeled "Doesn't Apply." \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	None	Some	Great deal	Doesn't Apply
1 Your father or stepfather or male guardian.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Your mother or stepmother or female guardian.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Sister(s) or brother(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Classroom teacher(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Coach(es) or music director(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Relative (not including parent, sister(s), or brother(s))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Friends of your family.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Your own friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Your employer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Person from the media (radio, t.v., movie, newspaper, books, or youtube personality)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. **Please identify others if any.**

\_\_\_\_\_

19. **O. Would you be interested in getting more information about teaching as a career? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

20. **P. Would you be willing to discuss your feelings about teaching as a career and this survey with an interviewer? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

21. **If yes, please write your non-formal email to be able to reach you:**

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## Teaching As A Career

Section II

22. **A. What is the name and location (city) of your high school / University? \***

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23. **B. What is your current academic level? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

High School

University Student

Graduate

24. **C. What is your gender? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Female

25. **F. Which one of the following best describes your present/past high school program? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

General Education

An Academic or college preparatory program

A Vocational (occupational preparation) program

26. **G. Which of the following describes your grades in high school? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Mostly A's (94 - 100)
- About half A's (94 - 100) and half B's (87 - 93)
- Mostly B's (87 - 93)
- About half B's (87 - 93) and half C's (80 - 86)
- Mostly C's (80 - 86)
- About half C's (80 - 86) and half D's (75 - 79)
- Mostly D's (75 - 79)
- Mostly below D's (<75)

27. **H. What is the highest level of education your most influential parent (Father/Mother...) completed? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than high school graduation
- High school graduation
- Some special training or college courses after high school
- College graduation
- Graduate degree (Masters, Doctorate...)
- Don't know

28. **J. Please describe the most recent job held by your most influential parent (Father/Mother...) even if he/she is not working at present? \***

---

29. **L. What is the highest level of education held by your second most influential parent or stepparent or guardian? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than high school graduation
- High school graduation
- Some special training or college courses after high school
- College graduation
- Graduate degree (Masters, Doctorate...)
- I don't know

30. **N. Please describe the most recent job held by your second most influential parent (Father/Mother...) even if he/she is not working at present? \***

---

31. **O. Which one best describes the monthly income of your family? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- 15000 AED or less
  - 30000 AED or less
  - 50000 AED or less
  - More than 50000 AED
  - I don't know
- 

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## **Appendix B: The Interview Questions:**

The Interview Questions:

- 1- Who did you choose as the person in your life that had the greatest influence on you?
  
- 2- Can you explain the reasoning behind your choice?
  
- 3- How did the following people affect your future plans and career choices?
  - a. Teachers:
  - b. Friends:
  - c. Media:
  - d. Brothers and Sisters:
  
- 4- What's the specialization that you would like to study after finishing high school.
  - a. Why did you choose it?
  - b. How far do you want to achieve when it comes to your academic level.
  
- 5- Is teaching a possible career choice for you?

If yes explain why.

If no, why not?

And if maybe, what are the circumstances that would make you work as a teacher?