Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>

Review request

5 messages

Jihad Hamdan <ijaes20111@yahoo.com>   Tue, Apr 5, 2022 at 4:04 AM
To: Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>

Dear Syarifudin,

The International Journal of Arabic-English Studies (IJAES) Editorial Board would be much obliged if you could kindly review a paper entitled **"The Need for National Teacher Framework to Guide the Teaching Profession in Kuwait"** (attached), to see if it is worth publishing in our Scopus-indexed journal (www.ijaes.net).

Table of Contents - IJAES

If you are able to do so, we would appreciate a clear e-mail report (in Word format) in a month's time for purposes of documentation using the attached Review Form. The Authors' Guide is also attached.

We take this opportunity to thank you for your cooperation and would highly appreciate it if you could kindly acknowledge receipt of this email.

Best wishes

IJAES Editorial Office

---

3 attachments

📄 **IJAES Review Form .docx**
28K

📄 **Updated Guidelines and Publication Fees.pdf**
111K

📄 **Anonymous.docx**

57K

Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>   Tue, Apr 5, 2022 at 6:27 PM
Reply-To: syarif@uinmataram.ac.id
To: Jihad Hamdan <ijaes20111@yahoo.com>

Received, I would like to review this article, thank you.

Virus-free. www.avast.com

[Quoted text hidden]

Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>   Tue, Apr 5, 2022 at 6:28 PM
Reply-To: syarif@uinmataram.ac.id
To: Jihad Hamdan <ijaes20111@yahoo.com>

I would like to review this article, thank you

Virus-free. www.avast.com

[Quoted text hidden]

Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>   Sun, Apr 10, 2022 at 8:43 PM
Reply-To: syarif@uinmataram.ac.id
To: Jihad Hamdan <ijaes20111@yahoo.com>

Dear Editor,

I have looked into the paper and reviewed thoroughly. This manuscript does not meet the scope and limitation of the IJAES. It focuses on teacher and education in general rather than English or Arabic language teaching or studies. For this reason, **this paper is declined or rejected.** I would suggest that this manuscript be submitted to journals that cover Education in general. For more details, see the attached file.

Regards,
Syarifudin

Virus-free. www.avast.com

[Quoted text hidden]

---

2 attachments

📄 **Anonymous.docx**
71K

📄 **IJAES Review Form .docx**
19K

Jihad Hamdan <ijaes20111@yahoo.com>   Mon, Apr 11, 2022 at 2:05 AM
To: Syarifudin Syarifudin <syarif@uinmataram.ac.id>

Dear Dr. Syarifudin,

Thank you very much indeed for providing clear and precise feedback on the manuscript entitled **"The Need for National Teacher Framework to Guide the Teaching Profession in Kuwait"** . On

behalf of the Editors of *IJAES*, I am immensely grateful to you for all forms of support you have provided which will certainly help us maintain the high standard of the journal.

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

Title of the paper: The Need for National Teacher Framework to Guide the Teaching
Profession in Kuwait

Reviewer's name: Syarifudin

Objective evaluation:

Criterion	1	2	3	4	5	Remarks
Title relevance to content	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Originality and research significance	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Literature review in terms of relevance and sufficiency	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Research methodology	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Findings and discussion in terms of importance and relevance	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Documentation & referencing [including in-text referencing]	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal
Language & style	*					It does not meet the scope of the journal

* 1 is the lowest value and 5 is the highest.

Descriptive remarks:

This manuscript does not meet the scope and limitation of the Journal. It focuses on teacher
and education in general rather than English or Arabic language teaching or studies. For this
reason, **this paper is declined or rejected.** I would suggest that this manuscript be submitted
to journals that cover Education in general.

Final recommendations (pick one):

☐ The paper is recommended for publication in its present form.

☐ The paper is recommended for publication after the suggested amendments are made.

☐ The paper needs major modification and it is recommended for resubmission.

☐** The paper is not suitable for publication in *IJAES*.

The Need for National Teacher Framework to Guide the Teaching Profession in Kuwait

Abstract

The Kuwaiti context in relation to teaching profession is challenging, and the current policies are inadequate for improving teacher effectiveness and making major progress in education. If key elements of an education system are in alignment, they reinforce each other and help accelerate improvement. In order to identify the changes needed in the Kuwaiti educational system, a five-year-long qualitative study was conducted on The Draft National Teacher Policy Framework (NTFW) in collaboration with the World Bank as a part of one of the pillars for the reforming educational projects in Kuwait. The NTFW covers all the major elements of teacher policy and creates the scaffolding for a comprehensive teacher reform. Its overall design is in broad alignment with teacher policies in many other countries, as its seven Core Policies cover all key areas. Nonetheless, for the NTFW to lead to measurable improvements in Kuwaiti teacher quality, it must be strengthened significantly in some critical areas. However, the policies in each area as currently drafted are not sufficiently deep to produce major improvements.

Keywords: Teacher policies; Reform Education; Effective Teaching; Preservice programs

Introduction and Background

In 2015, an education technical cooperation program was initiated by the Government of Kuwait in collaboration with the World Bank (Government of Kuwait, 2019). This program, referred to as *The School Education Quality Improvement Program* (SEQI 2), is an extensive Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS) engagement (Alhashem, 2021). The development objective was grounded in the five-year Kuwait National Education Development Plan (NEDP). It is based on the conceptual model for integrated education reform and focuses on five core interventions known as the *Integrated Education Reform Program* (IERP): (i) a competence-based curriculum; (ii) effective teaching; (iii) school leadership; (iv) standards and assessments; and (v) system capacity building. The intended IERP outcomes were: (i) improved quality of core educational processes and products in curriculum, teaching and learning, classroom assessment, leadership, and supervision, as a prerequisite for increased student achievement on national and international assessments; and (ii) increased capacity to establish and use accountability systems for improved education decision making (Government of Kuwait, 2019).

The State of Kuwait has undertaken a major comprehensive reform of the national education system in the last three decades, with one of its components focusing specifically on improving teacher effectiveness in the classroom (Almanea, 2018). In order to ascertain if the aims of this initiative had been achieved, the National Center of Educational Development (NCED) with the support of the World Bank has studied the current status of teachers in Kuwait. This collaboration resulted in the initiation of four main projects to support the teaching profession. The objective of Component 2 titled "Effective Teaching" was to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Its key deliverables were the development and implementation of: (i) a National Teacher Policy and Regulatory Framework, (ii) a Professional Development program linked to teacher performance standards and teacher career path; and (iii) a teacher self-assessment tool based on these standards. As teachers are the most important school-based factor in determining student achievement, the established standards were expected to serve as a guide for the adoption of specific skills and practices while teaching. The teacher framework would delineate and collate all polices related to teaching education and practice, from their preservice programs to their retirement and exiting the field. Moreover, it works as a reference for all stakeholders, school leaders, and educators (World Bank, 2014).

Teacher Profession in Kuwait

2.1 Preparation Programs and Recruitment

In Kuwait, teacher preparation, selection, and ongoing training is confronted with several challenges which must be addressed immediately (Alhashem, 2021; Alhouti & Male, 2017). Individuals who enter the teaching profession come from a variety of national and international institutions and no mechanism or criterion for determining their suitability for teaching is presently available. In addition, the statistics related to 2016 and 2017 demonstrate that Kuwaiti colleges and universities have dramatically increased their intake of teacher candidates, and there is no guarantee that this expansion will result in academic excellence (Statistical Analysis Group, 2017). Consequently, it is imperative to establish the minimum standards that must be met by all newly graduating teachers in order ensure that schools are staffed with well-qualified teachers.

The excess of teachers at the school level is typically managed by assigning a different teacher to each subject, due to which even young students are exposed to many different teachers each day. This practice diverges from the approach adopted in most other countries, where the youngest students are taught by a single teacher, as this is less disruptive for the students and more efficient instructionally. As in Kuwait teachers are also unevenly distributed across schools, excess staffing is particularly acute in girls' schools. As a result of this practice, education spending is inefficient because the budget designated for important non-salary expenditures, such as information and communications technology (ICT), books, assessments, program evaluation, information management, professional development, and research is inadequate (Aljassar & Altammar, 2020).

2.2 Raising the Selectivity of Entry into Teacher Training.

In most countries where teacher quality is perceived to be low, the problem begins with the entry into teacher training programs, often due to a proliferation of private teacher training institutions with very low entry standards and low quality. Nonetheless, even well-resourced public institutions are sometimes unable to apply rigorous academic standards for admission and/or develop an excellent teaching faculty and high-quality instruction (Bruns & Luque, 2015). In most countries, governments are not directly involved in admissions to higher education because of university autonomy. The issue of colleges of education was addressed in Finland in the 1970s by reducing the number of teacher training programs and concentrating resources on four institutions that, combined, would produce only the teaching cadre that the country really needed. This practice saved resources by limiting the number of graduates entering the profession, while also raising teacher quality by mandating that only the top 20% of high school graduates would be admitted into training programs (Bruns & Luque, 2015).

2.3 More Rigorous Standards for Teacher Hiring.

Dramatically raising the quality of the teaching stock is the challenge for Kuwait, as the government has most leverage at the point of initial hiring. Most countries have increased teacher quality by: (i) defining explicit national teacher standards that set a new, and much higher, bar for quality; and (ii) developing a set of tests (sometimes including teaching a sample class) that screen candidates. The most

beneficial tests are rigorous, and measure teachers' content mastery, understanding of child development, pedagogy and classroom management techniques, and assess teachers' socio-emotional competencies (Almanea, 2018; Wiseman, Alromi, & Alshumrani, 2014; NIE, 2013). Several countries have established excellent national standards for teachers and these examples might be helpful when developing the same in Kuwait. It would also be prudent to involve expert teachers from across the school system in the design process, but all parties must recognize that the goal is to set a much higher bar for future teachers (Alsaleh, 2020).

2.4 Comprehensive Teacher Performance Evaluation.

An equally powerful policy change is to shift from automatic promotions based on years of service to promotions based on evaluated performance, as such merit-based system could change teachers' incentives profoundly. School districts across the United States and a growing number of developing countries have adopted this reform (Bruns & Luque, 2015). However, it only works if the teacher performance evaluation has legitimacy, i.e., it is perceived by teachers as based on relevant measures of teacher quality and is administered in a fair and incorruptible manner.

2.5 System-wide Data on Student Learning, Teacher Quality, and Research. The new student assessment system is an extremely important step forward, but Kuwait lacks other types of diagnostic data that can be used to improve system policies. The World Bank has supported several countries in carrying out classroom observation studies in representative samples of schools in order to gain a better understanding of the average quality of teachers' classroom practice and the variation in quality across and within schools (World Bank, 2008, NIE 2013). These studies have produced major insights into core problems affecting the educational practice, such as inefficient use of time, teachers' inability to keep students on task, teachers' reliance on traditional "chalk and talk" lectures rather than engaging students with questions, and teachers' failure to be in the classroom for the full class hour. These findings have helped educational ministries of the countries in which these studies were conducted to design more relevant and focused professional development programs and re-think the role of school directors (Alhouti, 2018).

The Kuwaiti government has prioritized "localizing teacher professional development in schools" which is consistent with good practice globally. However, global experience shows that it is important to provide schools with technical support and orientation in order to make school-based professional development productive (Alhashem, 2021). Also, school-level collaboration among teachers was stimulated by providing teachers with expert feedback on their classroom practice and support resources (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). Participating teachers found a practical guidebook and video examples of effective classroom practices particularly helpful, as their classroom management improved significantly and student learning increased in just one year (Bruns & Luque, 2015). These findings confirm that most efficient education policies are invariably designed on the basis of good data and analysis of the underlying issues. Educational stakeholders that realize that research is an investment rather than a luxury reap gains in the form of more effective policies and more efficient spending.

Available evidence further indicates that a good evaluation system must be comprehensive, and should incorporate the following major dimensions of teacher quality: (1) expert assessments of teachers' classroom performance; (2) tests of content mastery; and (3) regular feedback from school directors, colleagues, and students. Recently, Alazmi and Al-Mahdy (2020) observed that teacher performance evaluation systems that cover these dimensions are consistently able to differentiate teachers by quality, and these quality differentials are correlated with student learning gains. In most countries, teacher quality is enhanced by: (i) defining explicit national teacher standards that set a new, and much higher, bar for quality; and (ii) developing a set of tests (including teaching a sample class) that screen candidates against these standards. For the tests to be effective, they must be rigorous and should measure teachers' content mastery, understanding of child development, pedagogy and classroom management techniques, and assess teachers' socio-emotional competencies.

Great teaching does not just happen. Teachers need to be developed, supported, and rewarded to promote inspired learning that will develop lifelong capacities in students. To achieve this ambitious goal, teachers need the capabilities to collaborate with and learn from others, assess their own practice and respond to feedback, and leverage technology to improve student learning (Darling-Hammond, Hyler &

Gardner, 2017). Effective teachers are highly proficient in: (i) assessing student needs and talents; (ii) evaluating the impact of their teaching; (iii) intervening and adapting multiple learning methods; and (iv) providing praise and regular feedback to students on their learning (Bruns & Luque, 2015). There is no doubt that the desired expectations from education and schools in Kuwait are characterized by their extreme urgency, given the importance of education in the economic and social development of the country and in the preparation of future generations for the job market.

Objectives of the National Teacher Policy Framework

Educational policies are considered one of the core elements in the package of initiatives, reforms, and approaches that the State of Kuwait seeks to achieve through its various institutions in order to realize its societal obligations and goals. Since these core elements of the educational process are traditionally centered on the student, the teacher, and the curriculum, in this Policy Framework, NCED has focused on the status of the teaching profession in the State of Kuwait. The Policy Framework was developed to include several workable policies intended to regulate teachers' career path from the time of their appointment until retirement. The ultimate aim is developing mechanisms for improving teacher efficacy at various stages, starting from the preservice teacher colleges and progressing through their career in the educational field. In this context, the goal of these policies is to enable educational decision makers and stakeholders to understand the specifics of the teaching profession, especially the aspects related to student learning. As this directly effects the standard of education in the State of Kuwait, the rationale behind this comprehensive framework comprises of the following objectives:

- Adopt clear terms and regulations to ensure that only the most talented individuals enter the field of education.

- Invest into the development of teachers' professional capacity, while ensuring that teacher training programs are in compliance with students' needs and are linked to incentives.

- Adopt teacher assessments based on clear criteria.

- Ensure fair and unbiased treatment of all teachers in terms of their rights and duties.

Method

The present study was conducted using the ethnography approach, as the aim was to gain insight into the education system in Kuwait through participant observations, face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders, and focus group discussions involving different representatives on the educational community. The gathered data was transcribed and subjected to qualitative analysis allowing common themes to emerge.

Data Analysis and Results

The World Bank team proposed the initial broad outlines of the framework by considering findings yielded by previous studies on teacher policies and best practices from other countries. The result of this effort was a conceptual teacher framework aimed at better organizing the teacher qualification process and ensuring that only the most capable individuals would enter and remain in the profession. Its further aim was to outline a clear career ladder prepared by the teacher frame of reference committee and in cooperation with the World Bank within one of the World Bank agreement projects with the Ministry of Education. Once the framework had been established, the committee prepared a draft that contains the following nine policies as well as related materials:

1. Admission to the colleges of preparation

2. Preservice training

3. Teacher assignment

4. Workforce distribution

5. Career stages and incentives

6. Professional development

7. Teacher quotas

8. Teacher evaluation

9. Teachers' rights and duties

After the committee finished its work, the committee chairman recommended the creation of a series of discussion seminars, allowing different groups in the educational field to share their views, thus enriching

the draft before entering the accreditation stage. Accordingly, representatives of all educational districts as well as private education institutions were invited. The participants included teachers, department heads, assistant directors, and school directors. A separate invitation was extended to the directors of administration from various educational regions and Islamic education institutions, as shown in Table 1. The framework was funded by the World Bank and was developed with the guidance from a Working Group comprised of Ministry of Education staff (supervisors, principals, teachers), faculty members from both Kuwait University (KU) and from Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and the NCED in collaboration with the World Bank. In addition to working group consultations, which were held from May 2015 to May 2016, the framework has been informed by a significant body of international research on teacher effectiveness for motivated student learning, and developing an education system to support this vision.

Table 1

Participants from School Districts, Private Education, Teachers' Association, and Technical Supervision

	Asamah	Hawalli	Mubarak Al-Kabir	Ahmadi	Farwaniah	Jahrah	Private Sector
Teacher	7	8	3	3	5	9	
Head of Department	6	6	3	3	5	7	
Supervisor	3	1	1		2	1	
Asst. Director	4	5	3	1	5	4	5
Director	5	4	2	4	4	3	3
Department Director	5						
Technical Supervisor	2	3	3	4	2	2	1
College of Education	5						
College of Basic Education	20						
Total	168						

4.1 NTFW Progress

April 2015−February 2016

- Teacher Policy Committee formed. Committee met regularly from April 2015 to March 2016 to help develop this work. Members of this Committee included faculty from the two preservice colleges of education (KU and PAAET), Teachers' Association, and school staff, as listed at the end of the NTFW document.

- World Bank technical team helped in defining the initial broad outlines of the framework by presenting alternatives for teacher's policies and best practices. Meetings were held with the NTFW Committee.

- The NTFW Committee submitted their comments to NCED by the end of February 2016.

March−April 2016

- Short Policy Action note prepared by the WB technical team. At the request of NCED, this supplemental note focused on presenting specific actions for the following priority areas: (i) preservice teacher education and recruitment; (ii) professional development; and (iii) incentivizing schools and teachers to improve teaching practice.

- NCED held district-level meetings to discuss teacher-related elements of the framework. These meetings were organized for various educational segments and school districts, as listed at the end of the NTFW document.

May−August 2016

- Actions from the Short Policy Action note were prepared within a broader strategic framework across all policies, and were grouped under short-term (2016−2018) and long-term actions (2019−2023). This background document is to be used to prioritize policies and their execution, starting in September 2017.

September 2016−March 2017

- A second round of meetings were held by NCED to discuss the second NTFW draft with colleges of education and the administrative representatives of the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- NCED revised the NTFW draft in alignment with feedback.
- WB technical team prepared detailed comments for NCED.
- Agreement reached with NCED to conduct a Quality Enhancement Review by April 2017.
September 2017–December 2017
- The final draft was completed and sent to the Steering Committee for approval by the Minster. Unfortunately, the project has been put on hold and has not been approved by the time of writing this research.

Table 2

NTFW Policies and Comments

| Issue	Policy/ies	Global Best Practice	Comments
<u>Preservice:</u> Trainees are being appointed in schools without: (i) adequate pedagogical skills in the new competency-based curriculum (subject methods and new assessment requirements) or (ii) sufficient teaching experience.	<u>Policy One</u>: Selection and admission to accredited colleges <u>Policy Two</u>: Preservice teacher training programs	Screen the quality of all applicants to colleges of education by administering a rigorous test focusing on content mastery and critical thinking skills (similar to PISA), as well as conducting an in-depth interview.	The two policies are closely related and should be presented as one, denoted as preservice/initial preparation of teachers combined with useful training and experience. Need to include a statement on upgrading teacher preparation courses to match current classroom practice (i.e., new competency-based curriculum). Articulation on what is specifically needed to improve the quality of current programs requires the team to study/discuss the current programs and present recommendations for upgrades in consultation with PAAET, KU, and MoE. Need to add proposed action: "Determine the projected numbers of teachers required for each subject across the country for the next 5−10 years and provide these estimates to PAAET and KU to assist with planning student intake and faculty needs for teaching in the various disciplines on that strict basis." Need to add proposed action: "Inform potential teacher candidates prior to commencing their training that they may need to wait for a longer time to secure appointments related to disciplines in the humanities. A firm MoE decision needs to be taken to direct this action."

			Need to add other incentives to attract the best candidates into teaching.
Mismatch between teacher supply and demand in various categories.

Large discrepancies in teacher workloads in schools.

Too many teachers rotating in younger grades, preventing students from establishing bonds, which can only be achieved with 1−2 teachers per class. | Policy Three: Teacher appointment and induction into the teaching profession

Policy Four: Teacher distribution to schools and equitable workload management | Teacher candidates carry out practicum training only in centers of excellence under the guidance of a master teacher | Most of these details seem to reflect the content of the current CSC regulations, with the exception of the "requirement" to pass the teacher proficiency test administered by the NCED. If there are any new requirements these should be made clearer.

Action should be added on induction training and support for newly appointed graduate teachers (alternatively, this could be added under Policy 6 PD).

Policy 4 is too narrow an area and should be combined with Policy 3 as "Appointment to Schools" or could be added under the policy regarding teacher responsibilities.
Need to add a proposed action to limit the number of teachers in grades 1−3 to one or two.

(Some actions under Policy 2 are also linked to addressing the issue of mismatch between supply and demand) |
| Need an updated mechanism to:
(i) ensure that all teachers are meeting acceptable teaching standards, and | Policy Five: Career path | Applicants must undergo a rigorous evaluation based on the Kuwait Framework for Teaching Excellence (national teacher standards). The evaluation will include: (i) a rigorous test of content mastery and critical thinking | Each of these three policies are related to the CPD framework discussions and need to be aligned. It is therefore difficult to complete these areas of the NTFW at this time. This is especially challenging since NCED requested not to reactivate discussions on the career path ladder at this stage. |

(ii) reward high-performing teachers.		skills; (ii) expert review of a teaching portfolio, including a videotaped lesson taught by the candidate; and (iii) an interview. Some of this work is directly linked to promotion, but there should also be other means to recognize and reward teachers. These need to be defined in the new teacher career path ladder/CPD framework and should be linked to teacher performance standards.	Additional statements related to school leadership need to be added, focusing on providing (i) conditions for improving teaching quality, and (ii) stronger pedagogical support to teachers.
	Policy Six: Professional development	Candidates must have a combined score of "good" or "excellent" on the content mastery test and their teaching portfolio to be considered for a classroom teaching position. Some reference should be made to teacher self-assessment as one of the tools for collecting teacher data to identify PD needs. This should be linked with teacher performance standards. Add proposed action: "To establish a district-wide induction program linked to schools for newly appointed graduates" (more details are provided in NTPF).	

		Should state annual number of PD hours expected, and how these can be completed. Should state clear policy actions on rewards and sanctions based on agreed achievement criteria and performance indicators. Should state proposals for allocating funding for PD based on impact (This requires an inventory of all PD activities currently offered and their approximate costs to uncover duplicate or misdirected efforts). Add proposed action: "To provide specific time-frame for teachers to practice specific instructional techniques with school leaders and expert peers, and opportunities for teachers to observe colleagues at their own or nearby schools to learn from each other." Add proposed action: "Central monitoring of quality of courses/criteria for all PD providers to ensure that they meet accreditation standards."	
Lack of consistency on	Policy Seven:	The teacher is required to	

how teachers are monitored and assessed. Lack of student achievement and teacher performance data to inform and improve teaching.	Performance appraisal	have a rating of "excellent" on his or her last comprehensive performance evaluation. Performance Appraisal is too narrow an area for this policy and should be changed to "Teacher Monitoring and Appraisal." This will allow adoption of a wider range of interventions, such as use of mentor-reported data, teacher self-assessments, etc., related to teacher practices to inform/enhance their teaching, while ensuring that teachers are maximizing time spent on tasks in the classroom, rather than focusing on formal appraisal.	
Setting clear expectations for teachers on their tights and duties, <u>including allowing sufficient time to fulfill these duties /better use teacher hours.</u>	<u>Policy Eight:</u> Duties and rights	Promotions should be restricted to outstanding candidates (e.g., those in the top one-third of the distribution on the most recent comprehensive performance evaluation).	Add action on the need to update the Teacher Handbook/Guide to ensure that it is more compatible with changed expectations related to the competency-based curriculum and other changes in the above policies. Add proposed action: "Set up taskforce to examine the feasibility of adopting one teacher per class, at least for grades 1−3." Add proposed action: "MoE to analyze the number of unused face-to-face teacher hours made available to schools. Strategies to be

			identified to more effectively use these hours to teach students."
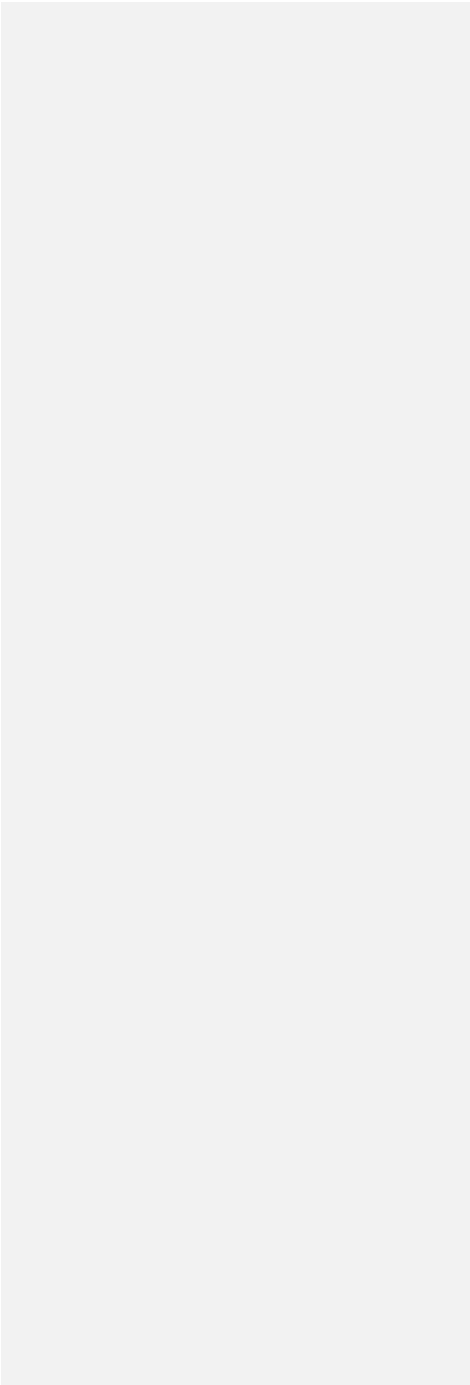
The NTFW outlined the teacher quality issues that have been created by national policies guaranteeing access to higher education, employment for all college graduates, and tenure for all teachers, irrespective of performance. The picture is complicated further by an imbalance in school staffing because 70% of all teachers are female, but prefer not to teach in boys' schools for cultural reasons. Because neither universities nor the Ministry of Education have been able to limit the number of higher education students who pursue the teaching profession or to steer them towards the MESA disciplines—Math, English, Science, and Arabic—where Kuwaiti schools have most vacancies, the national education system is also reliant on expatriate teachers (40% of the total at present).

The discussion pointed to the educational dysfunction that has resulted from these policies, and which can explain low learning outcomes among Kuwaiti students. As no caps are imposed on the number of teacher trainees accepted into the training colleges, number of graduates significantly surpasses the needs of the education system. There are currently 30,000 students in Kuwait's two teacher training colleges, which is equivalent to nearly 50% of 66,000 teachers currently in service. Thus, the government must work on regulating the flow of candidates accepted into teacher training colleges as well as those hired into the education system. These are the two points at which high-performing education systems across the world exercise selectivity, and low-performing systems typically do not.

The government does not yet utilize the newly developed national standards for teachers that explicitly define the knowledge, skills, and competencies that a prospective teacher needs to possess in order to be hired. In the absence of explicit standards and any tests or assessment processes that can be adopted to verify whether candidates meet these standards, there is essentially no means of identifying the strongest and weakest teacher candidates. This means that all candidates are hired, leading to one of the lowest pupil−teacher ratios in basic education in the world, which was 8:1 in 2015 (National Report of Kuwait, 2019).

The combination of automatic promotion based on years of service and the inability of the public sector to dismiss civil service employees for poor performance has created weak incentives for teachers to develop their competences even though salaries in the education sector are high. The system apparently

also suffers from political interference with teacher promotions and transfers, which is a common problem in countries that lack explicit standards and meritocratic policies, along with institutional processes to implement them. Owing to the absence of all these measures, teachers with low skill levels and few incentives to work hard continue to be hired in large numbers, very few of whom have the desire to pursue in-service teacher development programs and improve their performance. Moreover, the lack of a national student assessment system disincentivizes schools from improving their performance at the institutional level. School administrators and principals do not know how their students' learning progress compares to that of their cohorts in other schools and the MoE has no data on how the overall system is doing beyond the information gained from Kuwait's intermittent participation in international assessments.

To overcome these shortcomings, the draft document proposes the refinement and further development of eleven policies relating to teacher management which will improve the quality of teaching in Kuwait. Each policy area is defined in terms of: (a) policy currently followed; (b) justifications for further reform; and (c) suggestions for improvement. The draft framework is an excellent outline of current thinking and covers the area of teacher quality improvement fairly thoroughly. It sets an ambitious agenda for the future improvement of teaching in Kuwait.

Efforts now need to be focused on developing the details of each policy and identifying the various parties that should be involved in this process. These are largely teacher management policies, some of which concern matters that can be contentious to some groups of people within the education field. For example, certain university faculty may resist the suggestion that all graduates must complete a full year of teacher training in addition to their degree. Similarly, the teacher associations may challenge the idea that underperforming teachers could ultimately face dismissal or demotion. Moreover, those with vested interests in this process within the MoE may resist the notion that quotas must be placed on entry to certain courses, or that certain teachers specializing in presently understaffed subjects could receive scholarships or bonus payments.

Discussion and Conclusion

Many factors, both within and outside the school, come together to allow for inspired learning. Once students are in our schools, however, their performance is most closely influenced by teacher quality. The challenges of today's increasingly complex and global society require our students to have different competencies, and our teachers to have diverse capabilities. Teachers need to know how to develop these capacities in their students in ways that inspire them to be lifelong learners, not just while they are at school. To achieve these goals, the state needs a well-qualified teaching force. No education development project will succeed if it fails to establish and develop the teachers' potential to respond to these new challenges.

The Kuwaiti education system needs a way of identifying its most effective teachers, who will be given precedence when assigning classroom teaching positions, awarding promotions, and selecting mentors for other teachers. This merit-based strategy protects students and creates powerful incentives for good performance. It also motivates teachers with weaker evaluations to invest more actively in their own professional development. Finally, it gives the education system a means of objectively identifying ineffective teachers and dealing with these issues in a straightforward manner.

Introducing a rigorous test of academic ability for admission to the teacher training colleges is the most efficient way to for the Government of Kuwait to raise the quality of teacher candidates and reduce the imbalance between teacher supply and demand. If this is politically impossible, it is important to find alternative strategies that would serve the same purpose, such as allowing candidates to enter teacher training institutions, but restricting them to general content courses until they can re-take the admissions test and score above the desired threshold. This alternative measure could remedy the weaknesses in candidates' academic preparation while signaling a commitment to making teaching a higher-quality and high-prestige profession. Even if Kuwaiti national policy dictates that all candidates must be employed, the teacher standards and entrance exam can identify the candidates who should be placed first, or those who are eligible for classroom teaching assignments. The government is fully justified in a setting a policy mandating that only the very best teachers are placed in classrooms.

A diagnostic study of teacher practice in Kuwait would similarly produce insights that school-level professional development could build on. However, in the current context of a major teacher policy reform, it would yield two additional results that would be even more valuable: (i) it would create a baseline picture of the system before the new teacher framework is introduced that will help the government evaluate the impact of the policy reforms, and (ii) it could help build the technical capacity for classroom observations that will be needed for comprehensive teacher evaluations in the future.

Given that acceptance of change can be difficult, it is necessary to have a well thought-out strategy before commencement. Ample body of evidence indicates that the best system change requires genuine support and public commitment by the Chief Executive Officer of the education system and public statements by the political head (Minister of Education). Execution often requires the following steps: (a) an Act of parliament (or similar high-level legislative instrument) which sets out the rationale for and a broad range of new policies for the management of teachers (the passing of this Act by a majority of members of the legislature would signal bipartisan support for change/improvement); (b) a number of regulations which set out the key requirements for the implementation of each area of the Act (policies); (c) a draft operational manual and draft procedures which set out the steps to be followed by officers in implementing and evaluating the policy; (d) a period of trialing the policy in sample schools followed by feedback and a review, before finalization of procedures; and (e) preparation of in-service materials and provision of training for officers before full implementation. As evident from these five steps, careful implementation takes time and effort if the change is to be accepted by all, and to ensure widespread commitment to these changes. These are the broad strategies adopted by education systems in making effective change.

Strategic Priorities

The educational context in Kuwait is extremely challenging, and no government can do everything at once. Nonetheless, it is difficult to make major progress in education without a core set of policies addressed in a coherent way. As noted earlier in this study, if key elements of an education system are in alignment, they reinforce each other and help accelerate improvement. If this is not achieved, clear incentives are not created and different policies undermine each other. The draft NTFW is commendable in that it covers all the major elements of teacher policy and creates the scaffolding for a comprehensive teacher reform. However, the policies in each area as currently drafted are not sufficiently deep to produce major improvement. Therefore, it is hoped that this review and suggestions will be considered by the Government of Kuwait when developing revisions to the NTPF that could substantially deepen its impact. It is also important that the NTPF be aligned with the complementary CPD framework being developed, which is intended to match career path/ladder. Possible next steps include the actions and decisions that should be taken in the upcoming months, as well as formulation of longer-term initiatives.

6.1 Priority Actions to Advance the NTPF

- Identify relevant agencies responsible for the policy actions, and begin preparation of an implementation roadmap.
- Develop of a regulatory framework.
- Establish contact with experts from other developing countries that have implemented successful teacher policy reforms (Chile in Latin America, the Netherlands in Europe, and selected US states) and could potentially provide useful advice on how to draft effective legislation and build implementation capacity.
- Consult on the draft document with key stakeholders (teachers, school directors, private school directors, business leaders concerned with the labor quality).

- Conduct diagnostic studies to generate solid evidence on key issues and establish a baseline for system quality against which progress can be measured and analyzed. Most importantly, a study of teachers' classroom practice should be conducted using a validated, standardized instrument such as the Stallings classroom snapshot, along with a test of teachers' content mastery.

6.2 Recommendations

(i) Each of the proposed actions under the Articles should be reviewed and amended where necessary to ensure that they fully support the core goals for more effective teaching. For example, will the actions help to attract the best and brightest to the profession? Are preservice preparation programs well aligned with the new curriculum and assessment processes to ensure that newly qualified teachers possess the practical skills required for effective teaching? Will proposed actions support beginning teachers in their first few years of teaching? Will outstanding teachers and schools be encouraged and recognized? Are incremental professional learning and performance management systems aligned?

(ii) The broader technical design should ideally be completed in conjunction with the formulation of implementation details to ensure that recommendations are feasible. This should be followed by crafting administrative procedures. Clearly, the NTFW will need to be updated once further implementation details are discussed.

(iii) Regarding the limited diagnostic work, the World Bank team could collect further information across the policy areas if this is deemed useful at this stage. We have a set of core questions that delve deeply into the core policy areas.

(iv) A decision also needs to be taken on the strategies that can eliminate excessive teacher rotation, especially in grades 1−3, which precludes bonding and undermines learning. We originally incorporated this proposal into possible actions, but it has been removed from the NTFW. Similarly, measures need to be put in place to prevent seemingly random emergence of new teacher regulations that undermine the current reform process. For example, the new CSC regulation allows for an unlimited number of teachers to take up to three years of paid leave for personal reasons. If this regulation is

followed by many of the newly trained teachers (i.e., those that have passed the new competency-based

assessments) this will adversely impact student learning and the current reform process.

References

Alazmi, A. A., & Al-Mahdy, Y. F. H. (2020). Principal authentic leadership and teacher engagement in Kuwait's educational reform context. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 1741143220957339. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143220957339?casa_token=hS8zc7ObgacAAAAA%3AzfEyPuY2jSmpIue6ZX86hFhwE_yp18usVyJ_7baSEftFwwXvtms6ifAOKNIVQHCEW-LdEuFI24BfRw

Alhashem, F. (2021). Analyzing plans of localizing professional development of the Ministry of

Education in Kuwait based on TPACK model for the rolling out competency-based curriculum. *Education Research International*, *Education Quarterly Reviews 4 (1), 113-121*. https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1993.04.01.178

Alhashem, F., & Agha, N. (2020). Analysis based on the three objective educational domains for final summative secondary examinations of science subjects (chemistry, physics, and biology). Volume 2020, Article ID 8886126, 12 pages Retrieved from https://www.hindawi.com/journals/edri/2020/8886126/

Alhouti, I. (2018). Teacher professional development in Kuwait and Singapore: Learning from

others. *World Voices Nexus*, *2*(3). Retrieved from https://www.worldcces.org/article-2-by-alhouti/teacher-professional-development-in-kuwait-and-singapore-learning-form-others

Alhouti, I., & Male, T. (2017). Kuwait Principals: Preparation, Induction and Continuing Development. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, *45*(1).

Aljassar, S., & Altammar, J. (2020). A Framework for the Professional Development of in-

Service Teachers in Kuwait. *Journal of Turkish Science Education*, *17*(3), 364-386.

Almanea, M. S. (2018). The Effect of using "Competencies Based Curriculum in Teaching" on Acquiring Tendencies towards Science Subjects Among Middle School Students, n the State of Kuwait. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, *56*(3), 333-347.

Alsaleh, A. A. (2020). The influence of heads of departments' instructional leadership, cooperation, and administrative support on school-based professional learning in Kuwait. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 1741143220953597. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143220953597?casa_token=eViBHJDyPN8AAAAA%3A7jAPfMPZM4ee0z4nTbkHNC_uh_0-qteMuMi7wBlvaAdmZhwddPM-

G8Kn0yYqNdkACRzG_W9bR-yA5Q

Bruns, B., & Luque, J. (2015). Great Teachers: How to Raise Student Learning in Latin America and the Caribbean. Washington, DC: World Bank.© World Bank.

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). Effective teacher professional development. *Learning Policy Institute*.

Government of Kuwait. (2019). New Kuwait Vision 2035. Retrieved October 1, 2019, from http://www.newkuwait.gov.kw/r3.aspx

National Report of Kuwait. (2019). Development of Education in the State of Kuwait.

National Institute of Education (NIE). (2013). *A diagnostic study of education in Kuwait*. Singapore: NIE.

Statistical Analysis Group (2017). Statistical Analysis Group. Retrieved from https://www.csb.gov.kw/Pages/Statistics?ID=58&ParentCatID=70

World Bank. (2008). *The road not traveled: Education reform in the Middle East and Africa*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

World Bank. (2014). *Kuwait Education Program Achievement Report*. Washington, DC: The World Bank. Retrieved from http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/530491468090852907/pdf/937090WP0P119500Final000Jan01102015.pdf

Wiseman, A. W., Alromi, N. H., & Alshumrani, S. (2014). Challenges to creating an Arabian Gulf knowledge economy. *Education for a Knowledge Society in Arabian Gulf Countries*, 24, 1–33.