GCES
The Gulf Comparative Education Society

SEVENTH ANNUAL GCES SYMPOSIUM

INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION: VALUES, CHALLENGES, AND PROSPECTS FOR EDUCATION IN THE GCC

Conference Proceedings

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Arab Open University - Kuwait Branch, Kuwait

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FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

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المحتويات

INTRODUCTION

The Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) held its seventh annual symposium under the sponsorship of the Arab Open University Kuwait, the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research from April 5th to 7th, 2016. Entitled "Innovation and Transformation: Values, Challenges, and Prospects for Education in the GCC," the symposium was held at the Arab Open University in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

It consisted of three different pre-conference workshops, two keynote addresses, three featured panels and seven breakout sessions with over 42 presentations by both invited speakers as well as those who had submitted abstracts. The speakers came from a wide variety of countries including the UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Egypt, Switzerland, England, Australia, and the United States, and represented different voices in the education sector, such as policymakers, academics and researchers, school providers and leaders, consultants, and teachers.

The theme for 2016 was inspired by a 2015 UNESCO 'Call for Action' to governments, institutions, faculty members, and students around the world to address the need for recognizing and reinforcing the practices of Open, Flexible, Online learning (OFO) as fundamental to the UN goals of Education for Sustainable Development and Education for All. The conference included presentations that focused on the use of innovation to transform education across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The keynote addresses were delivered by Dr. Suaad Alshebou from the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Kuwait and Dr. Gita Steiner-Khamsi from Columbia University.

The featured panels and breakout sessions addressed the following key topics:

- Culture, Leadership, and Reform
- Early Childhood Education
- Education Systems, Public Policy, and Economic Development
- Effective Classroom Practices
- Internationalization of Higher Education
- International Trends vs. Regional Realities
- Perspectives on Teacher Development
- Meaningful Inclusion for All Children
- School Culture Assessment

- School Leadership
- Women and Girls in Education

In addition, the symposium brought together over 75 participants working in a range of organizations across the Gulf states and beyond, all of whom shared an interest in comparative education in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Following the symposium, speakers were asked if they would like to submit a 1,500 – 3,000 word paper on their presentation. This volume is the compilation of those papers that were submitted. While it does not cover all of the presentations that were made at the symposium, slides for some of the other presentations are available on the GCES website (www.gces.ae).

Dr. Abdullah Alajmi, President

Dr. Natasha Ridge and Susan Kippels, Secretariat Representatives

Brian Jaewon Chung, Sahar ElAsad, Holly Cook, and Lauren Clingan, Proceedings Editors

المقدمة

عقدت الجمعية الخليجية للتربية المقارنة المنتدى السنوي السابع لها برعاية الجامعة العربية المفتوحة في الكويت و مؤسسة الشيخ سعود بن صقر القاسمي لبحوث السياسة العامة من 5 إلى 7 أبريل 2016. تحت عنوان " الابتكار والتحول: القيم والتحديات وآفاق التعليم في دول مجلس التعاون الخليجي" ، عُقد المنتدى في الجامعة العربية المفتوحة في الكويت.

وقد تضمّن المنتدى ثلاث ورش عمل تحضيرية قبل المؤتمر، وكلمتان إفتتاحيتان رئيسية ، و ثلاث جلسات متخصصة، وسبع جلسات جانبية قام خلالها أكثر من 42 متحدث ومتحدثة بتقديم العروض والملخصات. وقد حضر هؤلاء المتحدثون من بلدان عدة مثل: الامارات العربية المتحدة، و الكويت، وسلطنة عمان، والبحرين، وقطر، ومصر، وسويسرا، والمملكة المتحدة، وأستراليا، والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية ومثّلوا أصوات مختلفة في قطاع التربية والتعليم، مثل صانعي السياسات، والأكاديميين، والباحثين، والمدراء والقياديين في المدارس، والمستشارين، والمعلمين.

واستلهم موضوع ندوة هذا العام من "نداء للعمل" للعام 2015 من اليونسكو للحكومات والمؤسسات، وأعضاء هيئة التدريس، والطلاب في جميع أنحاء العالم لتلبية الحاجة إلى الاعتراف وتعزيز ممارسات التعليم المفتوحة و المرنة، و عبر الإنترنت (OFO) باعتباره عنصراً أساسياً في تحقيق أهداف الأمم المتحدة للتعليم من أجل التنمية المستدامة وتوفير التعليم للجميع.

وتضمن المؤتمر عروضاً ركزت على استخدام الابتكار لتحويل التعليم في دول مجلس التعاون الخليجي (GCC). قدمت الكلمتان الإفتتاحيتان الرئيسية كل من الدكتورة سعاد الشبو من الهيئة العامة للتعليم التطبيقي والتدريب (PAAET) في الكويت والدكتورة جيتا شتاينر-خامسي من جامعة كولومبيا.

وتناولت حلقات النقاش والجلسات الجانبية المواضيع التالية:

- الثقافة، والقيادة، والإصلاح
- تعليم الطفولة المبكرة
- نظم التعليم، والسياسة العامة، والتنمية الاقتصادية
- الممارسات الفعالة في الصف
- التعليم العالي الدولي
- الاتجاهات الدولية مقابل الحقائق الإقليمية
- وجهات نظر حول تطوير المعلم
- الإدراج الهادف لجميع الأطفال
- تقييم الثقافة المدرسية
- القيادة المدرسية
- النساء والفتيات في التعليم

بالإضافة إلى ذلك، نجح المنتدى بجمع أكثر من 75 مشارك ومشاركة يعملون في مختلف المنظمات في جميع أنحاء دول الخليج والعالم أجمع ،الذين تشاركوا بإهتمامهم الكبير في التربية المقارنة في دول مجلس التعاون الخليجي .

بعد الندوات سأل المقدمون إن كانوا يودون تقديم ورقة عمل تتضمن من 1500 – 3000 كلمة حول العرض الذي قاموا بتقديمه خلال المنتدى. هذا هو المجلد الذي يحتوي على أوراق العمل التي تم تقديمها. وفي حين أن المجلد لا يغطي جميع

العروض التي تم تقديمها خلال المنتدى، إلا أنه سيتم توفير شرائح العروض الإلكترونية على موقع الجمعية الخليجية للتربية المقارنة (www.gces.ae).

الدكتور **عبدالله العجمي**– الرئيس

الدكتورة ناتاشا ريدج و **سوزن كبلز** – الأمناء

سوزن كبلز و بريان جاي وون تشونغ و سحر الأسد و هولي كوك و لورين كلينجان – محررو المجلد

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS (DSM) ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN EGYPT

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Introduction

Classrooms throughout the world include special needs students. Yet, these educational spaces often lack an awareness of the definitions and diagnostics of special needs as well as their implications for effective classroom instruction. Mental health professionals use the American Psychiatric Association's (APA's) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) to conduct a special needs diagnosis. Upon diagnosis, they are expected to provide the student an individualized education plan (IEP), with the express purpose of enriching the student's learning experience by ensuring equal educational opportunities. This includes protection from unnecessary discipline or exclusion due to non-harmful behaviors stemming from their needs. While some students diagnosed with the same disorder have similar experiences or symptoms, experts recommend that schools and parents approach each case individually, so that treatment and accommodations are tailored to meet specific students' needs (Wong, 2004).

There is a general lack of awareness of special needs in the Egyptian education sector, as special education is a relatively new field in the region. As a result, special needs students in schools face unnecessary disciplinary reprimands, often due to the symptoms of their disorder being perceived as misbehaviors. Regardless of what government policies dictate, schools that service special needs students often lack facilities, training, and experienced staff members. This is a systemic problem that will only be remedied by updating Egyptian policies so that they become able to provide schools with the necessary information, tools, and resources to ensure equal educational opportunities for special needs students.

Egypt's public education system is outdated and largely relies on curriculum based on rote learning and memorization. Students are taught to memorize content in order to pass twice-yearly assessments (Browne, 2011). The private education system is more popular, but contains its own unique challenges. International schools bring in curricula from other countries, including the US and the UK, without taking into account that these pedagogies were tailored to native English speakers (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). This leads to major learning disability assessment concerns in Egyptian international schools, as the tools used to assess learning disabilities are not culturally or linguistically relevant (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of a typical Egyptian international school's special needs policy as measured by the experiences and perceptions of teachers, administrators, and mental health professionals. It analyzes the influence of the DSM, which provides diagnostic classifications on special needs, has on the school's discipline and classroom management policies. For this research, *special needs* are defined as physical, emotional, behavioral, or mental limitations that prevent children from

behaving and processing information the way they are expected to. As such, special needs include learning disabilities as well as giftedness.

Literature Review

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

Created by a task force from the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is the standard classification for mental disorders used in the United States by mental health professionals across different clinical settings. While the DSM provides criteria on the expected symptoms for each disorder and the expected length of its symptoms, it also limits the contradictory symptoms in order to provide unified criteria and diagnostic reliability (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

The latest edition of the DSM, the DSM5, contains one critical update. It now recognizes that mental disorders do not and will not always fit within the boundaries of one specific disorder. The most relevant and controversial change has been the Autism Spectrum Disorder, which consolidated autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder. This change is meant to improve "sensitivity and specificity of the criteria for the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and to identify more focused treatment targets for the specific impairments identified." (p. xlii) The symptoms are represented on a continuum regarding social communication and restrictive repetitive behaviors or interests (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This update will require revised organizational structures and has vast policy implications for the education sector in Egypt. The paper begins by exploring topics in the US and then focuses on the case of Egypt and the greater need for DSM to provide special needs students with greater support, particularly in international school settings.

Governmental Influence in the United States and Egypt

In the US, there have been several policies and laws passed to support children with special needs. Early federal support for educating children with disabilities began in 1968, but the most effective laws were passed in 1975, guaranteeing access to free and appropriate public education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, more commonly known as IDEA (2008), has allowed special needs students to receive a higher quality of education, preparing them for integration into general education. In addition, the introduction of the renewed Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 mandated that all children with disabilities are offered the same opportunities as non-disabled students, including access to appropriate education in the least restrictive milieu (Reynolds, 2008). Besides expanding the current opportunities available to students with special needs, the U.S. Department of Education aims to improve instruction through various methods, including through the *Tool Kit on Teaching and Assessing Children with Disabilities* (OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2014). This publication provides insight into effective teaching and assessment methods in special needs contexts and thus provides a blueprint for schools to support special needs students.

Along similar lines, there has also been extensive research focusing on what schools and educators can do to support children with special needs. Boyd (2012) found that schools must have a systemic discipline system in order to foster a psychologically and physically safe environment that ensures productive education for all students, including those with disabilities.

As in the US, Egypt also has special laws to support children with special needs. According to Egypt's State Information Service (2009), Egypt designates special attention to students with special needs to ensure equitable learning opportunities. Egypt's 1996 Child's Law 12 mandates special needs students receive proper care based upon their needs. Article 76 of Egypt's Child Law 12 specifically states that special needs children have the right to a healthy social, physical, and psychological life that nurtures independence and facilitates social integration (Egyptian E-Government, 1996). Article 77 states children and families have the right to social, psychological, medical, educational, and employment rehabilitation. More recently in Egypt, the Ministry of Education (MOE) states in its National Strategic Plan for Pre-University Education Reform that one of its main objectives is to provide disabled students with a high level of education equivalent to their non-disabled peers (Ministry of Education, 2014). Accordingly, the MOE seeks to increase the number of special needs schools with proper resources and learning opportunities by 2017.

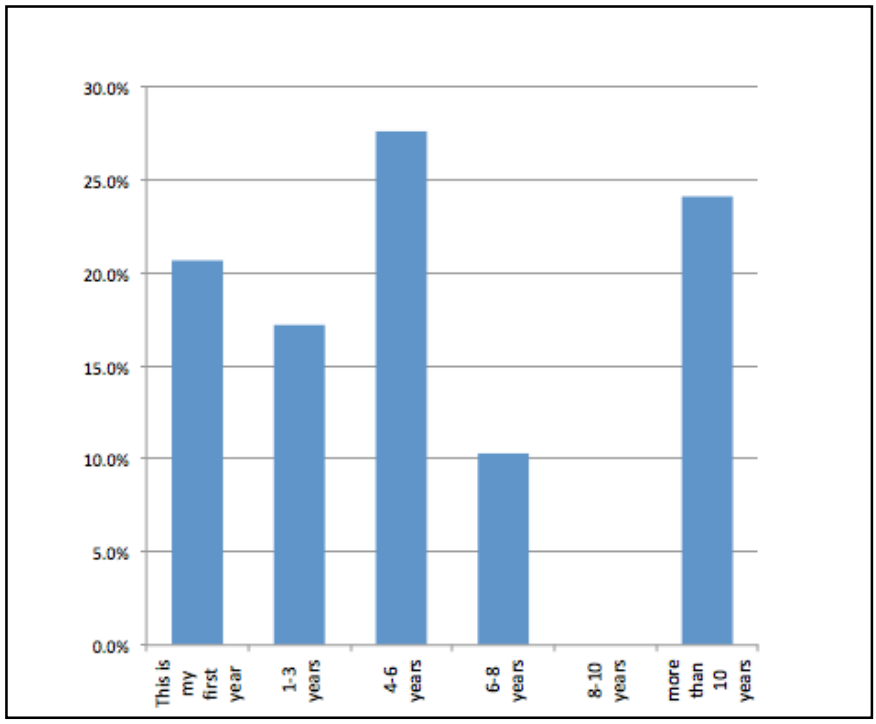
There are obvious differences between the special needs policies in the US and Egypt. The policies in the US are comprehensive and offer teacher support, whereas the policies in Egypt are vague at best. Furthermore, while there seems to be implementation and follow-up of the US policies, the same cannot be said regarding the policies in Egypt. This could be attributed to the vague sense of the purpose and implications of implementing policies in Egypt. For example, the Egyptian policy enables schools to open special education departments, but without giving any guidelines, restrictions, or regulations. In that regard, how can the government follow up to ensure that the schools are properly implementing and abiding by the policies? Furthermore, how can schools internalize the national policies without such guidelines? Egyptian government policies should be more comprehensive and holistic so as to ensure that all students are afforded the best opportunities available to them.

Methodology

This study analyzes the influence of the DSM on school discipline and classroom management policies in an international school in Egypt. It utilized two different data collection tools, questionnaires and interviews, for two separate participant groups (one school and one group of mental health professionals). The first set of participants included a group of middle school teachers and administrators from one Egyptian international school. The school was a private multilingual school offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program and instructs in Arabic, English, and French. This school was chosen on the basis of the fact that it had a special needs policy. With the school program coordinator's approval and informed consent of the participants, the electronic questionnaire was distributed. In order to ensure accuracy and protection of respondents, the results were collected anonymously and kept confidentially.

To obtain data on the experience of working with special needs students, the questionnaire asked about the teachers' and administrators' qualifications, positions, training, and personal experience with special needs students. It also assessed their knowledge of the DSM and its diagnostic standards. Twenty-nine out of 43 questionnaires were returned, with only 22 respondents filling out the complete questionnaire. Of the 29 respondents, 82.8% were teachers and 17.2% were administrators. The breakdown of their experience in terms of years is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Distribution of the Participants Based on Years of Experience in Education (years)



The second set of participants was comprised of three Egyptian mental health professionals, who each had more than 10 years of experience working with special needs and/or learning disabilities. Upon receiving their informed consent, the professionals participated in semi-structured one-on-one interviews. Their identities have been kept confidential.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Middle School Teachers and Administrators Questionnaire

Eighty-eight percent of the questionnaire respondents reported being aware of their schools' special needs policy. Table 1 depicts respondents' varying perceptions of the policy in terms of its effectiveness, implementation, updates, informative, and inclusivity.

Table 1: Evaluations of the School's Special Needs Policy

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Effective	20%	56%	24%
Implemented	40%	36%	24%
Needs Updating	62.5%	29.2%	8.3%
Informative	26.1%	56.5%	17.4%
Inclusive	41.7%	25%	33.3%

The data shows that there is a general disagreement about the special needs policy. Staff members who felt neutral towards the effectiveness of the policy may have felt that way due to their lack of awareness and understanding of the policy, special needs, and their implications in teaching and learning. There also seems to be a lack of consensus regarding the implementation of the policy. This could be due to their lack of awareness of the policy and potential lack of administrative follow-up in ensuring that staff abides by the policy when it is necessary. It could also be due to their lack of understanding in how and when to use the policy and to what capacity. Furthermore, most of the respondents believe that the policy needs to be updated. Finally, there is disagreement about the inclusivity of the policy itself. This may be due to the fact that special needs policies are generally expected to be tailored to accommodate the different types of special needs.

When asked if they had received special needs training, 29.2% stated they had received training while 70.8% stated they had not. Table 2 represents the survey results of those who had not received training. Those who indicated that the questions did not apply were those who had received training, and therefore labeled as 'Not Applicable'.

Table 2: Summary Results of the Questionnaire - Respondents Who Did Not Receive Special Needs Training

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Not Applicable
I am interested in receiving special needs training	70.8%	8.3%	—	20.8%
Special needs training will allow me to become a more effective teacher	75%	—	4.2%	20.8%
Special needs training is essential and should be mandatory for all staff members	75%	—	4.2%	20.8%

The data reveals that many school staff are still yet to receive training on special needs. This is problematic as it could potentially lead to a vicious cycle of negativity between the student and the teacher, where the teacher does not have the capacity to use the necessary knowledge and/or skills to manage special needs students. This unpreparedness may be why the majority of respondents expressed interest in receiving training and believed it would allow them to become more effective teachers. It also offers an explanation as to why they believe such training is essential and should be mandatory to all staff members.

Table 3 shows the perceptions of respondents who had received special needs training. Respondents who answered not applicable had not received training. The data shows that a significant portion of those who received the training rated their experience as neutral, which may suggest the training quality was not up to expectations. Furthermore, this finding may also suggests that the respondents still feel inadequately prepared to cater to the needs of special needs students. Finally, the majority of those who had received training, like those who had not, seems to agree that special needs training is essential and should be mandatory for all staff members.

Table 3: Summary Results of the Questionnaire - Respondents Who Received Special Needs Training

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Not Applicable
The special needs training/professional development I received was helpful	16.7%	12.5%	—	70.8%
The special needs training/professional development I received was comprehensive	12.5%	16.7%	—	70.8%
The special needs training/professional development I received allowed me to become a more effective teacher	12.5%	16.7%	—	70.8%
Special needs training is essential and should be mandatory for all staff members	25%	8.3%	—	66.7%

Of the 22 respondents, none claimed familiarity with the DSM. Yet, 40.9% respondents stated they agree the DSM can be an effective tool in dealing with students who have been diagnosed with special needs. 13.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the DSM can have a negative influence on students due to the stigma associated with labeling. DSM awareness allows teachers and administrators to be cognizant of the different symptoms associated with various special needs, and recognize potential 'red flags'. Teachers and administrators who are aware of the symptoms, conditions needed

for diagnosis, and requisite timeframe are less likely to spuriously label students. Just as not every troublemaker has Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), rushing into the label without proper awareness leads to detrimental results, including social stigmatization of the student.

Interviews with Mental Health Professionals

When asked to define special needs, the participants' responses were consistent. One participant stated that students with special needs are those who have certain challenges and, depending on the type of disorder, require a learning environment tailored to their needs. Another indicated that students with special needs are those who have low or borderline IQs with conditions ranging from autism, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disability (formerly mental retardation). The participants agreed that diagnosis is important for schools to help tailor the methods of instruction and classroom settings in accordance with the child's needs. The participants cautioned that schools' tendency to label students as "cases" after diagnosis, leads to bullying by peers.

In describing the role of the school, one participant stated that the school plays a significant role regarding awareness, teacher training, and hiring qualified professionals. They emphasized the importance of student-teacher rapport, comparing it to the therapist-client relationship with alliance, positive expectations, genuine interest, and positive challenges. Another participant described the needed student-teacher rapport as "when you give love, you receive love" (Participant 1). In regards to their experience working with schools, the participants replied negatively. According to one participant, even though the work with the teachers and administrators was negative, work with the students often led to positive results. They went further, stating that the administration's decision-making processes are negative, especially since inclusion was added because of an accreditation requirement by the American system.

International schools in Egypt lack awareness regarding special needs and tend to retain special needs students mostly as a business decision without regards to qualifications, resources or willingness to accommodate. One participant stated they have an "ethical issue with schools because they accept special needs students when they are not only unequipped to deal with them, but also because they are not willing to invest in the necessary training for their staff" (Participant 2). Another teacher reported feeling used solely for "commercial purposes," and that there was very little substantive awareness or interest by the school.

When asked about the instruments used for diagnosis, the participants stated that they have yet to use the DSM-5. One participant described the many debates over DSM-5, due to some of the changes that were made. They believe that since psychiatrists do diagnosis, it is best to avoid diagnosis unless there is a dire need for it. Another participant stated that they are waiting for the release of the expected DSM-5-TR, which they believe will resolve the controversy and debates surrounding DSM-5. When asked about how their work is influenced by diagnostic instruments, one participant said that it is a good guideline in terms of diagnosis and identifying the areas the student needs work on. The student, their needs, and their behavior influence this. Another participant stated that the DSM is best used for psychological disorders and that she does not use it with students because she believes it cannot be effectively applied in Egypt.

Finally, when asked about governmental influence regarding special needs education, the participants vehemently stated the government has no influence, and that this is a problem that needs to be addressed. Laws allow schools to enroll special needs students without ensuring equal opportunity. The government needs to provide Egyptian educators with a formalized special needs accommodation manual as a guide for supporting every student's needs, regardless of ability.

Conclusion

This research started out as an attempt to assess the influence of the DSM on an international school in Egypt. From the results, the lack of awareness regarding special needs became clear, leading to further questions regarding the perceptions and experiences of teachers and administrators. Students with learning disabilities, including ADHD and autism, are often integrated into the educational system without necessary resources or training on the part of the school, which may negatively affect special needs students as well as the efficacy of classroom instruction.

A more problematic issue is the vague Egyptian laws, which states that schools can have special needs classes, yet do not mandate government provision for the resources necessary for implementing such policies. Thus, schools may become inclusive solely for commercial reasons without having the proper mechanisms in place to support special needs students. Schools need clear guidelines regarding special needs, teaching strategies for various disorders, and the requisite academic, behavioral, and physical accommodations. The government must follow-up with schools with special needs students to ensure best strategies and accommodations.

Special needs students should not be perceived as unnecessary burdens or as lazy, unengaged problem students. They have the right to the same educational opportunities and experiences as regular students. In order for schools to abide by their duty to educate special needs students, they need to be willing to make the necessary changes and accommodations, for the good of the students. When a school decides to include these students, they need to adequately train and support all staff members. Though this study, as a pilot, had a small sample size, it indicates the dire need for change in Egypt's education sector regarding special needs awareness, training, and government intervention.

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THE EXISTENCE AND MERITS OF TEACHER RISK-TAKING IN THE UAE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Introduction

Since the late twentieth century, educational institutions have disengaged from traditional forms of educational administration and adapted forms of practice used in private and corporate management (Meyer, 2002, p. 534). Their management structure has transformed to resemble a business model, in order to support better practices and accountability. However, as a learning institution is primarily concerned with humans, and not profit, the business model invariably clashes with the ethos of a learning environment. Frost (2004, p. 72) explains, "Turbo capitalism has distorted the aims of schools and has undermined communitarian values and social capital. In particular, trust and agency are weakened." These distorted aims reduce social capital and in turn decreases the human capital within schools through policy and procedures, and this restricts teacher's agency to solve educational problems. Fallout from the weakening of trust and agency is the decline of risk-taking (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). Simultaneously, the ability of school staff to take risks has a bearing on the institutions ability to self-regulate problems (Fullan, 2008). Educational leaders should pay attention to this loss of measurable human capital, as it is an important cog in an educational organization.

This paper is primarily a literature review that introduces concepts and theories behind risk-taking by teachers. It enquires into the merits of risk taking by teachers, specifically in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) education system. This research also proposes the concept of Classroom Risk-taking (CRT), which is defined as any action taken by teachers, which challenges established policy and procedure, in order to improve student participation, achievement and, in turn, school effectiveness. This paper proposes that Classroom Risk-taking is a component of measurable School Social Capital. I define School Social Capital as the accumulation of shared values, abilities, trust, and moral obligations of a school's staff. I propose that School Social Capital requires trust, agency, and social networking to improve. When educational leaders promote Classroom Risk-taking, School Social Capital will increase, advancing school effectiveness and consequently driving effective learning.

Argument for Classroom Risk-taking in the UAE

Educational change is occurring across the UAE (Macpherson, Kachelhoffer & El Nemr, 2007). Since the age of standardization and marketization fell upon education, educational leaders have been pressured to implement educational change by the book and this dominates over arguments for contextual input into school policy and procedures (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). The prosaic nature of managerialism prevents educational leaders from applying context into the day-to-day running of schools. In the UAE, the Abu Dhabi Educational Council now sees the autonomous decisions over attendance and length of a school day, which was once the remit of school leadership, as deviant practices. Brown & Duguid (1991) have an interesting paper on the value of deviant practices over canonical ones. In a corporation's view,

practices that differ from given policy and procedures are deviant practices, and by relying on canonical methods of management, managers develop an outlook that cannot appreciate the importance of innovation in classrooms (Brown & Duguid, 1991, p.42). An innovative teacher can solve problems of student attendance, classroom management etc. without the need of their managers input ergo freeing leadership to pursue other timely matters. Brown & Duguid (1991, p.42) reported on employees who developed personalized practices to implement their corporation's fixed approach, in a job "laden with the dilemmas, inconsistencies, and unpredictability of everyday life." In this case, productivity and capability increased.

Likewise, the unpredictability of a new classroom and school makes the grounding of new practices troublesome. Schools, being a microcosm of society, deal with a variety of personalities and performance from students to leadership. Therefore, it is unpredictable. Fullan (2008, p. 28) reports on the damage which fixed policy implementation, without the input of context and prior knowledge, can do to the staff morale and increases stress on teachers. Expatriate teachers may follow their own norms and values, even as they use a new curriculum and operate in a different educational context, which could lead to potential conflicts between teachers and leadership (Brown & Duguid, 1991). They argue that if company representatives follow non-canonical practices, the management could assume that their representatives are "untrainable, uncooperative, and unskilled". Likewise, school leaders could develop negative views of such teachers with deviant teaching practices, rather than supporting them to improve the school efficiency.

Abstract goals may appear when schools implement policy and procedures without the factor of context in their creation. When context is removed from policy creation, it may lead to teachers taking liberties. For example, staff in the Atlanta Public Schools district cheated on state-administered standardized exams (Fausset, 2014). Teachers who confessed blamed the extreme pressure to achieve abstract goals set by the district and said they faced severe consequences such as a loss of job if they did not meet the set goals. Staff were accountable for students' marks. The social responsibility attached to teaching was replaced with accountability for the student's results, regardless of the students'/school context. Not understanding the pressures put on the school staff to reach district targets by the leadership, led to the formation of risk taking behaviors favoring self-preservation over social responsibility. Additionally, prosaic leadership styles usually cause the practitioners' perception of the situation to be dismissed (Elliot, 1996, p. 217). The teacher, with their implicit understanding of the classrooms codes and nonverbal communication, is hindered from advancing teaching and learning using this knowledge. Such a mechanistic way is undesirable as the basis for the teaching role professionally. As Elliot (1996, pp. 217-218) states, "mechanical behavior in teachers doesn't work for education".

Alternatively, to being fearful of different work practice, Fullan (1999, p 23) advocates that conflict and diversity are our "friends" and "…it is better to incorporate differences early in the process of change…than to avoid conflict only to have to face it later when it is unresolvable". Similarly, Shepard (1967) advocates for an "organizational form consistent with support for continual changing and self-renewal, rather than with a primary mission of maintenance and control". Both, therefore, reinforce the argument

that an educational institution that utilizes Classroom Risk-taking supports a changing environment.

Impact of Classroom Risk-Taking in the UAE

A major concern in the UAE, as reported recently, is that the turnover of teachers each year might be as high as 50% in public schools (Pennington, 2015). A high turnover of staff has weighty consequences in workplaces that require extensive communication among staff as 'policy amnesia' can set a learning institution back a few years (Taysum and Iqbal, 2012, p.14). Using this lens, a high turnover of school staff does not simply cause staffing issues but also harms the school environment and student performance (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 31). Staff with experience in the school can help student performance, because students and other staff tend to be relaxed around a familiar teacher. In addition, they could act as an anchor for sustaining the shared values amongst staff, which helps to create a positive work environment. These shared values and beliefs among staff and administrative support for teachers are aspects of high performing schools. A study by Kersaint (2005) indicated that principals who successfully retain their faculty are more likely to involve their teachers in decision-making, while those who do not often find a majority of their staff unsatisfied. Therefore, a key factor in teachers leaving their profession could be the administrators' failure to actively involve staff in the decision making process (Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007, p.782).

Besides the obvious saving of financial and human investment in recruitment and development of new staff, there could also be additional benefits associated with the retention of competent staff (Bowen & Schuster, 1986). The promotion of Classroom Risk-taking by education leaders would potentially increase school effectiveness, as administrative support of such strategies would stimulate trust, agency and shared values (aspects of School Social Capital). This, in turn, would ultimately lower teacher turnover, and promote a culture of high performance.

Risk Taking

I define Classroom Risk-taking as any action taken by teachers that challenges established policy and procedure in order to improve student participation, achievement and, in turn, school effectiveness. However, a framework for implementing risk-taking is imperative to ensure justification of delicate strategies.

The Collins Dictionary Online (2016) defines risk-taking as "the practice of taking action which might have undesirable consequences." However, in business its definition is, "an individual or business that tends to behave in a way that can potentially cause physical harm or financial loss, but might also present an opportunity for a rewarding outcome." ("What is risk taker? Definition and meaning," 2016)

Vasquez, Heilig, & Young (2012) comment that in the business world, a principal objective of an organization may be growing profit, but for educational institutions, a principal objective may be increasing students' marks and raising school evaluations. Hence, "the risk management process in both cases would involve identifying and measuring exposures, selecting alternatives, implementing solutions and monitoring results" (Vasquez et al., 2012, p. 567). As schools have "adapted forms of practice used

in private and corporate management", for example the prevalence of line managers and continuous staff evaluation in schools, and risk-taking is an expected practice in business, it should be evident in everyday actions of schools (Meyer, 2002, p.534). The existence of Classroom Risk-taking is as "a response to the entrenchment of long standing business ideology…in educational policy" (Meyer, 2002, p. 567). Therefore, school leadership should concern themselves with its presence.

Recent literature promotes the use of risk-taking in schools. Risk-taking by teachers increases student confidence and lowers behavioral issues by reducing anxiety (Hargreaves, 1995, p.28). Creemers & Kyriakides (2011, p.19) view risk-taking as a component of school improvement. While, principals in successful schools support teacher risk-taking and innovation (Cotton, 2003). In addition, network-learning communities[1] promote risk-taking and creativity (Harris & Chrispeels, 2006). Ideally, risk-taking in educational organizations starts at day one for educational leaders. For example, when analyzing new or current policies, "critical reflection may reveal policy strengths and areas for development which may at the same time affirm and subvert policy in a constructive way to bring about coherence and improvement in delivery or provision" (Taysum & Iqbal, 2012, p. 15).

Across schools, adherence to policy is accomplished through reflection and subjective realization of its impact within the context of the institution. Teachers reflect on policy to fashion "sense of external policy agendas, respond to factors specific to their own context and develop and pursue their own agendas" (Bell & Stevenson, 2006, p.142). As every school's context differs, the position of teachers to implement policy is vital. Some policy can be difficult to implement but can be managed by innovating and adjusting policy and procedure. Therefore, risk-taking in schools can lead to a faster embedding of policy, which may take longer when using prosaic methods and may have contextual barriers to implement. For example, attendance policies are strict by nature but for an Islamic school Ramadan can prove problematic, as most students will pray in the morning and may miss the first bell/assembly. If the school follows policy, the students are late. Therefore, adjusting the attendance policy during Ramadan is best practice as it affirms and bring coherence to the attendance policy.

Taking responsibility for student learning is a vital component of teaching. Responsibility before accountability is a logical step to school improvement and increased effectiveness (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). However, the dominance of accountability now holds over responsibility in educational institutions has led to a paradigm shift. Leadership pushes aside teachers' problem-solving capabilities in favor of procedural solutions. Institutions categorize students and deal with issues through policies, created without contextual influence. This mechanistic behavior is detrimental to education as James (2006) referred to in his study of teacher training and Ball (1998, p.123) reports this "indirect steering replaces intervention and prescription with target setting, accountability and comparison".

[1] Clusters of schools/ departments or professionals who share a common academic goal and regularly meet to discuss/share best practice in order to improve

Utilitarianism

The justification of risk is determined only by its resulting consequences; as such, utilitarianism is a framework by which risk strategies can be implemented and vindicated. Bentham (1776) wrote that utilitarianism "is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong". Hargreaves (2008, p. 233) states the idea from utilitarian ethics of balancing the results of an action to "maximize the goodness of an outcome is a useful and practical mechanism for judging the moral acceptability of innovative strategies".

With prescriptive policy designed to solve school issues, whether it is student attendance and behavior or a curriculum that is not appealing for students, teachers are restricted in finding common ground in its implementation. The urge to be responsible for the development of students/society is replaced by the urge to protect their job by following orders. As Fullan (2003, p.11) explains that the value of morality held by teachers has diminished. He argues that ... "with all the emphasis on uninformed prescription and informed over the past twenty years, one of the casualties has been teachers' intrinsic motivation or sense of moral purpose." Educational leaders should not wrongly judge the depth of "moral purpose inherent in the … (human)… psyche, especially if this is connected to the improvement of humankind social development" (Fullan, 2003, p. 15). Fullan (2008) also reminds us that teacher exchanges are likely to be weak unless coupled with moral commitments, "unless they (teachers) were bound together by a moral commitment to growth, empathy, and shared responsibility, teachers were as likely to replicate the prevailing school culture as to change it" (p.38).

Senge et al. (2000, p.7) propose one of the five learning disciplines as "Shared Vision" when improving school learning.

> People with a common purpose …can learn to nourish a sense of commitment in a group or organization by developing shared images of the future. A school or community that hopes to live by learning needs a common shared vision.

Although utilitarianism does not suit recent educational policies, such as "No Child left Behind" and "Every Child Matters", as their raison d'être to consume class time to promote the weakest academically, However, by practicing Classroom Risk-taking through a utilitarian framework, which endorses shared values, could promote school effectiveness through maximizing school potential, as well as raising School Social Capital. Consequently, this would promote effective learning.

Conclusion

Education leadership should reflect on the impact accountability holds over responsibility and the barriers to risk-taking it establishes. It removes the autonomy of teachers, reduces the human capital of the school and increases disillusionment. Initiative and experimentation may disappear and teacher turnover rates may rise. I propose the social responsibility attached to teaching may transfer into accountability for the self, as Dostoevsky (1880) discussed without morality everything is permitted. By ignoring Classroom Risk-taking, another Atlanta scandal may occur, or be happening today (Fausset, 2014). Therefore, my research into Classroom Risk-taking leads me into asking more questions about how teachers in different countries approach problems. Do they take the prosaic method? Are they allowed to try different methods of problem

solving? However, my preliminary research into this issue in the UAE has led to a conclusion that should gladden the most skeptical of educational theorists. It is a topic that deserves more investigation.

I have deduced that by acting against expected procedure, it is not anarchy but a means of maximizing the potential or social capital within schools. Therefore, the presence of Classroom Risk-taking in my context is a result of the dominant role accountability now holds over the social responsibility of teaching. Its existence is evidence of man's moral compass against the pressures of managerialism, and it depicts innovation and the social responsibility of teachers towards education.

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WHAT CAN CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND STEM PRACTITIONERS IN THE GULF REGION LEARN FROM PRACTITIONERS IN THE UNITED STATES?

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Introduction

This study examines the perceptions of Career and Technical Education (CTE) practitioners in the northeastern United States on their experience with CTE. CTE is a secondary school program that focuses on giving students technical training centered on various career themes. The roots of CTE date back to 19th century vocational education in American public schools (Castellano, Stringfield, & Stone, 2003). To maintain their relevance, CTE curriculums incrorpoate project-based and student-centered learning with their content often informed by local universities and industries (Chan, 2007; Plank, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2008). CTE has been found to have a positive economic effect on its students, such as improved income levels after high school graduation (Bishop & Mane, 2004).

The existing CTE research has largely focused on defining CTE student experiences and perceptions (Chan, 2007; Fletcher Jr. & Cox, 2012; Maguire, Donovan, Mishook, Gaillande, & Garcia, 2012). Other studies have presented findings on specific CTE programs or CTE-related initatives (Dorfman, 2008; Mouza, Cavalier, & Nadolny, 2008). However, there is currently a lack of literature that illustrates how CTE practitioners perceive various elements of CTE programming.

Initially, this pilot study was conducted to further enrich CTE research in the United States. However, the findings of this study are relevant to various constituencies across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, as CTE has the potential to function as an education model that may help encourage more diversified economic participation in the GCC. More specifically, CTE has the potential to serve as a model for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programming delivery, which will help the Gulf countries transition into a more knowledge-based economy. By presenting various accounts of CTE practitioners' experience, this study attempts to present ideas that will help GCC policymakers consider the applicability of CTE programs within the GCC context.

Literature Review

Defining CTE

Castellano et al. (2003) define CTE as a program that is"(a) organized as a school within a school, where students stay with a group of teachers for… 3 or 4 years; (b) offers students both academic and vocational curriculums… and (c) has established partnerships with businesses to build connections between school and work (p. 253)." Anderson, et al. (2004) further refine this definition, describing CTE as a "multi-year sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge leading to higher levels of skill attainment and whose curriculum is organized around a unifying career theme (p. 8)." Based on these two

definitions, this study defines CTE as a hybrid of academic and technical education that prepares students to gain practical skills relevant to various career themes.

Major Challenges in CTE

There are several necessary elements to successful implementation of CTE within school settings. Quint (2008) identifies five such elements: creating a sense of belonging, helping freshmen with weak academic skills, preparing students for postsecondary success, improving instruction, and stimulating lasting change. The success of CTE program implementation may be limited if these elements do not align to provide a supportive learning environment for students (Mouza, et al., 2008; Plank, et al., 2008) as well as for practitioners.

Many CTE programs struggle with the realities of implementing new learning mechanisms within traditional school contexts. Too often, CTE is implemented inadequately, and as a result, yields marginal successes (Mouza et al., 2008; Plank et al., 2008). Several studies suggest that the pressure to comply with the academic mandates from ministries is a main factor that limits the extent to which the intended CTE pedagogies are followed (Dorfman, 2008; Stone, Kowske, & Alfeld, 2004).

In some cases, teachers and administrators do not feel that CTE courses are worthy of their equivalent traditional course credit hours. This stigma is one of the most serious challenges that CTE program implementation faces in schools today. Castellano et al. (2003) posit that one of the most pressing issues that CTE must address is reversing the stigma of vocational education. Gray (2004) extrapolates further, saying that many believe that CTE "prepares students only for work after high school, and its students are mostly male, too often minorities, academically backward, and destined for dead-end jobs (p. 129)." Such stereotypes make it difficult to build a support system within school settings for CTE programming, staff and students.

Quality of instruction is another major challenge to implementing a successful CTE program (Chan, 2007; Mouza, et al., 2008). Despite the availability of various teacher professional development offerings focusing on CTE programs, CTE instructors were found to have received less professional development trainings in curriculum integration and school-to-work implementation compared to non-CTE instructors (Stone et al., 2004).

Methodology

The current literature suggests that practitioners should document, in their own words, their lived experiences within CTE school settings, so that researchers and policymakers can gain deeper insight into CTE settings and assist practitioners in their work accordingly (Dorfman, 2008; Fletcher & Cox, 2012; Maguire, et al., 2012; Mouza, et al., 2008). This exploratory pilot study seeks to document such practitioners' experiences through interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations focused on exploring how CTE practitioners think about their work. The ultimate aim of this study is to promote the voices of CTE practitioners, their reflections, attitudes and opinions about their field.

This study was conducted at a CTE center called The Future Technical Academy (FTA)[2], which is located in a suburban area in the northeastern United States. This school is part of a broader educational network that serves numerous school districts, and serves more than 1000 junior and senior high school students. The main reasoning behind this model is to spread the cost of providing an expensive and specialized technical education across several school districts. Students apply to these programs, offered only at FTA, through their home high school guidance office.

Students primarily join the program to learn the skills that will help them in the workforce after high school. The students have the option to choose from approximately 40 programs contained within six clusters (Business/Information Services, Health Services, Engineering Technologies, Human and Public Services, Natural and Agricultural, and Arts and Humanities), either in morning (juniors) or afternoon (seniors) sessions that each last two and a half hours. Most programs are two years in duration and allow students to take industry certification exams at the end of their second year. CTE students are required to simultaneously partake in courses at their home high schools.

Participants

The study consists of three main research components: six interviews were conducted with CTE instructors and administrators working at the Future Technical Academy (FTA), two focus group interviews with five CTE practitioners in each, and six classroom observations. All data was coded to illuminate prevailing themes.

The interviewees consisted of four CTE teachers, a guidance counselor and two CTE program administrators, all of who worked at FTA. Their names have been replaced with descriptors to ensure their anonymity. All interviewees signed consent forms explaining the purpose of this study and granting permission to have the interviews recorded for accurate transcription.

Limitations

There are three notable limitations to this pilot study. First, the small sample size did not allow for a robust set of responses. Second, this study would have been strengthened by a more formalized inclusion of the acting principal. Third, teacher participants in the focus group were selected on the sole basis of their accessibility. Having a more varied sample would have helped with the generalizability of the findings.

Summary of Key Findings

The findings from this study revealed that CTE practitioners perceive their role in their specific CTE context as multifaceted. Overall, all interviewees were extremely positive about CTE and FTA. They pointed out that the amount of time the FTA program model enables them to spend with students helps to establish and nurture deep connections with each students, which makes the teaching and learning process a bonding

2 Name of the program was changed for the purpose of protecting study participants

experience for students looking to emulate teachers who are also industry professionals. This deeper relationship helps students to stay motivated to continue pursuing CTE programs.

The Unique FTA Program

CTE is often implemented in various models and programs, most of which include residential programs (Gott, 2007), magnet schools, career academies[3], and school design models like High Schools That Work (HSTW)[4], Talent Development High Schools (TDHS), New American Schools (Berends, Bodily, Kirby, 2002; Castellano, et al., 2003; Quint, 2008). However, none of these studies included a CTE program similar to the Future Technical Academy, where it acts as a regional school, serving students from different high schools in the area. As a result, the combined funding from various high schools makes it possible for FTA to run programs that are otherwise not possible with limited funding.

During field visits, it was found that no teacher interviewed had more than 22 students during the morning session and 20 in the afternoon session. No teacher had more than a total of 45 students in total enrollment, as opposed to teachers in traditional settings who customarily teach five classes per day with 100 to 150 students. This limited number of students comes from state and national industry regulations in the United States regarding safety, as well as providing teachers adequate opportunity to deliver the depth and breadth of curriculum. Focus group interviews made it clear that the practitioners felt this schedule and enrollment are seminal ingredients to the success of CTE.

As a result of these differences in school design models, the findings of this study should not be compared or expanded to other settings. So that stakeholders interested in CTE can continue to deepen and broaden their understanding, it is important they know the perceptions of CTE practitioners within the various settings of this work. How similar are their experiences and understandings about what they do? Future studies should aim to address this question.

College or Career?

Yan et al. (2005) found that when given exposure to both a career and college pathways, students in their study appeared slightly more interested in pursuing a career path. However, findings of this pilot study revealed the opposite. The members of the FTA Class of 2012 were three times more likely to pursue post-secondary education than to pursue vocational opportunities in the workforce six months after graduation. While

[3] The magnet school's origin is rooted in efforts to racially desegregate urban schools in the 1970's. The career academy model harbors academic pathways centered around different career themes while magnets might focus an entire school population on only one career theme. Both can occur as smaller entities within a larger, traditional school setting or as the focus of the entire school, though in this later case, the career academies are still centered on small learning communities. Magnets tend to be bigger, in terms of student population (Castellano, et al., 2003).
[4] This particular model of high school reform focuses on "raising the academic achievement of career- bound high school students by combining the content of traditional college preparatory studies [core subjects such as English, Math, etc] with vocational studies." Similar to the career academy and magnet school models, HSTW schools have built in teacher collaboration time each day to coordinate team teaching of curriculum, and individual student advising (Castellano, et al., 2003).

there may be context-specific factors at play in yielding such results, this is an issue that needs to be further explored.

The interviewees made it clear that they are working to prepare students for both college and careers. They want students to feel that they can be successful taking either route. Both administrators spoke to this in their one-on-one interviews. One administrator said, "in my mind, CTE should lead to a credential or certification or an achievement level where a college or an industry says 'you meet our standard, you meet this standard, and you can work here'…you can have a career (personal communication, 2015)." The other adminisrator explained that CTE provides "students with life-long career skills where years ago, many people thought that you sent the 'less than,' the less desirable children to [such programs] (personal communication, 2015)."

Role of Guidance Counselors

The importance of guidance counselors in the successful implementation of CTE programs was emphasized in the interviews and focus group discussions. Several interviewees reported that guidance counselors serve a critical role as an academic 'filter' that helps students to properly identify the most suitable career pathways. During one focus group, a CTE instructor said the following:

> If we don't have the support of counselors and their understanding of what we do and what students are a good fit, we're done... Our counselors have to know, 'Hey, that kid in [cosmetology]? I think that kid really belongs in physical therapy or barbery.' Or that kid down there in welding? Let's get him for a visit in another class before we lose the kid. *CTE instructor #1* (personal communication, 2015).

This was not an isolated observation, as other focus group participants confirmed the strong bonds created between guidance counselors and the students who are part of their caseload. This allows them to perform their role efficiently, as guidance counselors need to have a sound understanding of the skills and traits necessary for each of the 40 areas of study offered. They must know students well enough to help them make realistic choices about pathways of study. To this end, guidance counselors spend more time out of their offices and in the halls and inside classrooms than counselors in other school settings do.

An administrator confirmed the role of the CTE guidance counselor not only as an academic filter, but also as a 'guardian' and 'gatekeeper' of enrollement in the various programs offered at FTA:

> What [the guidance counselors] have to monitor is keeping the classes full. And that's always a hard part because let's say a student goes into cosmetology and hates it. They won't ever say, "Let's drop you." They're going to look to move you to a place that works because we always had to keep enrollment. So they are the gatekeepers for enrollment. *CTE administrator #1* (personal communication, 2015).

Criticisms and Misconceptions

The findings also included criticisms of various aspects of CTE programming. All interviewees reported feeling frustrated about the slow bureaucracy, which hinders their ability to respond to industry innovations at the same rate they are accustomed to in their own practices. During a focus group, practitioners discussed the slow response time of administration and its insufficient support of practitioners' educational needs:

> Unfortunately, administration is a little bit behind, in terms of where [their] mindset is. So, we see things coming down the line that should be implemented, but then there's that lag in upper administration that takes a while for them to catch up to us for many reasons. *Guidance counselor* (personal communication, 2015).

In a separate interview an administrator offered a slightly different perspective of this tension, highlighting the difference between the perceived needs of practitioners and the fiscal constraints under which administrators are often beholden:

> There's always the issue of getting the supplies that [teachers] need…Always finding resources and things like that, was a challenge because there's often times where [teachers] need more than what's there. So, doing that was challenging at times, especially for those that are material-intensive courses. *CTE administrator #1* (personal communication, 2015).

Several participants in both the interviews and focus group discussions also reported that CTE is worth spreading, but that it will continue to have a tough time doing so without additional advocacy work. All interviewees were practitioners with a lot of experience working in the CTE schools, and were aware of the inaccurate perceptions prescribed to CTE. An administrator expressed that they had spent a significant portion of their professional time educating policymakers on what makes CTE different from more traditional forms of education. However, being on the frontlines of CTE instructional delivery, the practitioners had to focus more on the day-to-day responsibilities in their jobs rather than brainstorming ways to dissipate the stigma. CTE practitioners, policy makers, as well as strategic allies, would do well to decide how best to coordinate a thorough PR campaign to get the word out about what CTE is and what it is not.

Conclusion

The aim of this exploratory pilot study is to add to the current literature on CTE by analyzing the beliefs and values of CTE practitioners. The findings of this study have important implications for research, policy and leadership in the United States as well as the Gulf Cooperation Council states. For the past few decades, the GCC nations have been fastidious in trying to improve the quality of their STEM curriculum and teaching force. New strategies are needed to help motivate native GCC students to take on the rigors of STEM education, creating a space for the GCC to learn from CTE programming in the United States as both are informed by local industry needs and the career prospects of the students.

Possible new strategies for GCC students' engagement in the STEM fields can be found in the CTE literature. Different delivery models for STEM/CTE, such as magnet schools,

career academies, and school design models like High Schools That Work (HSTW), Talent Development High Schools (TDHS), and New American Schools, are options for GCC nations as they continue the search for school design models suiting their needs (Berends, et al., 2002; Castellano, et al., 2003; Quint, 2008). The FTA model of CTE delivery presented in this study was found to be quite appealing to practitioners, but GCC education leaders must determine how they will ensure equally as strong, if not stronger academic results than those reported here.

The FTA model of CTE delivery adds to an already diverse set of programs represented in the research literature. The knowledge of teachers and administrators with significant CTE experience is a significant ally in this work that should not be overlooked. The FTA program was created to address the financial impact of providing a quality school environment and instructors who are motivated industry professionals. This innovative spirit ought to be duplicated by the GCC nations as they continue to think about how to establish and improve the quality of their CTE schools (Kirk, 2015).

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE TO IMPROVE LEARNING OUTCOMES IN GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC) COUNTRIES[5]

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Introduction

Memory Functions and Student Performance in the Arab World

Students in the Arab world, including those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States, have, on average, lower than expected scores in international assessments. To compete in the global marketplace, students must improve their performance in basic skills, such as in reading and math. However, Arab students typically study in Modern Standard Arabic, which is not used in daily conversation, and its grammar must first be acquired in order to process information in the classroom. In addition, the Arabic script has challenges that further lengthen the learning timeframe.

This paper reviews research to highlight the conditions necessary for the improved academic performance of Arab students. It explores the relationship between the visual challenges of the Arabic script, the linguistic challenges of ancient language forms, such as Modern Standard Arabic, and educational outcomes. It seeks to inform the educational research agenda through the utilization of a cross-disciplinary approach, which includes cognitive science research that examines the role that memory processes play in language acquisition. The broader implications of both the literature and the revised research agenda are presented through policy recommendations. These recommendations should support and inform appropriate measures that will mitigate the unique challenges that Arab students face with Arabic grammar and script acquisition.

The Visual Challenges of the Arabic Script

It is easiest to learn reading in languages that we know and that consistently represent sounds with letters. With practice, the brain connects sequences of symbols into longer patterns (Aguirre, 2004). Initially, learners read letter-by-letter, but after several hours of practice, a part of the brain becomes activated that recognizes words as if they were faces (Dehaene & Cohen, 2011). This seems to happen at around 45–60 words per minute (Abadzi, 2013a; 2013b). After this, people read more effortlessly and automatically, and can process large volumes of text (Dehaene & Cohen, 2011).

As we deal with written text, we must instantly recall vocabulary, grammar and syntax rules, contexts, and meanings. The information must fit within our "working memory", which is the type of memory that holds our present thoughts in a very limited space/time - approximately seven items for about 12 seconds (Miller, 1956, Peterson &

[5] *Note*: This review was conducted under the auspices of a project funded by the Qatar National Research Fund in 2013–2016 and by UNESCO–Doha entitled, "*Momentum for Education Beyond 2015: Improving the Quality of Learning Outcomes and Enhancing the Performance of Education Systems in GCC Countries*." The lead principal investigator was Dr. Faryal Khan.

Peterson, 1959). Script must be interpreted correctly within this timeframe, or the working memory gets erased. We lose our train of thought, and cannot proceed. The higher the reading speed, accuracy, and automaticity, the more time we have to think about the content. Critical thinking becomes possible when people have time to bring various concepts into working memory, link them, and make decisions (Abadzi, Martelli, & Primativo, 2014).

Textbooks for children typically contain short sentences that approximate this span. Reading at 45-60 words per minute may allow students to fill the memory buffer with one sentence without loss. It is possible that reading at speeds below 20 wpm does not fill the memory buffer with enough words to complete the sentence before the trace decays. This suggests that the benchmark for speed may be set by the parameters of the working memory. Moreover, memory limitations may explain the relation between speed of reading and comprehension. It is worth noting that developmental dyslexics, who have average or above average IQ and typically read at a speed below 30 wpm, fail in reading and comprehension tasks when they are not allowed to re-read a text. (Dr. Marialuisa Martelli, private communication, May 2016).

In principle, Arabic script can be learned efficiently as voweled Arabic letters consistently represent sounds (Taha, 2016). Hence, children should be able to learn the letters within the first half of Grade 1. This means that average students of the Gulf States should be reading at 45 words-per-minute by the end of Grade 1, just like students of some European countries (Seymour et al., 2003). However, the Arabic script has certain perceptual features that require specific training for rapid discrimination. Our brain most easily recognizes letters that have regular, consistent curvatures, grouping components that form a coherent shape into a unified "chunk" (Yigal & Sekuler, 2008). In contrast, for historical reasons, most Arabic letters consist of multiple disconnected parts that take a few milliseconds longer to recognize. Linkages and the multiple parts of most letters slow down their detection (see review in Abadzi & Martelli, 2014). In addition, our visual system optimally discriminates when letters have certain spacing between them. Small or dense letters slow down identification (Pelli et al., 2007; cited in Marinelli et al., 2011), which slows down early readers. With time, children become habituated to this spacing, but children learning to read Arabic scripts for the first time need more assistance, such as with large and well-spaced texts.

As Arab students become habituated to multipart letters and dense writing, the vowels are removed from the text around Grades 3-4. While visual detection of letters is facilitated, ambiguity is introduced, and students temporarily lose their reading fluency. Unlike most other scripts, therefore, the mastery of Arabic reading has a non-linear trajectory (see for example, Saiegh-Haddad & Joshi, 2014).

Arabic and the Linguistic Challenges of Ancient Language Forms

The Arab respect for culture and religion makes it important to use Modern Standard Arabic in schools and formal speech (اللغة العربية الفصحى; ALECSO, 2013). This form of Arabic is an older language that is spoken only in formal occasions rather than in daily conversations. However, because Modern Standard Arabic tends to differ significantly from other colloquial Arabic forms, children tend to perceive it as a different language (Eviatar & Ibrahim, 2014; p. 79 for Arabic). First graders typically learn languages

easily, but the process of learning Modern Standard Arabic takes longer time since their exposure to Modern Standard Arabic is limited to school settings. As a result, students require systematic instruction before they can learn information using Modern Standard Arabic (Eviatar & Ibrahim, 2014).

Similarly, some countries, such as Cyprus and German-speaking Switzerland, speak very distinct dialects but use the official forms of their languages in the classroom (Lievano & Egger, 2015). The official language forms often have more complex grammar than the modern forms, and Modern Standard Arabic is no exception. Although Arabic grammar is very regular and has been hailed as a mathematical miracle, it also has a plethora of components. There are 10 verb forms, each with 4–5 tenses, conjugated in masculine and feminine genders in the singular, dual, and plural. Noun conjugations have similar complexities (Abadzi & Martelli, 2014). In other words, becoming proficient in Modern Standard Arabic requires explicit and rigorous instructions in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.

However, this necessity clashes with the established best practices in language learning (ALECSO, 2013). Many educators today advocate for the use of authentic texts and frown upon memorization. Using authentic language materials may be useful for English learners, because the language has almost no conjugations. However, the case of Arabic is more complex. As people detect language patterns based on statistical learning, they need to be exposed to variations of a language (Newport & Aslin, 2004). The multitude of Arabic patterns, nonetheless, suggests that students cannot get enough exposure to form rules and understand complex content. Educated adults somehow assume that students will "pick up" the different conjugations, but children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and areas with greater linguistic distance from Modern Standard Arabic, may not hear enough examples to create statistical predictions (Eviatar & Ibrahim, 2014).

Children are very good at pattern recognition, so systematic instruction in this task could be feasible. In principle, children could memorize conjugations and sequences and instantly apply them, thus getting explicit language instruction. However, traditional Arabic grammar instruction has been inefficient (Eviatar & Ibrahim, 2014). It focuses on grammatical terminology (e.g., a definition of a term such as *idafa*, which shows possession) that may detract from language use. Since time is consumed in such activities, students may read very short texts and thus fail to build up the speed and comprehension needed, including for international assessments given in Grade 4.

One likely consequence is that only a few students enjoy reading Arabic and/or willingly engage with it (ALECSO, 2013). The cognitive load and effort needed to read Arabic creates a vicious circle—when the task is difficult and therefore not enjoyable, children will resist practicing reading, which means that it will continue to be difficult.[6] As a result, the necessary visual and linguistic processing speeds that are needed to comprehend volumes of text may lag behind for students for years (Saiegh-Haddad & Joshi, 2014). In addition, students may use reading mostly to acquire information rather than for enjoyment (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Drucker, 2012).

[6] Prolonged cognitive load is associated with reductions in "rest and digest" parasympathetic activity of the body and increases in fight–or–flight sympathetic activity (Mehta & Parsuraman 2013; Mizuno et al. 2011). Thus, people feel brain fatigue and a desire to limit prolonged mental activities.

In response to this dilemma, should Arab countries use the vernacular forms of Arabic in the lower primary grades simultaneously with the Modern Standard Arabic? Linguistically, the idea is appealing, but the use of vernaculars in formal education is fraught with immense practical obstacles (Saiegh-Haddad & Joshi, 2014). For example, some dialectic sounds cannot be rendered with Arabic reading rules. Consonants have been created to accommodate African and Asian languages (such as "p," "v," and "ng"), but vowels like "e" and "o" have rarely been created. In addition, students would forever have to use *harakat* (diacritical markings indicating short vowel sounds), which would slow down reading and writing. Additionally, the emergence and popularity of social media and communication technology have wide-ranging and intriguing implications for language. For instance, new letter codes are emerging to write text messages, which use a mixture of Latin letters and numbers; but a well-adapted formal spelling system does not currently exist for vernaculars.

Performance Interactions with Gender

The ability to deal with text fluently has a gender dimension in Arabic with girls greatly outperforming boys in reading. Worldwide, young girls have an advantage in reading over boys, but perhaps this effect is exaggerated in Arabic for reasons that are not clearly understood (Taha, 2006). Some possible explanations for these differences include sociological issues. In the Gulf States, boys and girls typically attend gender-segregated schools. On average, the girls of the Gulf States significantly outperform the boys in international assessments and even on university entrance exams (Mullis et al., 2012). There is a concern that, while girls enjoy highly educated female teachers who are often citizens of the country—partly because women have limited career opportunities—boys may be taught by almost exclusively foreign men, and who may have been weaker students in school (Ridge, 2014).

This hypothesis and its implications deserve more detailed study. However, it resonates with the results of a USAID early-grade reading intervention in Jordan. During the intervention, girls performed better overall, and girls in single-sex schools performed best (USAID, 2014). In contrast, boys seemed to get little benefit from the intervention. One recommendation of the USAID study was to educate boys in mixed-gender schools (USAID, 2014).

Instructional Time Management in High-Income Schools

A significant amount of visual and linguistic content must be learned in the first one or two years of schooling in the Arab world (Abadzi & Martelli, 2014). This means that time should be strictly budgeted for the necessary tasks, and materials and methods should make the essential learning tasks more efficient. Informal classroom observations by the author suggest that instructional time could be better utilized.[7]

[7] Classroom observations were conducted in 2016 as part of a project funded by the Qatar National Research Fund in 2013–2016 and by UNESCO–Doha entitled, "Momentum for Education Beyond 2015: Improving the Quality of Learning Outcomes and Enhancing the Performance of Education Systems in GCC Countries." The lead principal investigator was Dr. Faryal Khan.

However, the needs for content may be at variance with policies to create happy environments for children.

In the Gulf countries, such as Qatar and Kuwait, primary schools offer children high quality care, with plenty of materials and the latest technology. The teachers are often well educated, well trained, and very supportive. Moreover, as in many countries, the focus is on innovation with fun, dynamic, and child-centered activities to engage the students. However, innovative "child-centered" activities may consume too much instructional time. Teachers require time to create engaging activities, and students require time to execute them. Furthermore, often one student is asked to do something, and the rest tend to just watch.

However appealing these activities may seem, they are not proven to raise performance in the low-level variables involved in perceptual learning and automaticity (Abadzi, 2007). Letters, words, and numbers must be assembled bit-by-bit and automatized by children; this requires a lot of practice as well as feedback from the teacher (Abadzi, 2013a). When the various peripheral activities (like setting up a task) are subtracted, the students may not be getting more instructional time than students in low-income countries (Abadzi, 2007).

Some people may believe that drill and memorization are tedious exercises, so there is often a tendency to substitute them with interesting and creative activities, such as drawing pictures. However, our biology requires drill; there is no other way to master reading automaticity, mental math, or writing fluency. When class time is not devoted to these tasks, student performance suffers (see Abadzi, 2015 and 2016). Arab students at the end of grade 1 may be expected to read single sentences, while, in countries such as Albania, students may be reading paragraphs. Hence, it follows that Arab students may be unable to execute the reading and calculation tasks expected in international tests like the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Martin, Foy, Mullis, & O'dwyer, 2011).

Innovative and creative activities are much more useful for complex cognition, past these crucial, more biological stages, where students must learn to execute in milliseconds. To get to that level, students must first be able to read, write, and calculate instantly and effortlessly (Abadzi & Martelli, 2014).

Improving the Outcomes of International Comparator Tests

Readers – of any language – must instantly and correctly identify individual letters and words, read entire sentences, make sense of them, and think critically about the content. All this must take place within the span of working memory (Baddeley, 2003). Psychologists typically research this process, but faculties of education rarely teach it (Abadzi, 2014). Therefore, the Ministries of Education in the Arab World have not benefited from the existing research.

Due to script and language complexities, students in Arab countries experience difficulty in easily acquiring knowledge from texts, which ultimately leads to a delayed reading competency (Mullis et al., 2012). In international assessments, such as PIRLS, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Arab students score near the bottom of the relevant distributions in reading, math, and science (Mullis et al., 2012; Abadzi & Martelli, 2014). This is particularly pronounced in the Grade 4 PIRLS language test. The texts developed for participant countries have about 800 words, and students must read and answer about 12 multiple–choice and open–ended questions in 40 minutes. But fourth graders in many Arab countries may read passages of only 100–300 words.

To think through content and retain what we need, we all need a steady effortless rate of information flow. The contents of international tests (e.g. 800 words for PIRLS) suggest that students of most countries (that do not use Arabic) find this passage length feasible for Grade 4, which may imply that they may process information at a faster rate than students do in Arabic.

Conclusion

A Call for Scientific Research in Arabic Information Processing

The findings suggest that for Arab children to perform similarly to other children of the same grade, reading fluency and common standard Arabic grammar should be learned in Grade 1. Cognitive science research suggests that these skills can be learned through practice that combines and automatizes smaller units. When students instantly recall important information, then they have time to think critically. To achieve this, instructional time should be used efficiently. More reading practice and early detailed instruction in Modern Standard Arabic would enable students to deal with texts of 800–1,000 words by the middle of Grade 4, which is when TIMSS and PIRLS are administered.

Applied research is also needed to find out how to speed up Arabic language learning and script acquisition. This will require a cross-disciplinary approach that utilizes neuroscience and cognition research to inform the educational research and policy agenda. With adequate support and funding, which is often a challenge to receive due to a lack of understanding of the linkages between these two fields, researchers could further test, inform, and streamline the following:

- Optimize letter shapes and sizes for faster detection by younger and older students (computers could be used);
- Apply methods of teaching students the letters that will result in fastest acquisition (e.g. incremental phonics);
- Emphasize sounds that students do not hear in their dialects (e.g., ض ق غ ث ظ);
- Study the effects of *harakat* and dependence on them, as speed and vocabulary knowledge increases;
- Study and optimize morphological awareness in order to predict *harakat*;
- study the effects of writing on reading speed, given phonics instruction;
- Explicitly teach standard Arabic conjugations to first graders in efficient low-terminology methods;
- Adapt etymological concepts for young learners to speed up comprehension of standard Arabic, given prior knowledge of various dialects;

- Optimize textbook appearance and recommend revisions to conform to research findings;
- Train teachers on the above issues, in ways that maximize the probability of use; and
- Investigate the number of school hours needed in text processing for automaticity to occur.

The implication of this paper is that the Arab students' information processing speed must increase. Arab governments could decide to "teach to the test." The implicit value of such an exercise would be to ensure that Arab students could process as much text as students of other countries of the same age. This would mean preparing students from Grade 1 onwards to read 800 Arabic words a minute, so by Grade 4 they are able to answer a certain number of multiple-choice and open-ended questions in 40 minutes. The roadmap for improving Arabic language readings could consist of:

I. More reading practice in Grade 1 for automaticity, as discussed above.
II. Explicit instruction of Modern Standard Arabic, as if it were a foreign language that has verb conjugations, negatives, pronouns, and adverbs that differ from most vernaculars spoken in GCC schools. Methods such as direct instruction[8] would enable weaker students to master and reproduce increasingly complex sequences and understand every word. Vocabulary and syntax should be taught explicitly, and the various grammatical features could be contrasted with features used in the vernaculars.
III. In Grades 2 through 4, class time would be spent reading longer passages to increase speed and understanding. The Arabic curriculum could be revised to use the time for longer passages, and grammatical definitions could be postponed to secondary school. With practice, students in Grades 3 and 4 might increase speed and understand texts of the same length that students habitually read in other countries.

[8] Direct instruction refers to (1) instructional approaches that are structured, sequenced, and led by teachers, and/or (2) the presentation of academic content to students by teachers, such as in a lecture or demonstration. More information is available at http://edglossary.org/direct-instruction.

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TRANSFORMING STRATEGIC OUTLOOK ON SUSTAINABILITY: THE CASE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC) COUNTRIES

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Introduction

The role of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has always been linked to developing human capital and maintaining the sustainability of societies (Wasiluk, 2013). However, globalization has fundamentally changed what is expected of HEIs. In the context of a rapidly connected world, HEIs need to equip individuals with the ability to grasp complex concepts, and strive for continuous innovation and improvement (AACSB International, 2011). At the same time, there has been a change in the societal expectations of HEIs in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and worldwide. This change can be better analyzed by explaining the key drivers of such re-positioning. The literature, however, does not define this trend nor does it explore the trajectory of HEIs in depth.

This study develops an analysis of the HEIs' changing roles in the modern context and investigates the dynamics of this trend. It discusses the GCC countries as aspiring to become knowledge-based, sustainability-focused, and entrepreneurship-driven societies. After contextualizing the study within the existing literature, the study proposes a new model for reinventing intellectual capital that could act as a strategic mechanism for HEIs to interact constructively with the larger society. Lastly, the study presents a comprehensive instrument for value co-creation and strategic positioning of HEIs. The study is based on the theoretical frameworks of value co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), Intellectual Capital Meta model (Ferenhof et al., 2015), and Service-Innovation and Service-Dominant Logic perspectives (Lusch & Nambisan, 2015).

Higher education in the context of the GCC

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries[9] share not only similarities in political, economic and geographical settings, but also a need for a quality education system. Stemming from a strong belief that quality education is the key to achieving sustainability and allowing less economic dependency on the oil sector, the issue of quality education has been a major component of national development goals for many of these countries (Alpen Capital, 2014). Hence, the education sectors in the GCC – particularly, in the higher education sector – have been working to improve their quality by benchmarking international standards and successful cases. Accordingly, the expectation from HEIs to produce "industry-ready graduates" (Alpen Capital, 2014, p.8) is very fundamental to these developments.

[9] The GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Conceptualizing the role of HEIs

In an entrepreneurial societal context, HEIs can be discussed both in terms of local and global scope. Audretsch (2009, p.253) refers to an entrepreneurial society as "[a] place where knowledge-based entrepreneurship has emerged as a driving force for economic growth, employment creation and competitiveness in global markets." HEIs are often projected as the support entity for the establishment of an entrepreneurial society. They are also considered one of the economic agents driving innovation. Moreover, HEIs play a crucial role in "knowledge spill-overs" in all types of organizations in the form of intellectual capital. This effect is fundamental to the development of skilled individuals with the necessary academic and operational competence to increase the entrepreneurial capacity of a society in an entrepreneurship-driven society (Audretsch, 2009).

Education is considered as a key to building competitiveness and finding new ways of doing things. A knowledge-based society is defined as "a human structured organization based on contemporary developed knowledge and representing new quality of life support systems" (Afgan & Carvalho, 2010, p. 28). HEIs are important to the development of knowledge; however, each institution has different levels of commitment, control and engagement (Bell, 2015). This highlights the need for the HEIs to take a planned approach to such developments to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive collaboration of various actors within a knowledge-based society.

A sustainable society is defined as a society that aims "to survive – for the human beings – in the long run" (Sustainable Society Foundation, n.d.). It allows multiple generations to fulfill the needs of present without compromising future generations' ability to do the same. In the modern discourse of sustainability, a sustainable society is called to ensure well-being of the following elements: humans, economy and the environment (Sustainable Society Foundation, n.d.). Societies that are striving for sustainability expect HEIs to propagate the social responsibility agendas by educating people about the importance of sustainability by raising awareness and teaching skills that are fundamental to sustainability. They also expect HEIs to liaise with government and industry to initiate research projects that encompasses all the three sectors. According to the 2014 Sustainable Society Index (SSI), which compares 151 countries on their human, economic, environmental well-being, the GCC countries were ranked relatively high for economic well-being (ranging from 22nd to 84th), in the middle range for human well-being (ranging from 57th to 113th), and relatively low for environmental well-being (all below 146th) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sustainability Society Index for GCC Countries out of 151 Countries

The Sustainability Society Index for GCC countries

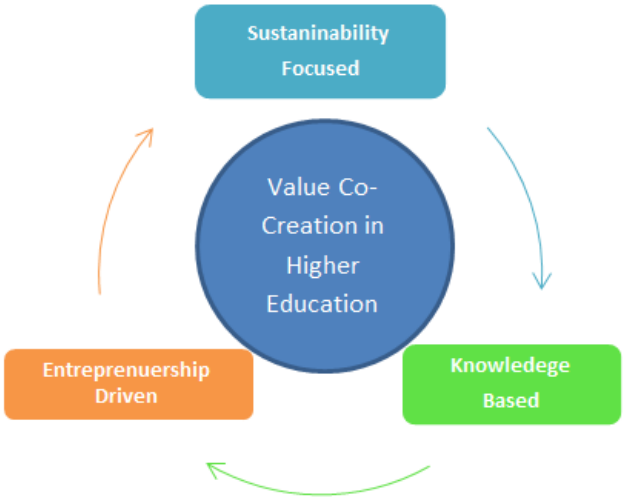
	Human Wellbeing	Environmental Well being	Economic Wellbeing
Bahrain	No data	No data	No data
Kuwait	76	146	23
Oman	89	151	84
Qatar	113	150	22
Saudi Arabia	57	149	30
UAE	82	148	18

Source: SSI for 2014 (Sustainable Society Foundation, n.d.)

Theoretical Framework

The HEIs are expected to perform as firms, "specializing in value adding activities" such as making sustainability measures (AACSB International, 2011, p.14), or as intellectual capital powerhouses that provide relevant 21st century skills in the workforce (AACSB International, 2011; GCC Education Industry, 2014). They are also expected to perform as an innovation hub, suggesting strategies and plans through knowledge spill-overs (Acs, Braunerhjelm, Audretsch & Carlsson, 2008), and other research projects. They create "knowledge that can be converted into value" (Edvinsson and Sullivan, 1996, p.358).

Figure 1: The HEI's centripetal position in today's societal context



The value co-creation is in the form of mutual benefits exchanged for the fulfillment of expectations as 'value in use' (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, p. 7). This mutual exchange of values can be described as value co-creation, since all stakeholders collaborate to

generate mutual benefits. For example, HEIs collaborate with industries to carry out research projects to investigate industries' performance. This type of relationship creates value for both industries (to identify area for improvement) and HEIs (to develop work-ready graduates). It also creates value for students as enhancement of their competencies and aptitutde towards life-long learning (Harvey, 2005).

The value co-creation distributes the responsibility of value creation among the receivers and providers of services ('actors'). It takes into consideration values created by all entities ('integration') to maximize value, as shown in Figure 2, while emphasizing customized combinations ('density') for an improved perceived value of these services ('liquefaction'). It represents "value co-creation as a resource integration process" (Lusch and Nambisan, 2015, P.162). This innovation involves a change in the role of beneficiary from receiver to co-creator. Value co-creation also requires resource reconfiguration and re-grouping (Michel, Brown, & Gallan, 2008). The service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2006, 2008; Lusch and Nambisan, 2015) presents re-organizing of resources with four meta-theoretical foundations of "Actor-to-Actor Networks, Resource Density, Resource Liquefaction and Resource Integration" (Lusch and Nambisan 2015, p.160).

Figure 2: Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2008, p.160)

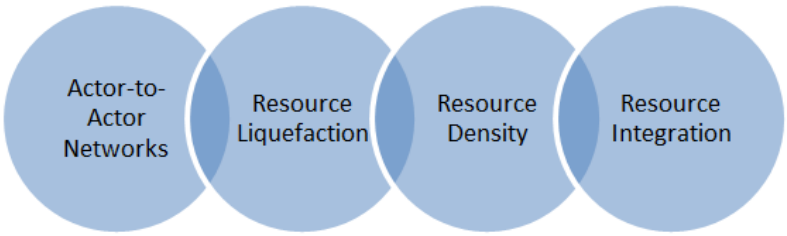
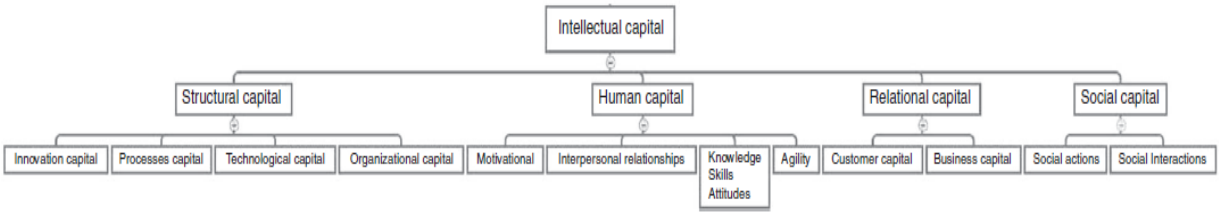


Figure 3: IC Meta Model (Ferenhof et al., 2015, p.91)



Reinventing intellectual capital and value co-creation in HEIs

The synthesis of intellectual capital and service innovation advances us to develop a new framework. This framework attempts to reinvent IC to report HEIs' positions and value co-creation at the same time. This model encompasses IC and S-D logic in the form of IC Integration, IC Density, IC Actors and IC Liquefaction.

Discussion

In the globalized and dynamic context of today's flattening world, the emerging proposition of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as Intellectual Capital (IC) powerhouses is a socio-economic expectation. The more HEIs emerge in the societal context, the more the link between them and IC is developed and further conceived. However, a sustainable and innovative approach is deemed important to explore the opportunities that this link offers. Below are some examples of the reinvention of the IC model to facilitate the value co-creation that takes place in HEIs.

1. Structural Capital for IC-Integration

Structural capital is an organizational fabric integrating IC with tangible assets for the value creation processes. Marr (2005) describes it as the "stuff" that enables the organization's progress. Structural capital can be considered as a soft-scaffold enveloping organizational operations management, data management, culture, strategy and context that all revolves around academics.

2. Human Capital from IC-Actors:

Human capital is the stock of competencies, knowledge and personality attributes that enable the labor to produce economic value. The discourse of human capital is thought of as something 'rented' and cannot be claimed by the organization or employers as theirs. The meta-model, however, further describes it as "motivation, interpersonal skills, knowledge, skills and attitudes and agility" (Ferenhof et al., 2015, p.90). It can be argued that the university's human capital is a compulsory ingredient to develop culture of learning and innovation. It is suggested that agility and motivation can be increased by publishing student satisfaction reports and coming up with institutional academic processes that make them different from others etc.

3. Relational Capital for IC-Liquefaction:

Relational capital embodies all the organization's relationships with customers, suppliers and other critical stakeholders (Roos, Bainbridge, & Jacobsen, 2001). These integrations develop customer and business capital covering relations, brand and image (Ferenhof et al., 2015). For HEIs, it may include research collaboration and development between academics from local and global educational institutions. Such collaborations may result in positive knowledge exchanges of many forms, including such activities as program reviews, student exchange programs and joint conferences.

4. Social Capital as IC-Density:

Social capital includes resources that are only available to members of active social networks (Lin, 2001). The model, as explained above, consolidates it with social activities and social interactions. This social capital represents the value-adding ability of all the members such as HEIs, government and various industries projects are done through collaboration. Some common examples of social capital can be welfare projects, green projects, complementary trainings for industry partners, knowledge sharing on social platforms and e-media and other sustainability projects.

Conclusion

This study analyses the shifting roles of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in today's dynamic context. It proposes that HEIs serve a central role in societies that aspire to become entrepreneurship-driven, knowledge-based and sustainability-focused. HEIs are expected to sustain a relationship of mutual benefit with all stakeholders. This study presents HEIs as the powerhouses of this mutual benefit and value co-creation system. It also suggests that a comprehensive mechanism of this value co-creation is a key to get the most out of the strategic re-positioning. The study presented a model for "Reinventing the Intellectual Capital for a HEI" as an appropriate and a 'fit-for-purpose' deployment mechanism. The model implies HEIs to demonstrate value co-creation in a more comprehensive manner by deploying value co-creation methods as explained in the third section. These indicative methods can be customized to present an HEI's differentiated outlook in the higher education sector. It also provides a platform to accommodate the expectations of internal and external stakeholders.

This study provides a conceptual framework for a further qualitative and quantitative investigation on how the proposed model can be customized to different HEIs and societal contexts. The model can be tested for its generalizability by deploying content analysis of HEIs' publically available information. It can also be further studied as an emerging framework for an institutional ranking system in the globalized context of today.

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HOW DO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ENGAGE IN QATAR'S PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION?

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Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increased attention paid to students with disabilities in higher education. Nowadays, higher education institutions around the world are actively seeking to accommodate special needs students by providing equal access to educational opportunities and services. However, despite international calls for better access such services, their applications in universities around the Middle East remain questionable.

Pressed by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Qatar National Human Rights Committee and proactive community efforts have raised awareness of the needs of students with disabilities in Qatar. As recently as 20 years ago, many higher education providers were indifferent to students with disabilities (Baron, Phillips, & Stalker, 1996; Riddell, Tinklin, & Wilson 2005). However, more recently, many universities in Qatar are working towards meeting the standards outlined by various higher education accreditation agencies in terms of services offered to students with disabilities and the quality control of such services.

People with disabilities continue to face a wider range of barriers in utilizing various educational opportunities, services, and spaces in higher education settings compared to those without disabilities (Mullins & Preyde, 2013). As a result, many students with disabilities are put in situations where they have to use services and facilities that may not be of high quality or aligned with their expectations and needs. One important aspect of higher education services is that access—to classroom learning, learning resources, information, physical access to buildings, and other amenities—is best judged by the experience of interaction between the user and the service. By this definition, it is questionable whether access is truly provided to students with disabilities.

Despite Qatar's ratification of a UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities on May 13th, 2008 and the subsequent development of programs for students with disabilities, public schools and higher education institutions in Qatar still face a broad range of challenges in supporting students with disabilities, especially those who transition from secondary school to higher education. The majority of the students with disabilities in Qatar transition from a K–12 schooling environment, where they were surrounded by ample support services, to university environment, and expected to be largely independent (Stodden, Galloway, & Stodden, 2003; Thoma & Wehmeyer, 2005; Getzel, 2008). The new students enrolling are often not familiar with the types of disability services provided in their new educational environment, and may face difficulties in finding concrete services that will serve their specific needs.

Context of the Study

This study was carried out in Qatar's largest national university (Qatar University), which, by Qatari law, must provide appropriate financial support for services to students with disabilities in order to ensure fair access to programs, services, learning resources, facilities, and activities for students with disabilities. At this national public university, a total of 92 students were identified as living with disabilities. Most of these disabilities were physical in nature, including visual impairments, speech impairments, learning disabilities, and hearing impairments.

Although much work has already been done in higher education institutions to include students with disabilities in academic programs, planning appropriate adaptations of curricula for students with disabilities remains a challenge, especially for instructors and professors. To support this process, the Special Needs Office at this public university has been active in promoting students to seek and learn more about the facilities and special services available for students with disabilities. The Special Needs Office has undertaken several meaningful initiatives to improve the academic experience of students with disabilities, but the extent of its effective has not been formally evaluated.

Study Objectives

With increased initiatives for quality assurance and accreditation, more and more universities are reviewing their programs, structures, organization and management to allow for further improvements. This study compares the levels of student engagement between students with disabilities and students without disabilities at Qatar University. Unlike previous studies that measure students' perceptions of higher education services, we measure student engagement with these services through a survey method.

Methods

Sample

A total of 92 students with disabilities were identified through the university's Special Needs Office. The identified students were asked to respond to a set of questionnaires. We defined a student with disability as a student who is disposed to physical dysfunction or impairment. The majority of these students had physical disabilities and/or visual impairment. A second comparison sample of non-disabled students was randomly selected through a campus-wide email from the registrar's office. A total of 752 non-disabled students responded to the questionnaire. The sample was 64.9% female and 35.1% male, while the makeup of the current student body of this national university is approximately 75% female and 25% male. The large majority of students were in their first or second year and between 20 and 25 years of age, while almost 20% were over 26 years of age. The majority of students with disabilities had a visual disability (24 students, 2.9% of the total sample) or kinesthetic disability (28 students, 3.3% of the total sample), which includes limitation in physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina. Other physical disabilities include impairments that limit other facets of daily life, such as respiratory disorders, blindness, epilepsy, and sleep disorders.

Instrument

We adapted a questionnaire from the College Student Experience Questionnaire (Pace & Kuh, 1998) for this study. The original CSEQ has 120 items that ask students to self-report their experiences based on their engagement with various resources available in their higher education institution. The first section of the questionnaire asks background questions about the respondent: demographic information (gender, age, family status, and occupation); disability (diagnosis); time spent at the university; self-rated overall university average (i.e., grade point average); major; number of courses taken; and number of semesters enrolled. The main part of the CSEQ uses the following constructs to determine various levels of student experience: Information Technology and Internet Accessibility, Library Experiences (four items); Course Learning (four items); Resources, Experiences with Faculty (six items); Campus Facilities (five items); Knowledge and Skills, University Environment (four items); Information Technology and Internet Accessibility dimension (19 items); and Resources (five items) (Pace & Kuh, 1998). Each question was measured on a 5-point scale, which ranged from 5 (always), 4 (very often), 3 (neutral), 2 (sometimes), and 1 (never). The instrument was written in English and translated into Arabic using a cross-translation method (see Nasser, 2005).

Data analysis

We conducted analyses on descriptive and inferential statistics to identify the services that students found either easy or challenging to use. We also conducted mean difference analyses to compare students with disabilities to those without disabilities to understand the types of services that students with disabilities found challenging. To obtain a construct-level mean, we took a mean value of the items within each construct. The mean difference analyses were also checked for their statistical significance.

Results

Mean Difference

Table 1 shows the mean difference analysis of the survey results between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. Two constructs were found to be statistically significant: Course Learning and Campus Facilities. Students without disabilities rated their experience with course learning as more positive than students with disabilities (M=3.54 vs. M=3.25). This finding suggests that students with disabilities feel less supported in the academic arena, compared to their non-disabled counterparts.

Table 1. Means of students without disabilities and students with disabilities on each dimension

	Students without disabilities		Students with disabilities		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t
Information Technology and the Internet Accessibility	3.64	.62	3.71	.66	-1.00
Library Experiences	3.25	.83	3.17	.98	.84

Course Learning	3.54	.87	3.25	.95	2.86*
Resources	3.14	.74	3.13	.81	.11
Experiences with University Instructors	3.21	.96	3.12	1.03	.81
Campus Facilities	2.54	.99	2.95	.77	-3.73*
University Environment	3.52	.89	3.38	.80	1.40

*p < 0.01

Interestingly, students with disabilities rated their satisfaction with campus facilities higher than students without disabilities, which could suggest that campus facilities appropriately take into consideration the needs of students with disabilities. However, it is worth exploring this construct further to see what this discrepancy may imply in the context of facility provision.

In Table 2, we present the item-level analysis with mean and standard deviation reported for each item. Using this data, we compared each item's ratings between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. The items related to learning and studying strategies were more likely to be rated higher among students without disabilities than among those with disabilities. For example, students with disabilities were less likely to do their assigned reading and take notes for their classes, compared to students without disabilities.

In addition, a more nuanced analysis of the mean difference in the Campus Facilities construct emerges in the item-level analysis. Students without disabilities were more likely to use the activities building to meet people and to join cultural activities in the activities building than their non-disabled peers. In other words, while the construct-level results implied that students with disabilities were satisfied with facility offerings at the university, the item-level results revealed that the mean difference is primarily a reflection of how more students with disabilities utilize a specific building than students without disabilities.

Table 2: Item-level average ratings and independent t-test difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

	With No Disabilities		With Disabilities		
	Mean(SD)		Mean (SD)		t
Information Technology and the Internet accessibility					
(16-1) I use a computer to prepare reports or papers.	4.47	(.92)	4.13	(1.16)	3.13*
(16-3-1) Instant message.	3.44	(1.23)	3.56	(1.45)	-.81
(16-3-2) Text message.	3.3	(1.14)	3.69	(1.29)	-2.92*
(16-3-3) Use the library website.	3.23	(1.41)	3.33	(1.55)	-.58
(16-3-4) Spreadsheet (excel, etc.).	3.86	(1.32)	3.66	(1.49)	1.28
(16-3-5) Presentation software.	3.60	(1.19)	3.27	(1.45)	2.37
(16-4) I use a computer tutorial to learn material for a course or developmental/remedial program.	3.41	(1.27)	3.83	(1.28)	-2.88*
(16-5) I use an electronic devices such as computer, iPad, etc. to participate in class discussion and activities.	2.83	(1.52)	3.08	(1.44)	-1.44
(16-6) I search for information using the internet.	3.95	(1.22)	4.00	(1.24)	-.39
(16-7) I use computer to analyze data (statics).	3.27	(1.38)	3.33	(1.68)	-.37
(16-8) I use learning management system such as blackboard or any web system.	4.31	(1.04)	4.38	(1.05)	-.60
(16-9) My professors or instructors use information (IT) effectively in course.	3.58	(.89)	3.85	(.89)	-2.66*
(16-10) My professors or instructors provide me and other students with adequate training for IT that they use in the course.	3.49	(1.16)	3.48	(1.46)	.06

(16-11) I use course or learning management system (blackboard).	4.05	(1.10)	4.06	(1.19)	-.08
(16-12) Overall experiences using course learning management system (blackboard).	3.77	(.91)	3.70	(.93)	.73
(16-13-1) I am active in the course uses IT.	4.03	(1.04)	4.07	(1.19)	-.35
(16-13-2) The use of IT in course improves my learning	3.86	(1.14)	3.87	(1.20)	-.10
(16-3-3) The IT services in my University always available when I need them for my course work.	4.18	(1.06)	4.24	(.98)	-.57
(16-3-4) I have contacted the campus IT services for technical support this academic year.	2.61	(1.71)	3.06	(1.78)	-2.30**
Library Experiences					
(17-1) I use the library as quiet place to read or review my course work or materials.	3.29	(1.43)	2.92	(1.41)	2.28**
(17-2) I ask a librarian for help to find me information on a certain topic.	3.79	(1.25)	3.56	(1.33)	1.64
(17-3) I find assistance from circulation desk staff.	3.28	(1.33)	3.48	(1.40)	-1.26
(17-5) I have difficulty accessing electronic or online library resources.	2.65	(1.33)	2.73	(1.35)	-.56
Course Learning					
(18-1) I complete my assigned reading for class	2.82	(1.37)	2.49	(1.48)	2.14**
(18-2) I take notes during class	3.88	(1.22)	3.52	(1.45)	2.51**
(18-3) I do my class assignment, project, or presentation with other students	3.52	(1.26)	3.29	(1.35)	1.58
(18-4) I use ideas from various services to integrate it in my class	3.93	(1.09)	3.70	(1.19)	1.82
Resources					
(19-1) I use dictionary or other resources to look up the proper meaning of words	3.25	(1.40)	2.98	(1.51)	1.72
(19-2) I like to have essay exams than objective exam	2.88	(1.46)	2.86	(1.37)	.10
(19-3) I find difficulty with essay exam that requires writing skills	2.94	(1.36)	3.07	(1.42)	-.84
(19-4) I prefer having objective exams rather than essay exam	3.24	(1.43)	3.29	(1.42)	-.32
(19-5) Objective exams encourage guessing more than essay exam	3.41	(1.38)	3.48	(1.39)	-.39
Experiences with University Instructors					
(20-1) I talk with professors and instructors about information related to my course work, such as grades, make up exam, work, assignments, and so forth.	3.61	(1.27)	3.55	(1.34)	.46
(20-2) I discuss my academic course with my academic advisor.	3.36	(1.44)	3.16	(1.38)	1.19
(20-3) I discuss my career plans or course project with my course professor or instructor.	2.97	(1.41)	2.97	(1.51)	.03
(20-4) I get feedback about my work from course professors or instructors.	3.62	(1.25)	3.44	(1.34)	1.23
(20-5) I receive comments about my academic performance from my course professor or instructor.	3.12	(1.35)	3.02	(1.53)	.63
(20-6) I participate in research project with my professor or instructor.	2.57	(1.50)	2.57	(1.53)	-.004
Campus Facilities					
(21-1) I use the activities building to meet people	3.66	(1.33)	4.19	(1.06)	-3.56*
(21-2) I join cultural activities in the activities building	1.93	(1.36)	2.53	(1.49)	-3.86*
(21-3) I attend the social or academic activities, such as lectures, panel discussion, and so forth.	2.57	(1.40)	2.72	(1.43)	-.959
(21-4) I participate in recreational activities throughout the year	2.11	(1.34	2.30	(1.22)	-1.25
(21-5) I use campus labs, studying rooms to improve my academic skills	2.42	(1.25)	3.01	(.80)	-4.30
University Environment					
(24-1) Students in my university support each other and try to give help when it needs.	3.59	(1.21)	3.36	(1.11)	1.69
(24-2) I talk with other students to help me to develop my understanding.	3.74	(1.15)	3.36	(1.22)	2.89*
(24-3) I feel comfortable when I work with other students.	3.35	(1.34)	3.45	(1.27)	-.68
(24-4) The learning center in my university provides me a plenty of opportunities to enhance the quality of my work.	3.40	(1.25)	3.35	(1.18)	.36

*p < 0.01

Discussion

Although significant work has been done to include students with disabilities at Qatar's national public university – particularly by adapting curricula to the needs of students with disabilities - many faculty members still feel that the issue of disability student inclusion remains largely ignored. Our findings suggest that students with disabilities

need more dedicated support in developing studying skills and learning strategies. Although the Special Needs Office at this national public university has encouraged students to take advantage of services such as access to programs and guidance, the results of this study indicate that students with disabilities are less likely to feel supported in their course learning. Academic learning is a key part of students' satisfaction with their higher education experience, affecting their social, professional, and intellectual development as well as their skills to engage in learning (Yeo, 2008). Thus, for the institution to succeed in providing quality services, greater care and consideration must be taken to include the services that students with disabilities may need, particularly in services that concern academic achievement.

Overall, students with disabilities reported having a more positive experience in receiving various school services than students without disabilities. However, both students with disabilities and without disabilities rated several services below three, meaning that the services are more unsatisfactory than satisfactory. This result reflects the importance of continuing to improve the quality of the services offered to not only students with disabilities, but also students without disabilities.

Conclusion

This study suggests that students with disabilities need to be supported with proper learning strategies geared towards academic success. However, the greatest challenge for instructors and professors in teaching students with disabilities is providing appropriate curricula that consider the needs of students with disabilities. According to Winzer (1998), the complete acceptance and inclusion of students with diverse learning and non-learning needs in mainstream classrooms will only happen as a result of long-term changes in attitudes. In order to ensure that students with disabilities are learning effectively in higher education institutions, all university stakeholders must be aware of institutional challenges of accommodating students with disabilities and actively working to support them every step of the way (Duffy & Gugerty, 2005). In addition, higher education providers must do more to fill this widened gap of higher education engagement, between students with disabilities and non-disabled students. From the student side, students with disabilities must be empowered to have the knowledge and capacity to seek out the services provided for them.

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CIVILIZATINAL ANALYSIS: ACCESSING CULTURE IN THE CRITICAL CULTURAL POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

Education in the Arab region is a complicated plethora of human and political influences that have multifaceted spatial articulations; be it analysis of educational processes within the borders of a nation state, or wider spatial contexts such as the regional, geopolitical, civilizational and transnational (Mazawi & Sultana, 2010). From a spatial perspective, the Arab region is not a homogenous and harmonious ethnic, linguistic or geographic space (Mazawi & Sultana, 2010), which is no less the case for higher education across the region. Nonetheless, despite an abundance of diversity and apparent differences, a number of characteristics such as the dominating Islamic religion, the shared Arabic language, similar political systems, and a common history—as well as the presence of various pan-Arab political, economic, and civil organizations—supports a comprehensive analysis of education in the Arab region (Herrera, 2007).

Before such a comprehensive analysis can be undertaken, appropriate tools and theoretical frameworks that account for the complexities of the Arab region need to be identified. This paper makes a case for utilizing a tripartite framework of analysis consisting of Robertson and Dale's (2015) critical political economy of education (CCPEE) theoretical approach, the concept of the education ensemble, as well as Arnason's (2003) emerging civilization analysis paradigm. It considers how civilization analyses (CA) can be used as a theoretical framework to investigate the 'culture' in Robertson and Dale's (2015) concept of CCPEE, with a focus on Arab modernity, culture and society.

Additionally, situating CA within the CCPEE and the education ensemble provides a systematic effort directed at theorizing and refining concepts intent on addressing, in a contextualized and comprehensive fashion, processes of education change. It offers researchers analyzing any aspect of modernity, culture and society, a means of accessing deeply entrenched sets of meanings and practices, allowing for a comparative interpretation of societal differences in education (Dale, 2016). Using CA also extends the understandings of 'cultural' beyond its discourse and semiotics. It allows us to strive to allocate evidence of "supra-cultural influences" (Dale, 2016) without resorting to orientalism, neopatricarchy, historicism, modernization theory, or Arab cultural studies, as sources of explanation.

Critical Cultural Political Economy of Education (CCPEE)

The critical cultural political economy of education (Roberston & Dale, 2015) is a theoretical approach to the study of the globalization of education. It is a critical means of investigating education. As an emerging post-disciplinary approach, it highlights the contribution of the cultural turn (meaning-making) to the analysis of the connection between the economic and the political and their embedding in broader sets of social

relations (Jessop, 2010). In CCPEE, the role of culture in education is equal to that of political and economic factors. It defines culture as 'meaning making' and 'cultural forms' present throughout the causal chain. In addition, it positions the political sphere as being not just of governance and government but as permeating power relations between social actors. Similarly, the economic is not just understood as value, but as social relations of exchange (Robertson & Dale, 2015; Kedzierski 2016).

The CCPEE allows for a comprehensive overview of education and provides a mechanism to consider spatial articulations, such as how knowledge and meaning are created and understood, who has power and where power relations exist. For example, it facilitates locating the power structures within the production of educational policy, reproduction, modification and adaption with the aim of sanctioning a particular social, political and economic order (Lopes Cardozo & Shah, 2016). CCPEE has recently gained traction, as it started being used to explore and develop a theoretical account of the historically and spatially situated socio-political and socio-economic processes favoring the use of English as a medium of instruction in East Asia's higher education (Kedzierski, 2016). CCPEE has also been used as a conceptual framework as a means to analyze the multi-scalar politics of education for sustainable peace-building (Lopes Cardozo & Shah, 2016).

Layers of the Education Ensemble

The education ensemble—comprising of critical, cultural, political and economic components— is a concept of education that involves a range of actors and institutions, reflecting the fact that education represents, and is embodied, "in crucial multiple relationships with, and within societies (Robertson & Dale, 2015 p.150)." The value of the ensemble concept is not just that it identifies and registers the range of relationships, but it allows analysis and identification of internal relationships between the components of the ensemble.

In order to understand the education ensemble, Robertson and Dale (2015) have posited that researchers should consider the presence of four distinguishable elements: the culture as well as the relationship of education with global, national, and local societies. The definitions of the various articulations of the elements are complex. First, the cultural element is understood not in terms of discourse or semiotics, but as civilization projects such as Western modernity or Islam. The other three elements of the ensemble are understood as relationships of education with varying geopolitical levels of belonging - for example, the relationship between education and civil society groups as a means to improve adult education provision. In addition, societies include the organizations that are featured in the education system, such as UNESCO and the 'Education for All' movement. These relationships are further differentiated by considering the interactions of education and the economy. This includes the role of the state in developing a knowledge-based economy through the provision of higher education qualifications. The relationship between education and economy is not just the capitalist or market-economy view, but the view that the education sector is an intricate economy itself as shown through the existence of academic cities, as found in Qatar and UAE, or branch campuses as a means of internationalizing educational institutes (Robertson & Dale, 2015).

The cultural or civilizational aspects of the education ensemble are the most problematic to define in that the casual powers of the cultural and civilizational scripts through which the education ensemble is constructed and mediated, as well as the particular conditions under which they are activated are difficult to determine. For example, civil society develops in different ways in the West in comparison to other regions (Armstrong & Gilson, 2011). Direction of development and causal power can hinge on cultural and civilizational features, which have religious, ideological, primordial and historical influences that need to be understood (Eistenstadt, 2002).

'Education Moments' as a Means to Guide Exploration within CCPEE

By prising apart the education ensemble of the GCC higher education sector, a set of education questions can be developed to explore these layers (Robertson *et al*. 2012). These questions in education are two-fold in purpose: orienting the investigation and revealing the stratified ontology. The following question is a prime example of the combination of these purposes: 'why has higher education in this region failed to adopt a regional approach to the recognition of qualifications, student mobility, accreditation, qualifications frameworks and degree equivalence? Particularly, for example, when the UNESCO Convention of the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States has been in place, unrevised, since 1978?' This, as a moment of educational practice, is linked to circumstances. They are real, actual, and an answer is needed in terms of how they are understood and how they are activated, by asking where, why, and how.

Aligned with critical realist ontology, the *education moments* help to guide exploration. The *moment of education politics* works in response to relationships and inter-relationships across scales (higher education institutions, the state, family, international actors, religious institutes) - for example, who and how the basis of student mobility is decided. However, not everything that happens in the *moment of educational practice* is a result of a "direct consequence and response" to what happens in the *moment of education politics* (Robertson & Dale, 2015 p.157). The *moment of the politics of education* provides the 'rules', in response to the above question – it may consider the individuals and institutions (state, religious, ministries of education for example) responding to university and institutes of higher education policies, but it may be ultimately connected with social structures such as growing Arab youth population. The *moment of outcomes* includes not "only the immediate consequences of educational practices, policies and politics for those directly involved, but also their wider personal/individual, community/collective, social and economic qualities arising from globalizing processes (Robertson & Dale, 2015 p.157)."

Civilization Analysis as a Means to Interpret Culture in the Political Economy

What is understood by culture is open to different interpretations derived from various ontological and epistemological positions. The dynamics of culture, religion, values and traditions converge in complicated and not well-understood ways (Mazawi & Sultan, 2010). Sholkamy (2006) notes that the outdated, under-theorized and undervalued nature of the study and the understanding of cultures and social dynamics in the Arab context. The impact of this difficulty means that recognizing the effects and role of global, geo-regional and national institutional structures and dynamics, as well as the

cultural problematic of meaning (not in the sense of being restricted to semiotics and the dominant view of world polity), remain difficult to explain with outcomes difficult to determine (Roberson & Dale, 2015). Arnason's (2003) civilizational paradigm can, however, be used as an epistemic space in order to find and address the cultural questions, and the basis on which Arab culture and society can be interpreted in the modern age.

The primary claim for the development of a civilization analysis approach within CCPEE is that it provides a means of comparison, which recognizes the characteristics, and meaning of "deeper cultural sources of current institutions, practices, and justifications, without which we cannot fully understand current educational institutions, issues and practices" (Dale & Robertson, 2016). The overarching goal of using civilizational analysis is therefore grounded in the aim of producing a more complete theory of the characteristics and effects of civilizational forms and legacies in CCPEE. This can be achieved through civilizational analysis' six main thematic foci, which "enables a means of access to deeply embedded sets of meanings and practices that can be used as a basis for comparative explanations of societal differences in education" (Dale & Robertson, 2016).

Other Paradigmatic Considerations

While Arnason (2003) provides a theoretical framework for analyzing civilizations and modernity, it is necessary to note that there are other important paradigms useful for analysis. Orientalism, (Said, 1977) for example, is a conceptual framework that focuses on the appropriation of the Orient through colonialism and imperialism encounters. On the other hand, Occidentalism studies Arab conceptualization of the West. Much of Occidentalism has been about the idealization of the western 'Other', which El Enany (2006) explains is the wish to become the other or at least become like the other.

Sharabi's (1998) neopatricarchal society, from an ideologically perspective, can be used at both the macro level of society, state and economy, as well as the micro level of family. Significant Arab intellectuals such as Adonis, Laroui, and Al-Jabri have discussed in different ways the significance and relationship between Arab subjectivity, history, and modernity (Sheedi, 1997, p.42). Al-Jabri uses Foucault's archaeological method (Sheedi, 1997, p.42) to fundamentally question the theory of tradition and history while dismissing "the idea of a unitary Arab reality or singular Arab Islamic tradition." Meanwhile, Laroui uses historicism—a theory that social and cultural phenomena are based on history—deeming it to be the most adept measure in determining Arab identity.

With strong ties between Arabo-Islamic culture and Graeco-Roman culture in areas of philosophy, theology, medicine, science, math and poetry, Pormann (2013) examines the influence of Graeco-Roman classics on contemporary Arabo-Islamic culture. Arabo-Islamic culture embodies Arab and Islamic concepts that are meaningful in textual and social contexts such as the fundamental modesty code that underlines practices like wearing the hijab (headscarf). Pormann (2013) presents a case arguing that classic Graeco-Roman civilisation has had an impact on Arab modernity. Sabry (2010) suggests that Arab cultural studies as an episteme is useful in the pursuit of the present cultural tense of Arab culture, and draws on the work of Abu-Lughod and Al-Jabri. Abu-Lughod (1963) began a new era in terms of the modern Middle East as a field of study,

focusing on the Arab world and its intellectual history, in comparison to Islam and the larger Ottoman Near East (Khalidi, 2011). Al-Jabri focuses on Arab-Islamic philosophy and the construction of modernity in the Arab world. Significant and valuable as these paradigms are, limitations should be recognized first, in terms of the spatial and temporal situatedness of Arab culture, and second, the relative inability to allow comparisons across global education systems. These two limitations can be addressed through the six thematic foci that constitute civilization analyzes.

Six Thematic Foci of CA

Arnason (2004) posits that his provisional framework of defining civilizations is, in the most part, not identifiable with any particular existing version of civilization theory, and that the components are grouped into connected themes, forming important contributions to the debate. The six aspects of his paradigm for civilization analysis delve in different arguments from sociological theory and comparative history (Arnason, 2004). The changing roles and weights of these six thematic foci or "inventory of civilizational components" (Arnason, 2004, p. 106) underline the need for flexible conceptualization, particularly in relation to a variety of historical contexts. The first three components form the internal structures of civilizations, while the remaining three relate to their expansion spatially and temporally.

In the first of Arnason's (2003) six thematic foci, he identifies understanding the difference between distinctive and formative cultural orientations as the most pivotal concept of the civilizational theory. He also argues that it could give the researcher the foundation to a specific universe of meaning, comparing it to Eisenstadt's cultural ontologies and visions of cosmic and social order. Understanding and defining the cultural problematic can point to the way in which a civilization constructs, represents and transforms social order (Arnason, 2003).

The second aspect of the framework—institutional structure and dynamics—is deemed by Arnason (2004) to be the least developed part of civilizational analysis and argues that drawing a distinction between cultural, political and economic structures may prove useful, allowing analysis of the civilizational connections between them. This can be achieved by drawing on the cultural interpretations of power and wealth and how these interconnected problems link to both political and economic institutions. The cultural interpretation or definition of power varies from civilization to civilization as a result of divergent historical paths; therefore, civilizations and societies vary in how they distinguish and manage sacred and secular authority or how sovereignty is viewed. Within the economic domain, cultural interpretations of power can be identified, as suggested by Arnason (2004 p.108), through the analysis of different modes of accumulation and the ability to maintain commercial development from a comparative perspective as well as the relationships between civilizations and economies through their views of capitalism.

The third component, while belonging to the institutional dimension, is deemed important enough to warrant a separate discussion and focuses on the concept of dominant worldviews. While the importance of "formative ideas, texts and elites is not in question (p. 108)" Arnason (2004) proposes in his framework to treat them as "a derivative and variable aspect of civilizational complexes." Arnason expresses concern

that comparative studies have accepted as standard or authentic dominant or exclusive world views —such as world polity theory— without considering that these views can be "embodied in canonical texts and represented by cultural elites (2004 p. 107)." Cultural elites not only endeavor to manage the interpretations of sacred religious scriptures but often share power with other elites in variable and arbitrary ways (Arnason, 2004 p. 107) and therefore have the ability to shape the characteristics of a civilization through its central institutions. For example, the medieval Catholic Church, Ulema, Brahims and Chinese literati represent different patterns of intellectual life as well as social power (Arnason, 2004 p. 109). These first three aspects focus on the internal structure of civilization, while the remaining three can be identified as traits of civilizations.

Moving to the last three aspects of the framework, the visibility of the multi-societal structure (families of societies) is a prime defining feature of civilizations and is most evident in terms of the macro-formations mentioned above although, there are some significant differences between them when considering the major civilizational worlds of pre-modern times such as Mesopotamia and Egyptian civilization. These "families of societies" can be thought of as sociocultural frameworks whereby smaller groups (societies) can be more or less autonomous and expand "their variations on shared themes" (Arnason, 2004 p.109), with Islam unequivocally recognized as the most multi-societal civilization of pre-modern times.

The temporal and spatial characteristic of successive generations of society (the multi-societal structure) leads to the concept of "multi-epochal civilization" and "multi-civilizational sequence," the fifth aspect of the framework. The temporal and spatial characteristics take into account complex factors, such as the progression of civilizations from one era to another, as such transitions "coincide with shifts of the geopolitical and geocultural centers, and interaction with other civilizational sequences (Arnason, 2004 p. 110)." These factors need to be taken into account in terms of analyzing the modern civilization. Arnason (2003) suggests that this trait of civilizations is one of the least explored in civilization analyzes and is challenging in terms of its complexity.

The final feature of the conceptual framework is the regional basis of civilizational distinctions with "historical formation and transformation of civilizations taking place in geographical contexts" with different civilization patterns occurring (Arnason, 2003, p. 314). The relationship between civilization and regional aspects is not simple, taking into account distinct and varying civilizational patterns. For example, the first Islamic conquests and subsequent formation of Islam as a worldwide religion came about as a result of the annexation of the Nile Oxus region, "the oldest and most central multi-civilizational zone" (Arnason, 2004, p.111). Subsequent cultural unification, religious expansion and imperial conquests "led to the Islamization of more remote regions" which were then "integrated into a supra-regional formation," but still retained sufficient unique characteristics "to give rise to more or less original variants of the universal model (Arnason, 2004 p. 111)." On the other hand, enduring multi civilization constellations exist in the regions such as the Mediterranean, which throughout its history "has been an arena of inter civilizational encounters (Arnason, 2004 p. 111)."

Conclusion

With origins in Cultural Political Economy, the CCPEE is a critical means of investigating education. This conceptual paper considers how civilization analysis (Arnason, 2003), as an emerging paradigm, can be used as a means to investigate the 'culture' in Robertson and Dale's (2015) critical cultural political economy of education. Analyzing Arab modernity, culture and societies, using civilization analysis (CA) as a theoretical framework, offers a means of accessing deeply entrenched sets of meanings and practices allowing for a comparative interpretation of societal differences in education and provides a systematic effort directed at theorizing and refining concepts. Civilization analysis, through its six thematic foci allows a flexible approach in considering the 'cultural' within the political economy of higher education.

A combined CCPEE and civilization analysis approach, which considers the education ensemble, may guide researchers in unfolding, in a more comprehensive and comparative perspective, the dynamics of power in education. The CCPEE offers a lens through which both visible and invisible layers and mechanisms within which education, its systems, and structures are located can be identified with the cultural problematic of meaning addressed by the thematic foci of CA. The combined CCPEE and CA offer a means to investigate education and education issues on a global scale offering theoretically grounded forms of analysis (Dale, 2015).

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THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE TEACHER IN THE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES OF OMAN AND FINLAND: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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المكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم في السياسات التعليمية في سلطنة عمان

و فنلندا (دراسة مقارنة)

علي بن سعيد بن سليم المطري

وزارة التربية والتعليم

سلطنة عمان

المقدمة:

يعاني المعلم اليوم من أوضاع صعبة تمس مكانته واحترامه، أكثر بكثير مما كان يعانيه المعلمون منذ نصف قرن مضي، ومع ذلك فهو يواجه مهمات و مسؤوليات أكثر تعقيداً وصعوبة عما كان عليه الوضع في الماضي، لقد تدهورت ظروف عمل المعلمين، وافتقر تدريبهم إلى الحافز والأحوال الإجتماعية والمهنية الجيدة التي من شأنها مساعدته على تحقيق قفزة واسعة إلى الأمام، وبدأ النظام التعليمية في بعض الدول العربية بالإستعانة بمعلمين مبتدئين، لم يحصلوا على أي تدريب تربوي أو شهادة تربوية قبل الخدمة، أو ممن حصلوا على قدر ضئيل من الأعداد المهنية بنظام الحصة أو المكافأة الشاملة، بإعتبار أنهم يمثلون قوى عاملة رخيصة، ولديهم الإستعداد لقبول العمل في ظروف العمل المتدنية الراهنة، ولا شك أنه توجد اليوم فجوة واسعة بين خصائص ومهارات المعلم الذي تطلبه ظروف عصر المعلومات والمعرفة الراهن وخصائص المعلم الحالي في المدارس العربية، ومن الملح الإشارة إليه أنه قد آن الأوان للإهتمام بدور المعلم ومهنة التعليم، وليس فقط على أساس العدالة في التعامل مع هذه الفئة المهنية التي تؤدي دوراً اجتماعياً ووطنياً مهما، بل لأنها تشكل عاملا حاسماً في أية استراتيجية للتنمية البشرية (جامعة الدول العربية، 2009).

إن الإتجاه نحو بناء صورة إجتماعية جديدة للمعلمين العرب وعملهم، تعني قبل كل شيء تحقيق أداء مهني فردي وجماعي قادر على إستعادة مساندة المجتمع وإحترامه لمن يقومون بالتعليم، ودورهم وقضاياهم، ويعني في نفس الوقت سياسات تنمية قدرات المعلمين وإعدادهم لتطوير التعليم في الوطن العربي ، و ترقية المعلمين إلى مستويات تدريسية أعلى، وتطوير السياق المؤسسي لممارسة التدريس، وإستراتيجيات التمهين من أجل التمكين أومعايير مقصودة ومتسقه بشأن الإعلام والاتصال والحوار العام(جامعة الدول العربية، 2009، ص10). بالإضافة إلى تعليم وتدريب المعلمين الرامي إلى إزالة الصور النمطية القديمة المقصورة على تلبية الإحتياجات الإجتماعية، والمطالب الفردية للمتعلمين (حسن، 2005) .وتكوين صورة جماعية مهنية جديدة عن المعلمين بإمتلاكهم مهارات إتصال وتواصل عالية، مهارات حل المشكلات المختلفة، ووعي علمي وتقني يساعد في النجاح في الحياة، وتطوير أدائهم التدريسي، ومعرفة الإحتياجات الإنسانية المتجددة للتلاميذ، وسبل إشباع تلك الاحتياجات بما يمنحهم الإستقرار العاطفي والنمو العقلي والقوة البدنية

بإعتبارهم مواطنين، ومهنيين، وقوى فاعلة، وحلفاء في تطوير التعليم في عصر جديد وفي ظل نموذج تعليمي جديد(النصار، 2002).

وللوقوف على تجارب الدول المتقدمة كأفضل الأنظمة التعليمية ، فقد تم اختيار دولة فنلندا حيث احتلت المركز الخامس على مستوى العالم كأفضل الأنظمة التعليمية، ومن هنا ، كان لابد من معرفة مكنونات هذا النظام التعليمي ،وسبل تفوقه عالميا، ومدى إهتمامه بتعزيز المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم، ومقارنته بالنظام التعليمي بسلطنة عمان بهدف تطويره والأخذ بمقترحات التطوير التي اتبعتها فلندا في مجال تعزيز المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم في السياسة التعليمية. (يحيي، 2015).

مشكلة الدراسة :

نظراً للأهمية الدور الذي يلعبه المعلم في المجتمع، تربوياً وتعليمياً بل وحتى سياسياً وإقتصادياً وإجتماعياً فهو بذلك عنصرها الأساسي في كل المجالات، وسلطنة عمان معنية كغيرها من المجتمعات بذلك، وكون الباحث يعمل في قطاع التربية والتعليم في عمان، وينتمي إلى هذه الشريحة من المجتمع، إذ أحسب نفسيه معني بذلك فقد عاش وسط فئة المعلمين، ونتيجة الملاحظة والدراسة الإستطلاعية التي قام بها الباحث ، والتي طبقت على (40) معلماً ومعلمه ،والتي أظهرت تدني المكانة الإجتماعية لهذه الوظيفة في مجتمعنا العماني التي شرفته العقيدة الإسلامية قبل أن يشرفها الفلاسفة والكتاب، وكأن المجتمع العماني غير واع بمدلول هذه المهنة. فصورة المعلم ليست في مكانها اللائق بها. كذلك أظهرت نتائج مجموعة من الدراسات العمانية منها دراسة الفارسي(2011)، ودراسة المهدي وآخرون (2014) التي قام بها مجموعة من الباحثين الأكاديميين بجامعة السلطان قابوس، عدم وجود سياسة تعليمية مكتوبة في سلطنة عمان وإنما مجرد مجموعة من المبادئ المتناثرة في الوثائق الرسمية. بينما يعد النظام التعليمي الفنلندي من أفضل النظم التعليمية في العالم، حيث تصدرت فلندا نتائج الدول المشاركة في المسابقة الدولية التي تجريها منظمة التعاون الدولي (OCED)،و نجاح سياساتها التعليمية التي اعتمدت على تعزيز مكانة المعلم الاجتماعية ،وتحقيق مبدأي الإنصاف والمساواة، وحصول جميع الأفراد على حقوقهم المتساوية في التعليم ،وإعتماد النظام التعليمي منذ عام 1979م على روتين هما: التعليم مدى الحياة، والإهتمام بالمعلم وإعداده وتقييم الطلاب(رفاعي، 2015، 436).ونتيجة لذلك ظهرت أهمية أجراء دراسة مقارنة للمكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم في السياسات التعليمية بين فلندا وسلطنة عمان، وهي الدراسة الأولى في حدود – علم الباحث – في سلطنة عمان مما يعطيها سبق البحث في هذا المجال.

أسئلة البحث:

ويمكن تحديد مشكلة الدراسة في التساؤلات التالية:

1- ما الأسس النظرية للمكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية؟
2- ما واقع العلاقة بين المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم والسياسة التعليمية في سلطنة عمان؟
3- ما واقع العلاقة بين المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية في فنلندا؟
4- ما أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية في سلطنة عمان وفنلندا ،ومقترحات تطويرها في ضوء خبرة فنلندا ؟

حدود الدراسة:

الحدود الموضوعية: اقتصر البحث على دراسة المكانة الاجتماعية والسياسات التعليمية في سلطنة عمان ، وفنلندا.

الحدود الزمنية: أجري البحث خلال شهر يناير 2016 .

الحدود البشرية: جميع العاملين بالقطاع الحكومي، والقطاع الخاص، والقطاعات الآخرى.

منهج الدراسة:

إستخدم الباحث المنهج المقارن المتبع في الدراسات التربوية المقارنة، ويتضمن الوصف والتفسير في ذات الوقت؛ بمعنى " وصف الظاهرة التربوية موضوع الدراسة والبحث وتحليل للعوامل الثقافية المسؤولة عن وجودها بهذا الوضع، كذلك تفسير لأوجه التشابه وأوجه الإختلاف التي يمكن ملاحظتها من دراسة النظم التعليمية" (شاكر وآخرون، 1999، 302).

مصطلحات الدراسة:

عرفها بيار أنصار في معجم علم الإجتماع بأنها: "مجموع الوضعيات يقصد بها في هذه الدراسة كما**المكانة (Status)** الاجتماعية التي يحتلها فرد ما، والأدوار المرتبطة بها".

المكانة الاجتماعية: يقصد بها في هذه الدراسة: "الوضع الذي يحتله الفرد في نسق العلاقات الإجتماعية القائمة في المجتمع وذلك بالمقارنة إلى أوضاع الأفراد الآخرين المناظر له في ذلك المجتمع، هي التي تحدد للفرد الحقوق والواجبات وسلوكيات هذا الفرد وطبيعة العلاقات الإجتماعية بين الفرد وغيرة من أفراد المجتمع"(البيلاوي، الحمادي، 1988، 14).

المعلم: إجرائياً في هذه الدراسة يقصد به: "الذي يقوم بتدريس كل أو معظم المواد الدراسية ويرتكز دوره في تهيئة الظروف التعليمية والتعلمية لطلابه، بهدف متابعة نموهم العقلي والبدني والجمالي والحسي والديني والإجتماعي والخلقي" (شحاته، النجار، 283،2003).

السياسات التعليمية: إجرائياً في هذه الدراسة تعرف بأنها : "إطار عام يعبر عن توجهات الدولة والمجتمع، ويتضمن الأهداف والخطط والبرامج التعليمية والتربوية، والإجراءات التي يجب القيام بها لضمان التنفيذ والتطبيق الناجح لها" (الرفاعي، 2015، 438).

<u>أولا: ًمناقشة الـــنتائج المتـــعلقة بالسؤال الأول</u>:" ما الأسس النظرية للمكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية؟"

مفهوم المكانة الاجتماعيةSocial Status :

تعطي المكانة الإجتماعية الفرد ميزات تجعله موضع استحسان وقبول اجتماعي، وفي الوقت نفسة ، فإن هذا الإستحسان الذي يمنح له أثناء تقويم الجماعة لقيمة ما عنده من خصائص ومقتنيات وما يقوم به من دور يحقق نتائج ذات نفع للجماعة، ومن هذا المنطلق ترتبط المكانة بحاجات تعد مشتركة فيما بين الأفراد في مختلف مستوياتهم، وفي ضوء هذا المنطق فإن المكانة تمنح للشخص تبعاً للمدى الذي تكون فيه خصائصه وسلوكه مثيبه لأعضاء الجماعة حسب ما يرونه، وعليه فإن

المكانة تعد متغيراً فعالاً في العلاقات ما بين الأشخاص أو الجماعات، لأن الأساس في المكانة هو عملية المقارنة ما بين الأشخاص، فمن خلال المقارنات المتكررة مع الآخرين ، ينمي الشخص فكرة واضحة عن مكانته مهما تكن أسس تلك المقارنات سواء كانت بشكل دخول أو مهارات أو مقتنيات أو خصائص.

مفهوم السياسة التعليمية:

تعد السياسة التعليمية جزء أو نظام فرعي من نظام السياسة المجتمعية للدولة، بإعتبار أن النظام التعليمي من أهم القطاعات المجتمعية التي تؤثر في بقية النظم المجتمعية الأخرى كالنظام الإقتصادي ، والنظام الإجتماعي، والنظام الصحي، ومن ثم فالنظام التعليمي في أي مجتمع تحكمه وتوجهه سياسة منبثقة عن السياسة العامة في الدولة أو المجتمع. (المهدي وآخرون ،2014).

وتتناول الأدبيات مصطلح السياسة التعليمية من أبعاد مختلفة ومناظير شتى ، حيث نجد من يعرفها بأنها قوانين وأنظمة أو أفكار وإتجاهات، تمثل الأطر العامة التي تضعها الدولة متمثلة بوزارة التربية والتعليم، الغاية منها ولوائح تتضمن مبادئ توجيه النظام التربوي والعملية التعليمية وترسيخ مبادئ العدالة والمشاركة والديمقراطية والمنهج العلمي. (عبيدات، 2007).

ثانياً: مناقشة النتائج المتعلقة بالسؤال الثاني: " ما واقع العلاقة بين المكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم والسياسة التعليمية في سلطنة عمان؟ "

تركز عمليات السياسة التعليمية في سلطنة عمان على عدد من المبادئ الموجهة لحركة التربية وأهدافها والتي حددها، النظام الأساسي للدولة الذي صدر بالمرسوم السلطاني رقم (101) لسنة 1996م، من أهمها ما يلي: التأكيد على العدل، والشورى والمساواة، وحق المشاركة في الشؤون العامة، وتلبية التعليم لمتطلبات خطط التنمية الإقتصادية والإجتماعية. والعمل على إيجاد جيل قوي في بنيته وأخلاقه، يعتز بأمته ووطنه وتراثه، ويحافظ على منجزاته. وتوفير التعليم الأساسي والعام ومكافحة الأمية. وتشجيع إنشاء المدارس والمعاهد الخاصة بإشراف الدولة. ولقد بذلت القيادة الحكيمة لجلالة السلطان جهود جبارة فاقت التوقعات خلال 46 عاما تمثلت في مجموعة من الإنجازات التربوية منها:

أ- الخطط الخمسية : (وزارة التربية والتعليم، 2006، 28)

الخطة الخمسية الأولى (1976-1980)	الاستمرار في التوسع في خدمات التعليم في جميع أنحاء السلطنة ، وإحلال المدارس المؤقتة (التي تم افتتاحها في خيام) بمدارس دائمة مبنية بالمواد الثابتة، وإنشاء معاهد تدريب المعلمين.
الخطة الخمسية الثانية (1981-1985)	الاستمرار في التوسع في خدمات التعليم في خدمات التعليم، وتزويد المدارس بالمكتبات والمختبرات، وتطوير معاهد تدريب المعلمين لتصبح كليات متوسطة لتدريب المعلمين تقبل خريجي المدارس الثانوية للدراسة بها لفترة عامين دراسيين.
الخطة الخمسية الثالثة (1986- 1990)	فيما استمر التوسع في توفير خدمات التعليم، والتركيز على تطوير جودة الخدمات المقدمة، ووضع

	الخطط الخاصة بتنفيذ برنامج تعمين وظائف الهيئات التدريسية.
الخطة الخمسية الرابعة (1991-1995)	الاستمرار في تطوير جودة الخدمات وتعزيز العمل في تعمين وظائف الهيئات التدريسية.
الخطة الخمسية الخامسة (1996-2000)	إعداد برامج مناسبة تتصف بالجودة لإعداد المواطنين للقرن الحادي والعشرين. واشتمل ذلك على تطبيق نظام التعليم الأساسي.
الخطة الخمسية السادسة (2001-2005)	الاستمرار في التوسع في توفير خدمات التعليم يتم توفيره للجميع، والتوسع في تطبيق نظام التعليم الأساسي والاستمرار في تطوير تعزيز وتطوير جودة الخدمات التعليمية.
الخطة الخمسية السابعة (2006-2010)	تطبيق مرحلة التعليم ما بعد الأساسي، والاستمرار بإحلال التعليم الأساسي مكان العام.
الخطة الخمسية الثامنة (2011-2015)	تضمنت أهداف قطاع التعليم في مجموعة محاور رئيسية وهي:(الأهداف العامة والبرامج والأنشطة الكفيلة بتحقيق هذه الأهداف)ومجالاتها، التعليم والتعلم، المناهج، رعاية الموظفين والاحصاء التربوي وتوظيف التقانة وغيرها من المجالات

ب- مشروع وثيقة فلسفة التعليم في سلطنة عمان:

تعد وثيقة فلسفة التعليم في سلطنة عمان مرجعاً مهماً في توجيه ملامح السياسة التربوية التي ينتهجها النظام التربوي بالسلطنة، وقد شهدت الساحة التربوية عموماً، وفي السلطنة على وجه الخصوص، مستجدات جعلت أمر تطوير هذه الوثيقة ضرورة ملحة خلال المرحلة الراهنة، لتكون معبرة عن الرؤية الحقيقية لتطوير مسيرة التعليم في السلطنة، والمرتكز الأساس الذي يمكن البناء عليه لتحسين جودة المخرجات التعليمية(مجلس التعليم، 2015).

وتكمن أهمية وجود فلسفة للتعليم في السلطنة كونها المحرك نحو تطوير التعليم والإصلاح التربوي في جميع مؤسسات التعليم، فهي تشكل أهمية خاصة في توحيد الرؤى والممارسات في قطاع التربية والتعليم، انطلاقا من أسس ومبادئ ونظريات تربوية معاصر، تمثل الإطار العام الذي يوجه العملية التعليمية نحو التحسين والتطوير وفق مصادر ومبادئ وأهداف عالية الجودة والمصداقية.

جـ - مسودة قانون التعليم: اعد بالتشاور مع المعنيين بالعمل التربوي داخل الوزارة وخارجها، بموجب القرار الوزاري رقم (24/ 2012م)، وللحاجات المستجدة للمتعلم، ويتوزع مشروع قانون التعليم المدرسي على عشرة أبواب تضم كل منها فصولا متعددة، شملت جوانب منها: متطلبات القبول في مراحل التعليم المختلفة، وبيئة التعلم، ومواصفات المبنى المدرسي، وتمويل التعليم، إضافة إلى جوانب تتعلق بالهيئة التعليمية بالمدارس من حيث رخصة مزاولة مهنة التعليم، والمنطلقات الأساسية لمتابعة أوضاع الهيئة التعليمية وإدارة شؤونها.

واقع المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم – وكيف ينظر المجتمع للمعلم العماني؟

قام الباحث بعمل دراسة هدفت إلى معرفة واقع المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم العماني- وما هي نظرة المجتمع للمعلم العماني ، وتمثلت آداه الدراسة في إستبانة تكونت من (32) فقرة وهي إستبانة من تصميم فريق بحثي أكاديمي بجامعة السلطان قابوس تم التواصل معه لأخذ الموافقة للتطبيق الإستبانة للدراسة الحالية، وتمثلت الفئة المستهدفة في الدراسة (القطاع الحكومي ، والقطاع الخاص، ومهن أخرى) ، حيث بلغ حجم عينة الدراسة (149) فرداً ، وللوقوف على مدى مناسبة الاستبانة للتطبيق فقد تم تطبيقها على عينة بلغت (30) فرداً للقياس مدى مناسبتها علمياً وتربوياً للتطبيق على عينة الدراسة الفعلية ،وبلغ معامل الثبات ألفاكرونباخ (0,93)، وهو رقم ومقياس واحد يقيس درجة ثبات وصدق أسئلة الإستبيان أي قدرة الأداة المستخدمة في الدراسة على قياس المقصود من قياسه وهي مناسبة علمياً وتربوياً للتطبيق.

وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن المشاهد الإعلامية المسيئة للمعلم تشعرني بالغضب بمتوسط حسابي بلغ (4,19) ، وأن المعلم العماني مرب وصاحب رسالة بمتوسط حسابي (4,12)، وأن المعلم العماني أساس في تقدم المجتمع ونموه حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي (4,06)، بينما ينظر المجتمع العماني للمهنة التعليم بأنها مهنة سهلة مقارنة بالمهن الأخرى حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي (2,13)، ويتناسب الوضع المادي للمعلم العماني مع حجم مسئولياته المهنية بمتوسط حسابي بلغ (2,89)، وأن المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم اليوم أفضل من الماضي جاءت بمتوسط حسابي بلغ (2,66) ، مما يدل على أن هناك يوجد وعي لدى المجتمع بدور المعلم العماني في العملية التعليمية إلا أن مكانته الإجتماعية مازالت ضعيفة مقارنة بالمهن الأخرى ونتيجة ظهور مهن منافسة بمؤهلات أقل وبرواتب أعلى، غيرت بوصلة الإتجاه نحو مهنة التعليم، كما هو موضح في النتائج في الجدول التالي .

المتوسطات الحسابية والإنحرافات المعيارية والأهمية النسبية (الرتبة) لاستجابة أفراد عينة الدراسة

م	العبارة	المتوسط الحسابي	الانحراف المعياري	الأهمية النسبية (الرتبة)
1	المعلم العماني يساهم بشكل واضح في قيادة التغيير في المجتمع في المستقبل	3.92	1.03	7
2	المعلم العماني إنسان كادح في عمله	3.93	0.89	6
3	للمعلم العماني أثر إيجابي في مستقبل أبنائي	4.04	0.97	4
4	يعتمد نجاح الطلبة في دراستهم أساسا على المعلم العماني	3.34	1.10	25
5	المعلم العماني أساس تقدم المجتمع ونموه	4.06	0.85	3
6	المعلم العماني مرب وصاحب رسالة	4,12	0.82	2
7	المعلم العماني مخلص في عملة	3.62	0.93	18
8	المعلم العماني نشط في خدمة مجتمعة	3.79	0.85	10

9	0.83	3.88	المعلم العماني نموذج صالح يقتدي به الطلاب	9
14	0.75	3.71	يتصف المعلم العماني بالانتماء لمهنته	10
23	1.07	3.45	يتعامل المعلم العماني مع الطلاب بعدالة	11
13	0.89	3.72	يتمتع المعلم العماني بالقدرة على التطوير والإبتكار	12
20	1.15	3.53	المعلم العماني سبب رئيس في الصورة الحالية لنظرة المجتمع لمهنة التعليم	13
11	1.11	3.77	النظرة الإيجابية للمجتمع تجاه المعلم مرتبطة بمدى تقدير وزارة التربية لمعلميها	14
17	1.17	3.66	تساهم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (الفيسبوك، تويتر، انستجرام، واتساب... إلخ) في تشكيل صورة المعلم لدى أفراد المجتمع.	15
28	1.09	3.22	أحب التعامل مع المعلمين في عملي أكثر من أصحاب المهن الأخرى	16
5	0.81	4	أسعى إلى إقامة علاقات إيجابية وفاعلة مع معلمي أبنائي	17
21	1.04	3.48	استشير بعض المعلمين لمساعدتي في حل المشكلات الاجتماعية التي تواجهني	18
8	0.83	3.80	حين أرى أحد معلمي أولادي خارج المدرسة لا يفوتني أن أسلم عليه	19
15	0.93	3.71	حين يحضر معلم ابني في مجلس من المجالس أشعر بالفخر	20
1	1,04	4.19	المشاهدة الإعلامية المسيئة للمعلم تشعرني بالغضب	21
19	1.15	3.54	لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي دور فاعل في تكوين نظرتي الشخصية للمعلم	22

بلغ معامل الثبات ألفاكرونباخ (0,93)

عمليات التخطيط للسياسات التعليمية:

عملية صنع السياسة التعليمية في عمان هو عبارة عن تصميم أو بناء يمر بعدة مراحل تبدأ بتحديد الأهداف وتنتهي باللوائح والقوانين، أو بمعنى آخر هي عملية تتضمن خطوات تبدأ بتحديد المشكلة وتنتهي بوضع التشريعات والقوانين المنظمة للعمل مروراً بعمليات نقاش وبحث وجمع المعلومات وتشارك فيها جهات رسمية وغير رسمية(الحربي، 2007، ص 8).والشكل التالي يوضح ذلك:

ثالثاً: مناقشة النتائج المتعلقة بالسؤال الثالث: " ما واقع العلاقة بين المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية في فنلندا؟"

تركز عمليات السياسة التعليمية في فنلندا على توفير فرص تكافؤ الفرص لجميع المواطنين ، وتحقيق تعليم عالي الجودة والكفاءة ، والإنصاف، وعالمية المعارف والمعلومات، وبنيت هذه السياسة على مبادئ التعليم مدى الحياة ومجانية التعليم، وينظر إلى التعليم باعتباره مفتاح القدرة التنافسية ورفاهية المجتمع (وزارة التعليم والثقافة الفنلندية،2012) .

ويتم عملية تنفيذ السياسات التعليمية على مستويين:

أ. الأول وزارة التعليم والثقافة: التي تعد مسؤولة عن سياسات التعليم في فنلندا من خلال المجلس الوطني الفنلندي للتعليم، ويعمل بالتعاون مع الوزارة لوضع الأهداف والمحتوى وطرق التدريس والتعلم للمراحل التعليمية المختلفة، وتشمل مرحلة التعليم ما قبل المدرسي، والتعليم الأساسي والثانوي، وتعليم الكبار.(رفاعي، 2015، 480).

ب. والمستوى الثاني: السلطات المحلية أو سلطات البلدية، وهي مسؤولة عن إتخاذ القرارات المتعلقة بالتمويل، وتنفيذ المناهج المحلية، وتوظيف العاملين، وتتمتع البلديات بالإستقلالية لتفويض السلطات للمدارس، ويتم مناقشة تشريعات السياسة التعليمية من قبل البرلمان، وبناءا على مقترحات الحكومة، ووزارة التربية والتعليم والثقافة التي تعد مسؤولة عن إعداد وتنفيذ السياسات التعليمية (رفاعي، 2015، 480).

رابعاً: مناقشة النتائج المتعلقة بالسؤال الرابع: " ما أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين المكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم والسياسات التعليمية في سلطنة عمان وفنلندا، ومقترحات تطويرها في ضوء خبرة فنلندا؟ "

التشابه	الاختلاف	مقترحات للتطوير
تتشابه العوامل نوعاً ما في الموقع الجغرافي المتميز وإنخفاض عدد السكان ، ولكنها تختلف في تحول فنلندا إلى إقتصاد المعرفة الذي يدور حول الحصول على المعرفة وتوظيفها وإبتكارها بهدف تحسين نوعية الحياة بمجالاتها كافة من خلال الإفادة من خدمة معلوماتية ثرية، وتطبيقات تكنولوجية متطورة وإستخدام العقل البشري كرأس للمال، وتوظيف البحث العلمي لأحداث مجموعة من التغييرات الاستراتيجية في طبيعة المحيط الإقتصادي وتنظيمه ليصبح أكثر إستجابة وإنسجاماً مع تحديد العولمة وتكنولوجيا المعلومات والإتصالات وعالمية المعرفة والتنمية المستدامة(مؤتمن، 2004، ص 23). تشترك السياسة التعليمية في سلطنة عمان في جميع مبادئ السياسة التعليمية في فنلندا. لا يوجد تشابه في تقدير المجتمع مهنة التعليم	تختلف حسب كل عامل وانعكاسه على تطوير التعليم. تفتقد السياسة التعليمية في سلطنة عمان إلى التطبيق الفعلي الجاد الذي يعتمد على مجموعة مبادئ منها المحاسبية، وقانون ينظم التعليم. تفاوت تقدير المجتمع لمهنة التعليم، وتدني مكانة المعلم بسبب مجموعة من العوامل منها الإقتصادية والإجتماعية.	التركيز على الإقتصاد المعرفي، تمويل التعليم في مرحلة التعليم قبل المدرسي من قبل الحكومة. العمل على إصدار السياسة التعليمية للسلطنة تتصف بالمرونة وبمواكبة العصر. مشاركة المعلمين في إعداد السياسات التعليمية بدلا من تنفيذها فقط. رفع معايير إعداد وإنتقاء المعلمين هي من أبرز أسباب إعطائه مكانة إجتماعية، كذلك تفعيل شراكة المعلم في صنع القرارات التربوية، وإعطاء مزيدا من الإستقلالية، ورفع أجره مساواة بالأطباء والمهندسين، وتقديم مختلف الخدمات كالخدمات الصحية ، لتنصب جهوده على التعليم، وذلك بإعتباره أهم عنصر لتحقيق أهداف الدولة بوجه عام، والتربية بشكل خاص، كل ذلك من شأنه أن يعطي المعلم في سلطنة عمان مكانة إجتماعية وإقتصادية متميزة تشعره بالفخر من جراء النظرة العظيمة التي ينظرها المجتمع لهذه المهنة المرموقة التي يتنافس الجميع للحصول عليها.

التوصيات:

1. ضرورة العمل على إصدار سياسة تعليمية مكتوبة بسلطنة عمان؛ ويتمثل ذلك بترجمة مجلس التعليم التعاون بينه وبين الجهات الرسمية والجامعات في إصدار سياسة تعليمية مكتوبة وواضحة المعالم لسلطنة عمان، كونه الجهة المسؤولة عن هذا الجانب.
2. التحول نحو الإقتصاد المعرفي وذلك للعمل على خلق رأس المال البشري وتطويره بنوعيه عالية وقدرات كبيرة من خلال التدريب والتطوير إذ يعد رأس المال البشري حجر الزاوية لبناء مجتمع المعلومات من جهة ودعامة تطور المؤسسة الإقتصادية ونموها ونجاحها من جهة أخرى.
3. تعزيز المكانة الإجتماعية للمعلم في الجوانب الإقتصادية من خلال مساواته برواتب الأطباء والمهندسين، وإعطاءه أبسط حقوقه الوظيفية مثل الترقيات المستحقة لبعض الموظفين في القطاع الحكومي والتي مضى على تاريخ إستحقاقها ما يقارب 7 سنوات ، والإجتماعية من خلال توفير التأمين الصحي للمعلمين، وتشكيل نقابة أسوة بنقابة العمال ، تدافع عن المعلمين وتطالب بحقوقهم التي لا يلقى لها بال.

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Founded in 2008, the Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) was formed to enable academic, professional and educational discourse, from a comparative stance, with a focus on the Arabian Gulf region.

The GCES aims to:

- contribute to the development and improvement of teaching standards at all levels in the region;
- increase the dissemination of knowledge about international research and best practices practice from a comparative stance; and,
- promote action research and cross collaborations across the Gulf.

The GCES is a non-profit society and a member of the World Congress of Comparative Education Societies. Visit http://www.gces.ae to learn more about the GCES.

About the Arab Open University – Kuwait Branch

Founded in 2002, the AOU is a non-profit university and stands as one of the initiatives of the Arab Gulf Program for Development (AGFUND). In addition to being the first private university in Kuwait, the AOU is also the largest of its kind, hosting 8,000 students and celebrates the cultural variation of its student population representing 75 nationalities. The mission of the university is to be open to all individuals of any socioeconomic or educational background, to be open to all innovative ideas and practices in education, and to be open in all places and environments. AOU has strong local as well as international accreditation of all its academic programs. In Kuwait, AOU is the leading institution in blended learning and the use of technology in the classroom.

Log on to http://www.aou.edu.kw *to learn more about their programs and admissions.*

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The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research was established in 2009 to aid in the social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah, a northern emirate in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Established through Emiri decree, the Foundation is considered a non-profit, quasi-governmental organization and is the visionary initiative of Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah. His Highness places great value on education and research, and the Al Qasimi Foundation was created to generate a world-class body of research on Ras Al Khaimah and the broader UAE, develop local capacity in the public sector, and engage the community in its work.

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