

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Department of Education

**TOWARDS EFFECTIVE IN-SERVICE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN
THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: GETTING TEACHERS TO BE IN
CHARGE OF THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

FATMA HAMAD ALWAN

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F.H. Alwan

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in this work are entirely those of the author and do not represent in any way the views of the University of Bath.

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Abstract:

Progress in education depends very much on keeping up with the various trends that emerge around the world. In-service teacher training (INSET) is a formal means through which teachers are constantly updated with the new findings in the field. There are also self-directed development activities that complement formal training. The need for this approach is a must when INSET is not as effective as it should be and this is the case in the UAE. It is essential for teachers in the UAE to take up their professional accountability in the absence of an efficient teacher training system.

This study investigates the effectiveness of the current INSET provision and the possibility of introducing self-directed (school-based) teacher development activities to teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL teachers). This was done with regard to educationists' perceptions: EFL teachers, school principals, supervisors and other administrators. A review of the related literature was carried out and the main development activities were outlined. Two research instruments were used to collect the data: a questionnaire for teachers and interviews with administrators. There was a total of 172 respondents.

The main findings are categorised and discussed under two major headings. The first one is 'the structure of current in-service training'. This includes frequency, length of courses, optional training available for EFL teachers and attitudes of teachers towards training courses. The second heading is 'self-development activities'. This includes journal writing, self-appraisal, peer-observation, reading, research and action research.

The findings of this study reveal that INSET in the UAE is unsystematic and EFL teachers practice self-directed activities on a limited basis. It was found that it is possible for EFL teachers to practice more self-directed development activities on the condition that the workload is reduced and that development time is planned and included within the working

hours. Finally, some recommendations are stated regarding the improvement of INSET and how to incorporate development activities within the school system. The main points raised are specifying training needs depending on surveying the EFL teachers themselves by the use of questionnaires. A follow-up system for training outcomes is recommended. Incentives are considered too. The most essential starting point to is to make the teachers informed of the suggested development activities and awareness raising is the second step.

AUTHOR DECLARATION

1. The author has not been registered for any other academic award during the period of registration for this study.

2. The material included in this dissertation has not been submitted wholly or in part for any other academic award.

3. The programme of advanced study of which this dissertation is part has included completion of the following modules:
 - Introduction to Educational Management
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 - Managing Staff Development
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4. Where any material has been possibly submitted as part of an assignment within any of these modules, it is clearly identified.

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Chapter I

Background and significance of the study

1.1. Introduction

The educational policy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) stems from multiple sources which have affected legislation in the field of focus of this study: teacher training of language teachers. The first factor that directs the educational policy is the Islamic religion. It directs education towards providing equal opportunities for all. The constitution and legislation of the UAE, which is the second factor, directs educational policy towards the protection of human rights and the maintenance of balance between rights and duties. It also encourages excellence and creativity. Third, the history and heritage of the UAE is in harmony with the Arabic and Islamic heritage. This directs education towards regarding productive work as a value before being a duty. The dynamic society and rapidly changing circumstances have made people get used to a changing environment and, consequently, adapt to change. In the Education Policy in the United Arab Emirates (1996) it is stated that this factor enables people to gain confidence in making changes, benefiting from the experiences of others and affirming the principle of discovery. Fourth, the social and demographic situation directs educational policy towards the consideration of the people of the country as its most valuable asset and its greatest wealth. Furthermore, the education policy referred to notes that growth in the educational system results in the need to introduce new forms of teaching in order to keep up with current developments. Above all, it leads to developing teacher education and training programmes. Sixth, the challenges and aspirations of the future affect the educational policy. Consequently, the policy gives priority to the teaching of essential subjects among which is languages. Measures are taken to improve on traditional education methods. Last,

the economic situation enabled the government to invest in the training of the workforce. In conclusion, education is given priority over other services in the UAE. The preparation of the workforce, teachers, is an integral part of the system. To cope with the global changes, teacher training has to be assessed and developed accordingly.

In consideration of future needs for having a skilled and qualified teaching force, it is essential to utilise the human resource to its full potential. The UAE Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY) is currently proposing a new educational strategy embodied in a new vision for education in the UAE for the first quarter of the twenty-first century. In the teacher development section, it is stated that teachers are expected to take up professional accountability. This implies that teachers should seek professional development on a self-directed basis.

1.2. Definition of terms

Teacher Development:

In a previous assignment, I drew out the conclusion that there is a difference between the three terms: training, development and education. As Cole (1988) argues education deals with individual needs, development with future needs, but training focuses on the job or task and the specific knowledge and skills needed. Fulmer (1988) asserts that ‘training’ is limited to teaching and developing specific skills. Education, on the other hand, “*emphasises knowledge or concepts that an individual can apply*” (ibid: p.329). Unlike training, “*development emphasises that the person grows inwardly through a combination of education and experience*”(ibid: p. 329). Casio (1992) has an opposing view, he sees that the two terms ‘education’ and ‘development’ can be used interchangeably. As I see it, training is

part of the wide concept 'development'. To develop teachers, it is necessary to assess performance, define the areas that can be improved, plan and carry out training programmes and evaluate training to test the results if there is any improvement. Apparently, 'development' is the end and 'training' one of the means. According to Parsons (1999), training can be enforced while development cannot. A teacher 'develops' but nobody can 'develop' a teacher. He refers to Eraut (1975) who defines teacher development as:

“ The natural process of professional growth in which a teacher gradually acquires confidence, gains new perspectives, increases in knowledge, discovers new methods, and takes on new roles.” (Eraut in Parsons: p 3). Thus INSET can be defined as the process of improving teaching skills.

1.3. Purpose of the study

This study investigates the current INSET provision for EFL teachers in the UAE. The purpose of this study was to find out to what extent it is possible to direct EFL teachers towards taking up accountability in their professional development. The study set to:

1. Point out the well-known methods of staff development both self-directed and externally-directed training.
2. Investigate the methods of school-based development that supervisors adopt with their teachers and find out their advantages and limitations.
3. Find out methods of self-directed development that teachers in the UAE already practise and methods that are not adopted and inquire into the reasons for this.

4. Find out ways for raising teacher awareness of the importance of self-directed development.
5. Examine the major difficulties that reduce the effectiveness of the methods that are already in practice.
6. Find out if it is possible to make development (for EFL teachers) a self-directed approach.

Finally, the study sought to make recommendations regarding the possibility of introducing self-directed activities in addition to the available INSET programmes, suggesting the requirements that might facilitate this approach in teacher development.

1.4. Need for the study

Students in the UAE study English for twelve years. It is expected that they develop a total command of the language. However, this is not the case. Institutions of higher education find that students need to study English intensively to improve their proficiency. The blame is constantly laid on the MOEY for having unqualified teachers and inefficient curriculum. The MOEY officials, on the other hand, blame it mainly on the teachers though they admit to having ineffective teacher training programmes. Consequently, they seek to activate the role of the EFL teacher by providing more efficient INSET programmes. The UAE educational planning document, Vision 2020 (1999), is ambitious and calls for making the development of teachers, of all subjects, a joint responsibility. This implies making the teachers accountable for their own professional development. From here stems the need for this study. Previous studies on teacher development were mainly on teacher training and teacher supervision in the UAE. This study is the only one in the UAE that investigates the

possibility of considering the teacher a partner in the process towards development. It examines the current teacher training programmes from the teacher's perspective and finds out whether other self-directed teacher development activities are practised, or would be welcomed by teachers in the UAE.

1.5.The statement of the problem

Teachers of different subjects receive different forms of training in the UAE. In case of EFL teachers, comparatively little is offered despite the changes in approaches in language teaching. With the wide selection of useful literature produced in the world on second and foreign language teaching, a limited amount reaches the teacher of English in the UAE, unless where there are individual efforts. There arises the need for teachers helping themselves to cope with the many changes. The level of language competency among EFL teachers is varied and there are teachers who do not practise the foreign language outside the classroom. Some do not read more than the teacher's manual, and a few resources for preparing a summary to present to their supervisors.

Training programmes seem to have short-term effects on the teacher. Although many supervisors encourage peer-observation, there exists a number of teachers who resent being observed by their colleagues. There is a need to find out why this form of self-directed development is disliked by many teachers, and find out solutions for this. There also exists a need to find out whether teachers practice other forms of development to make up for the lack of training and to back up current training programmes. There arises the question of finding out the reasons for the lack of self-initiated activities.

1.6. Questions to be answered

The main questions that the study sought to answer are:

1. What is the system of teacher training in the UAE ?
2. Do teacher training programmes follow a systematic approach in the various training steps?
3. What self-directed and school-based development activities are practiced?
4. What are the factors that affect the practice of such activities?
5. What can be done to facilitate the contribution of teachers to their own professional development?

1.7. Hypotheses

The hypotheses to be tested by this study are:

- a. Current teacher training courses are unstructured.
- b. Identification of training needs is not based on surveying the teachers' needs.
- c. There are teachers who are not familiar with some well-known development activities.
- d. There are factors in the nature of development activities and in the characteristics of the work environment that affect the teachers' attitude towards development activities recommended by the supervisors.
- e. Development activities can be introduced when difficulties associated work conditions are improved.
- f. It is possible to make development (for EFL teachers) a self-directed approach

- g. The research population is truly represented by the research sample.
- h. The responses received are sufficient to allow for generalisation regarding the prospect of introducing self-directed development activities of EFL teachers in the UAE.

The researcher believes in the need for continuing professional development (CPD) through training and initiative efforts as well. The hypotheses stem from the purpose of the study indicated earlier. The study can be said to focus on two major issues which are the current practices in CPD and the possibility of introducing more self-directed development activities.

1.8. Type of Data

The nature of the questions require the collection of quantitative as well as qualitative data. The data presented in this survey is basically quantitative in the form of frequency of responses in the questionnaires. Quantification represents a reality that is characteristic of the research sample which is a representative of the research population. Therefore, quantitative data was sought to allow generalisation. Responses were tabulated on the demographic variables of the sample following the questions used. Qualitative data was also used where appropriate, to supplement and clarify the quantitative data. This was restricted to clarifying certain points and to avoid misunderstanding. Qualitative data was obtained through interviews.

1.9. Limitations of the study

The study was affected by the following limitations:

- a. Research was conducted on teacher training and development in the UAE only.
- b. The study focuses on EFL teachers only.
- c. The empirical study was conducted in the period from November 1999 to January 2000, work conditions may have changed since then.
- d. Conclusions based on data collected are limited to those types of teacher development activities included in the questionnaire.

Chapter II

The current situation of in-service teacher training in the UAE in the light of published literature

2.1. Introduction

Several studies were conducted in the UAE to examine the effectiveness of INSET. It was found that INSET in the UAE suffers from several drawbacks. There are various points that need to be considered with regard to design, objectives, trainers, methods of delivery and trainees, that is if reform is to be achieved. Supervision is a major tool for change as it is one of the INSET activities. Therefore, it is essential to activate its role in staff development. Teachers, on the other hand, have to be encouraged to adopt more development techniques. Supervision can help teachers change their attitudes if it follows approaches that encourage teacher independence.

In a survey carried out by Loughrey et al (1999) in the UAE, it was found out that both teachers and supervisors agree upon the urgent need for training. Expatriate teachers, who form the majority of EFL teachers in the UAE, are said to “*have received almost no development or training while (working) in the UAE schools*” (ibid: p.54). They have also discovered that “*there appears to be very little in-service training- even for UAE nationals*”. Therefore, they recommended “*a proper and well-structured system for training with dedicated trainers*” (ibid: p.55).

Cascade training is common in the region due to limited funds allotted to INSET. In this process, “(head) *trainers pass the message to the ordinary trainers who (pass) it on to the rest*” (Bradley, 1991, p. 85). The effect of such training is debatable. First, there is no proof that the message was passed on, as evaluation of training is not carried out. Second, the message may be changed by such transmission, which implies deviation from the general goals. In addition, it gets shorter. Consequently, very little reaches the concerned people at the end of the training channel.

Adding to the fact that training is a rare occurrence, as explained above, training courses are poorly designed and carried out. Despite the MOEY’s attempts to improve on this asset, supervisors, who conduct the training, carry out only scheduled routine training programmes that are designed for specific purposes. These programmes do not include all the teachers. For example, they train new teachers in the various levels and carry out a few hours training for teachers who deal with new curricula introduced in their first year only. Many constraints, as discovered by Ghareeb (1996) restrict supervisors as trainers. The most important limitation of INSET is the unsystematic approach in which the various training steps are executed.

Ghareeb conducted a survey in 1996 on INSET in the UAE, in which she attempted to evaluate the training courses provided to teachers of English in the UAE. In her research, she states that “ *some teachers have passive attitudes towards in-service teacher training courses in the UAE*”. Further, she points out that “*the data obtained indicates that the majority of trainers and teachers have reservations about some of the aspects of INSET in the UAE*” (ibid: p.72). The main constraint is the inconvenient timings. Most training is offered in the afternoon - after a long working day. Another constraint is the lack of training equipment in the training venues. In addition, there is the difficulty of finding a suitable place for training,

which is normally a classroom in a school. Furthermore, transport of teachers in remote areas to the training venue is another problem. The trip takes several hours, which means that they often miss part of the training. Teachers consider this a burden on their time, as they are not released from work to be able to attend training programmes offered outside the working hours.

When designing INSET courses, several requirements are to be taken into account. First, training needs should not be estimated. They should be defined depending on a survey of the teachers' training needs. Training goals should be outlined depending on this survey. Second, teacher trainers have to be well selected. In practice, supervisors, the trainers, are required to train teachers besides assessing their performance in class. Third, there should be variety and balance of activities as well as content. Activities selected for training are to be a manifestation of training objectives. 'Practice' should be a salient feature of the course, due to the nature of the profession itself and the subject taught. Moreover, there should be constant support and follow-up of teaching practices as part of the training programme. Ongoing evaluation of the training is essential too. This is not to forget the essence of the training, which is raising the teachers' awareness.

As for surveying training needs, Bradley (op. cit.) refers to Bolam (1987) who asserts that one of the features of INSET is that it focuses upon the current and future needs of participants. To achieve this, Bradley recommends having short-term as well as long-term targets that encompass both goals: the school's and the teachers'. Short-term goals are also referred to as "*in-service objectives*" in Dubin and Wong (1994). There are models for analysing needs according to the level of the teacher, sex, age and experience as suggested by Bradley. It is crucial to gather information in order to produce an accurate needs' analysis.

INSET courses should take place for a specific purpose and should have focused requirements too. Actually, there is no point in running training courses that add nothing to the trainees' expertise or knowledge.

Researchers agree that not all trainers have the same potentialities, and this is true in the UAE as Ghareeb (op.cit.) asserts. It is only natural that the degree of knowledge and training skills are different. In practice, trainers need to possess highly specialised skills. Ghareeb even expresses her doubts whether all supervisors are qualified for training, since, with reference to her research findings, she mentions that supervisors themselves say that they need to be trained to qualify as trainers. Similarly, Rossiter (1993) attests that educators need to examine their practices. For example, teachers tend to question the validity of the new skills and teaching techniques when the trainer himself or herself is still using the traditional methods of instruction to pass that skill or knowledge to them.

Ghareeb found out that many trainers complain that experienced teachers in the UAE resist change because they are told what to do without giving them practical demonstrations. These teachers have established routine patterns of behaviour in the classroom but it is possible for them to adopt new techniques if they see their usefulness in practice. Therefore, to avoid negative consequences, teacher trainers have to practice what they preach. Murdoch (1990) refers to this issue and cites the assertion given by Britten (1988, in Bradley) of the possibility of making change happen if teachers are trained using the methods that they are supposed to adopt. Bradley also agrees that the attitudes of the trainees either facilitate or limit what can be achieved. The responses to the activities are more likely to be different depending on the aim of each participant for attending the course.

Trainee involvement is one of the characteristics of a successful training program. Training courses, as Murdoch (op.cit.) recommends, must be learner centred with respect to material and the method in which it is administered. He refers to Waters (1988) who recommends flexibility in devising the material to meet the needs of the participants. Hence, more emphasis is to be laid on the method in which the content is conveyed to teachers. The same is agreed upon by Bradley who calls for adjusting the activities to the needs of the participants “*rather than fitting individuals into activities*”. What is needed in an effective INSET is “*demonstration or modelling*” and “*practice (which is either) stimulated or real*” (ibid: p.96). Moreover, Bradley recommends increasing the number of elements within an activity. This gives the participants the opportunity to explore the new idea with their colleagues.

It is a drawback in many training courses to “*stress the input form of lectures and model lessons, not behavioural modifications through active trainee involvement*”. (Murdoch, op.cit. p.51). Variety of activities and modes of training are recommended. The program should include activities that “*involve situations in which groups ‘brainstorm’ possible solutions and then analyze their likely effectiveness*” (Bradley, op. cit., p.93). This can be achieved by making use of case studies and cameos. They put the participants in situations that require discussion and exchange of ideas among themselves, as well as provide valuable sources of data, as Ellis (1986) points out. Different techniques provide variety and achieve different purposes. As Ellis points out, the lecture provides straight input. It can help pass on theory to participants. Group and pair discussions, on the other hand, ensure trainee involvement. Workshops can be good means of training teachers to prepare teaching aids, for instance. To train the participants on how to use certain techniques, demonstration is the best means. Panel discussions also help cover varied issues. Many possible rubrics may be used in

training. Participants can be asked to compare, prepare, evaluate, improve on, adopt, listen to, select, rank, add, complete or rearrange certain topics or ideas. INSET experiences “*should challenge (the) present understanding (of the participants)*” (Bradley, 1991: p.71). For training language teachers, articles and books on second language teaching are good components of a training course as Ellis points out. They can be administered in two ways. Trainers may use them to administer tasks. Alternatively, they can be given for further reading. Finally, observation and feedback contribute to the success of INSET programmes.

Training has to be structured as well as continuous in order to have positive results. Contrary to that teacher training in the UAE is run on an occasional basis. Such training courses have a shallow impact on teacher performance. Richard and Lockhart (1995) assert this finding. They justify the reason for this as that in-service workshops “*rarely involve teachers in an ongoing process of examining their teaching, therefore, they have only short-term effects*” (ibid: p.2). Structured training as Bolam (1987) asserts, is flexible and allows for “*modification in the light of evaluation*”(Bolam in Bradley, op.cit. p.86). Therefore, Dubin and Wong (1994) recommend evaluating the effectiveness of the training programme as well as providing “*follow-up assistance and enforcement*” [Siedow et al (1985) in Dubin and Wong , p.282)].

2.2. From Training to Development

Researchers have become aware of drawbacks in teacher training courses and the dominating role of teacher educators in deciding the needs of their teachers and, therefore, the content of the training. The concept of learner centred classrooms in the field of education has left its

impact on issues related to teacher training. Moreover, there is a great tendency towards considering training and development as two distinct terms.

As it is known, teacher educators determine the content of any training programme. It usually encompasses modules about new methods, materials or research findings. Niakris and Bacigal (1992) and Gephard, Gaitan and Oprandy (1994) criticise both the content of training courses and the methods in which they are transmitted. There seems, therefore, to be a need for INSET programmes to cater for the real needs of teachers. They also agree that teacher educators should not be given the supreme authority to prescribe what teachers should do to increase their effectiveness, as this approach makes the teachers passive receptors of decrees.

As Okwen (1996) points out, it was found that “ *training methods only provide teachers with ritual teaching behaviour...instead of preparing them to cope with the ever-demanding profession of teaching in an ever-changing world*”. He also asserts that this finding shifted the emphasis “*in teacher education from teacher training to teacher development*” in the last decade (ibid: p.10). He cites the views of Lucas in Okwen (1996), which are backed up by Lange (1994) whose examination of research on teacher development reveals that “ *a minimal attention is paid to the development of teachers in second languages either conceptually or research-wise*”. He even goes a further step in calling for “*professional development*” and not “*training*” (ibid: p.252). Freeman (1994) is with this view. He argues that the main goal of teacher education is to make teachers “ *develop the independent capacity decisions and to asses the impact of those decisions on both their own and their students’ learning*” (ibid: p.103). He states that this orientation relies on two broad educational strategies, which are teacher training and teacher development. It is clear that Freeman claims that there is a difference between the two. However, unlike Lange, Freeman

asserts that if the strategies are in balance, they will lead to the achievement of the main goal above. In addition, he stresses the importance of maintaining a balance between the strategy itself and “*the content to be taught by that strategy*”. The content referred to here, is the “*aspects of teaching to be learned or taught*” (ibid: p.103).

A case in point is the tendency towards making INSET or teacher development more of a self-help approach. Gephard, Gaitan and Oprandy (1994) assert that the role of the teacher educator must be to provide the student teachers with opportunities to gain investigation skills they need to be able to make decisions as responsible language teachers. Likewise, the role of the teacher educator, based on the views of Fanslow (1987), is to train the student teachers how to “*describe, diagnose,.. and alter their own practice*” (Fanslow in Freeman, 1994, p.105). This, of course, contrasts with the assumption that “*one person can teach another (to) teach*”. (ibid: p. 105). These, however, are two extremes and the situation is to provide a balance and not to use any term ‘training’ or ‘development’ exclusively. As for training, for example, Freeman asserts that there are aspects of teaching which can be effectively conveyed via training. However, this can lead to over-emphasis on teaching skills and behaviours at the expense of developing the student teacher’s independent resources and capacity to take charge of what he or she is doing. Contrary to this, Bradley’s research findings show that “*short activities (in training) may suffice to raise teachers’ awareness of an issue but they may not be sufficient to influence their practice*” (ibid: p.84). This makes the two concepts (training and development) merged in shifting the responsibility from the trainer to the trainee.

To sum up, several researchers made the concepts of training and development different from each other. In fact, development is the wider term of which training is an activity that leads to

development. There are also other activities. The main difference is that some of them are self-directed unlike training which is imposed. This is not to underestimate the great effects of training, no matter what content it has and how it is delivered. The positive effect is that it leads to awareness, which is a key element to development. It is expected to lead teachers to follow strategies of their own, and practice development activities. There is a need to investigate whether the current training efforts in the UAE achieve this awareness-raising effect. We have to find out whether teachers practise self-development activities and to what extent their practice influences their performance.

2.3. Supervision for staff development

“Unless we are willing to explore and use new behaviours in our supervisory efforts, we will never know the consequences that these behaviours can have on the professional development of teachers”

(Gebhard, 1984:166)

The shortcomings of teacher supervision in the UAE have always been existing due to the dual role of supervisors as trainers and assessors. Ghareeb (1996) believes that with the present heavy workload and conflicting responsibilities, supervisors are incapable of fulfilling their role in the best way. Loughrey et al (1999) assert that “ *this dual role leads to confusion- teachers feel they are always being assessed, so they cannot always respond positively to development and training*” (Ibid: p.56).

Consequently, supervisors taking up the role of trainers, tend to exercise great control over the teachers’ behaviours since they generally favour the **directive** style. The dual role of the

supervisor is exercised in this model too. As Gebhard (op.cit.) states, the supervisor also evaluates the mastery of defined behaviours. The same point of the supervisor as a threat is also mentioned in Stoller (1996). She asserts that teachers experience anxiety when they interact with their supervisors. She concludes that this attitude stems from the traditional authoritarian nature of supervisor-centred methods. Henry (1993) cites Blumberg (1980) in saying that supervisors are perceived by teachers as being “*potentially dangerous*” (Blumberg in Henry, p.48). To eliminate this negative attitude, we need to improve on the mode of supervision. However, the change in supervisory styles is not an easy thing to implement. I found this view also in Stoller (1996) who considers this one of *the greatest challenges*. The negative attitudes mentioned above impede professional development. She recommends the change of supervision from being directive, supervisor-centred, vague, subjective and unsystematic into the opposite. In other words, we should have supervision that is interactive, teacher-centred, concrete, objective and focused.

With regard to the other alternative models that help to eliminate the negative attitudes, they were found to shift the responsibility of development from supervisor to teacher to achieve more effective results. Some of the arguments in favour of alternative models are given below.

In the first place, **non-directive supervision** gives teachers the freedom to express and clarify their own ideas. They are free to try new ideas. They also have the chance to raise questions about themselves as teachers and consequences of their teaching. This is in agreement with what Ellis (1989) states. He argues that supervisors are more understanding in this model, which means that the relationship is supportive rather than authoritarian. Another point

implied is that non-directive supervision raises awareness and thus aids in encouraging the teachers to take over their own professional development.

Second, **clinical supervision** contributes to staff development and is a non-traditional approach. Goldhammer, Anderson and Krajewski (1993) refer to Moris Cogan (1973) who defined this model as:

“a practice designed to improve the teacher’s classroom performance. It takes its principal data from the events of the classroom. The analysis of these data and relationship between the teacher and the supervisor from the basis of the program, procedure, and strategies designed to improve the students’ learning”
(ibid: p. 3)

They also refer to the argument raised by Sergiovani and Starrett (1988) that this model of supervision contributes to teacher development. They cite the following quote:

“one-to-one correspondence exists between improving classroom instruction and increasing professional growth, and for this reason staff development and clinical supervision are inseparable concepts” (ibid: p. 3)

One of the characteristics of this model is conferencing. Feedback obtained is constructive and leads to development. Stoller also believes that this model results in lower stress and anxiety levels and achieves positive responses from the part of the teacher. The most important characteristic is that it emphasises continuing professional development, which, as Acheson and Gall (1992) in Stoller assert, is the goal of clinical supervision.

Third, **alternative supervision** helps teachers to gradually take over in making teaching decisions. The purpose of providing teachers with alternatives, as Gebhard (1984) states is to “*widen the scope of what a teacher will consider doing*” (ibid: p.158) and stimulate him or her to reflect on teaching behaviours. The role of the supervisor, in this model, according to Freeman (1982) is to “*suggest a variety of alternatives to what the teacher has done in the classroom*” (Freeman in Gebhard 1984, p.158). This limits the number of choices for the teacher. Unlike the directive model, the decision making is kept within the hands of the teacher, provided that the supervisor does not reveal any preferences or sound judgmental.

Fourth, **peer supervision** shifts the responsibility of teacher development to fellow teachers. Gebhard (1984) believes that awareness of teaching can be gained from observing other colleagues. He states that in this case, there is no need for the presence of a supervisor. The objective of this model is to provide support to inexperienced teachers. This model is considered more of an INSET technique.

Fifthly, **creative supervision** is another alternative for achieving teacher autonomy of their own professional development. Gebhard recommends the use of teacher centres mentioned by Zigarmi (1979). These are “*places (where) teachers go to find answers to questions, use resources, talk about problems with other teachers or special “consultants” or “supervisory experts” rather than the supervisor going to the teachers, the teachers can go to the teacher center*” (Gebhard, 1984, p.162). This implies the teacher’s attempt to direct himself or herself on a personal basis.

In the UAE there is a need to vary the methods of supervision. Teacher observation carried out by colleagues is the only version of peer-supervision. There is a need to examine the

effectiveness of this technique in an attempt to find out how to develop the practice in the UAE to achieve the maximum benefit.

2.4. Requirements for achieving self-directed development

A) Professional Awareness

“ The more interest teachers have in gaining awareness of how they teach, and the more informed they become about what it is that they do in their classrooms and the impact this has on their students, the more freedom they will have to direct their own teaching towards successful student learning” Gebhard (1992: p.45).

When teachers become aware of their own practices as compared to other teachers or as they learn new methods via training, they are usually challenged to think and consider the potential for change. A challenging environment causes awareness too. During my early career as a teacher and currently as a teacher trainer and supervisor, I have noticed the positive attitudes of teachers towards seeking improvement of certain classroom practices after development or training activities. In some schools, ordinary teachers become better and even surpass their peers when they are in company of excellent teachers. Thus gaining awareness is an effective drive towards development. Fortunately, certain activities can achieve this aim too.

There are several reasons as to why teachers get interested in becoming more aware of their own teaching. Gebhard (1992) points out the major drives. For example, development

activities such as peer observation, action research and journal writing play a major role in fostering critical thinking regarding the teachers' own teaching. Consequently, they can comprehend the relationship between their own teaching behaviours and the effects that these behaviours have on the students. This narrows the gap between the view of teaching and reality, as many teachers are likely to discern that their teaching behaviour is not what they think they do in their classrooms. This is similar to Richards and Lockhart's (1995) who argue that teachers do not always have an accurate perception of the impact of their work.

Classroom experiences are to be utilised in collaboration with formal knowledge, in other words, teachers need to bridge the gap that exists between theory and practice. They should be assisted in evaluating past and current trends in methodology in the light of their classroom experience and of the particular needs of their learners. Gebhard points out that the working environment may have a negative effect on teachers. Therefore, it will not provide teachers with opportunities to build awareness. In the UAE, some supervisors, for example, are believed to prescribe to teachers the required methods for teaching as when adapting the directive supervisory styles. This leaves the teachers bound to routines and does not allow for creativity. Another example is the lack of time due to the teachers' school activities, such as the number of lessons per day. Some teachers work in evening centres for adult education too. These factors do not allow time for practising development activities that lead to awareness.

Bax (1999) and Bradley (op.cit.) emphasise the effect of the challenging environment both at school and as an essential element of training courses. They assert that INSET courses help in raising awareness if they include activities that are intended for this purpose. These activities may reveal development, issues related to teaching or even deficiencies in one's own

performance. Observation, for instance, either of their peers' classes or their own, makes teachers reconsider certain issues regarding their practices "*if it is followed by further skills on development activities*" (ibid: p.90). Another example is role-playing and simulation. According to both researchers, these activities have enormous effects in raising awareness. Games, in addition, are also recommended for this purpose since they have a competitive element and help keep the participants alert, as agreed by Bradley, Cherry (1999) and Gore (1999). This is not to under-value collecting and analysing data, which is also a good exercise for raising awareness.

Having had a wide experience in the Arab world in general and in the UAE in particular, Bax (op. cit.) calls for urgent awareness raising activities embodied in involving teachers in a network for development. The rationale behind that is that in the Arab world, experienced teachers are the least inclined towards seeking development. Alwan (1999) found out that some teachers explicitly declare that they do not need training at all. Similarly, Niakris and Bacigal (1992) call for fostering a critical self-awareness in both novice and experienced teachers. They assert that teachers vary in the level of their knowledge and experience. This can be achieved by focussing on the teacher as a person in the first place. Bax (1997) is with this view. He declares that trainers should not determine the content of the training. Moreover, Bax, as well as Niakris and Bacigal (op.cit.), agree that all teachers should be involved in training on an equal basis. They recommend that novice as well as experienced teachers should be given the freedom to share their ideas on an equal basis and learn from each other.

Having pointed out the meaning of awareness itself and its effect, and the factors that hinder its existence, it becomes clear that being involved in development activities is the stepping

stone for gaining professional awareness. Apparently, it is also a cycle. Once the teacher's awareness is raised, he or she becomes more involved in staff development activities. According to Gebhard (1992), gaining awareness is empowering. Teachers become capable of achieving successful learning as they direct their own teaching. The effect of this is passed on to the students too, as learning becomes more successful. This parallel effect of gaining awareness should be aimed at when designing teacher-training courses. Apparently, INSET activities, which are geared towards awareness raising, help the teachers to become aware.

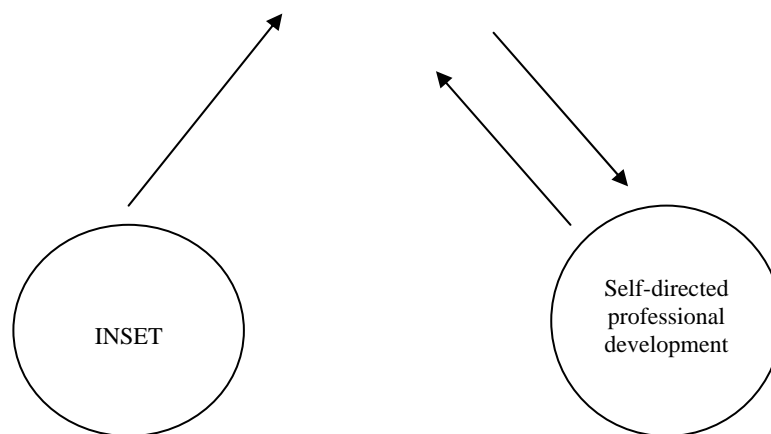


Figure (1): INSET activities geared towards development causes teachers to become aware of the need for development by becoming self-directed towards development. These activities, in turn, raise the teachers' awareness and the cycle continues.

B) Continuing professional development

“An informed teacher (who) has an extensive knowledge and deeper awareness about different components and dimensions of teaching is better prepared to make appropriate judgements and decisions in teaching” (Richards and Lockhart, op. cit. p. 3).

Continuing professional development is the answer to the pressing demands of the teaching profession. The teacher’s job as an educator of others is far from being a routine activity. Creativity is a major requirement, as Bradley asserts. In my opinion, the language teacher’s job is even more demanding. That is because besides facilitating the process of teaching and learning, the teacher should be capable of making choices regarding methodology and material. It is a misconception to consider experience as the measure for a teacher’s competence. On the contrary, without professional development, the more experience the teacher has the more teaching methods are taken for granted, the harder to change. Teachers tend to develop routines and strategies for handling the various aspects of teaching. In the case of experienced teachers, this is done spontaneously without prior thought needed, as Richards and Lockhart (1995) believe. Therefore, they recommend a systematic examination of experience that can make it play a more productive role. They state that experience is *“insufficient as a basis for (indicating) professional growth”* (ibid: p.4). Nonetheless, it is an essential component and a good starting point for teacher development. The more the teacher learns, the better he or she can monitor his or her teaching. The MOEY recommends that teachers commit themselves to lifelong professional development. The first step is to examine oneself critically and discard the methods that are taken for granted.

Bradley (1991) mentions that there are two major purposes of training and development, which are also common factors among the two. They are to raise the awareness of the teacher

and reinforce his or her skills and understanding. Niakris and Bacigal (1992) assert that training and development are distinct concepts. Training is a passive and conditioning period in which the trainee is told what to do. It is agreed, however, that initial training is not capable of preparing the teacher to meet the realities of the classroom. Bradley goes even a step further in asserting that INSET activities fail to ‘enhance’ skills and understanding, which is a major purpose in teacher development. In contrast, continuing professional development achieves both purposes. Researchers cite the fundamental goals that are met by teacher development. Some researchers, like Bradley and Okwen (1996), assert that continuing professional development makes the teacher aware of his or her role by systematically maintaining and improving his or her skills. It also develops the personal qualities that are necessary for carrying out professional duties. Moreover, it updates the teacher with knowledge in the field as well as refines the teacher’s skills.

In addition, Bradley believes that *“attempts at innovation provides teachers with continuing and rewarding job satisfaction”* (ibid: p.107). Engaging in continuing professional development activities intensifies the teacher’s possibility of career development. The fundamental purposes of continuing professional development are various. First, they make teachers valued in their job. Second, teachers do their job well; hence, they have job satisfaction due to the positive feedback that they receive.

Continuing professional development is suitable for introducing gradual as well as dramatic change. It is based on small steps of change that achieve on-going improvement. It is demanding but it also raises the competence of teachers in carrying out their professional role. In case of dramatic change, the goal of staff development is to help teachers *“come to terms with the need for revolution and with the demands which the change will make upon*

their teaching” (Ibid: p.31). Helping teachers and preparing for change in their work environment is a fundamental purpose of staff development. Being involved in the change process satisfies teachers. They tend to conform more easily to change that they own.

2.5. School-based development

The school is an influential factor in the teacher’s development and there are possibilities within the daily life of the school for staff development. School activities can serve their original purpose and achieve positive ends regarding staff development. Staff development days and staff meetings are only examples of the many activities that can be introduced in the daily life of the school for maximum benefits. Keeping a resource file also aids in development. In addition, peer observation, and peer networking, are recognised for their effectiveness in development of teaching behaviours. This is not to deny the role of having a well-resourced school library. Other administrative actions, like job rotation and involving teachers in evaluation, have their contribution as school based attempts for raising the effectiveness of teachers.

Researchers recommend providing staff development time during the regular working day. Bradley (op. cit.) cites staff development days as a successful practice. He refers to the practice in the UK in which there are assigned days that are devoted for staff development. He points out the significance of staff development days. They achieve the development of both school and staff. This means that school days are used more constructively, which brings about various benefits. First, they bring together the whole staff for a much longer time than normally possible. Second, they are considered very intensive events that build up a team spirit and a sense of shared achievement. Third, they allow a mixture of learning styles such

as lectures, discussions and experiential learning. Last, they can serve as a part of a wider programme for teacher development. Bradley emphasises that such days must have intensive planning to achieve the desired outcome. For example, a leading member of staff can be asked to inform and train his colleagues. Another suggestion is to use staff development days for reviewing and evaluating the current progress in development. Outside speakers can also be invited for training purposes. These can even serve as awareness raising conferences by discussing case studies or discussing problems. Such development activities help novice as well as experienced teachers. The pressure on new teachers in their attempts to conform, and even of those who had a recent transfer into the school, can be overcome by staff discussions for they provide valuable learning experiences.

Maurice et al (1990) suggest a practical idea, which is building up a resource file. The resource file is to include all sorts of used materials such as supplementary materials and exercises, past tests, and even creative techniques and activities that are learnt, read about or developed. The researchers assert that “*the file can serve as a centre for creative techniques. If people will share their good ideas AND others are genuinely interested in improving*” (Ibid: p. 25). The contents can contribute directly to staff development. The results obtained are worthwhile. Most importantly, less effective teachers become better performers. Keeping a resource file is useful for the talented teachers as well. Teachers become more creative practitioners and effective planners.

A common practice in UAE schools is peer observation, which is known as ‘inter-visitations’, ‘demonstration lessons’ or ‘model lessons’. This enables teachers to observe practical application of existing ideas and can help re-orient teachers to the changes in the field. Observations are carried out within and in other schools. Researchers point out that “

Spending time in another teacher's classroom is one of the most often requested and beneficially perceived resources ...for teacher professional development." (Holly in Blackman 1989: p.8). In addition, Bax (1997) has a sound view on peer networking. He asserts that a systematic network has to be created to support staff development. This exposes teachers to different issues, and encourages them to express individual beliefs and practices for comparison with others. It provides teachers with a supportive atmosphere, which is necessary for attempts at innovation. Peer networking is not competitive, it is supportive, as good staff relationships facilitate this. They contribute to making a powerful and empowering environment. Blackman asserts that *"the quality of the relationships among faculty is central to professional development"* (ibid: p. 8). Mansour (1993) recommends assigning the talented teachers as unit heads - which is equivalent to senior teachers in the UAE. A senior teacher, like a head teacher, retains his duties as a teacher with a reduced load.

Bradley considers job rotation as a very good activity for career development since it broadens the teacher's experience portfolio. He argues for involving teachers in management and decision making. He explains that this demands a high level of response and compels the teacher to *"try to anticipate, to brainstorm, to plan and to evaluate"* (ibid: p.74). He believes that management requires skills and leads to development. Involvement in evaluation of the school also contributes to development. Management demands careful planning, collecting data to achieve the specified objectives, analysis and discussion. Being involved in the management processes widens the teacher's experiences. Pennington (1989) asserts that *"it is in the best interests of all teachers to take an active role in the evaluation process, as part of their own development as teachers and as part of their contribution to the development of the profession"* (Pennington in Mansour, op. cit. p. 49). Wallace and Woolger (1991, in Mansour)

also back up this argument. They declare that teachers collaborate better when they are treated as ‘partners’.

Encouraging teachers to read is another school-based activity for staff development. The wider the knowledge base, the higher the regard among staff members for each other’s skills, as Bradley points out. Therefore, providing a staff library encourages reading. Another way is planning a presentation of the read material on staff days or meetings.

In conclusion, schools are rich grounds for staff development. If this influence is left to drift along, we will be unsure of its impact. Therefore, we should aim to build staff development into the regular daily life of the school. Much is to be gained by school-based activities or INSET days if the practice is adopted in the UAE. In the first place, the approach ensures that all staff are included whether novice or experienced. Furthermore, teachers are provided with extensive choices of activities that meet their individual needs. Follow-up and support from training and colleagues is an integral part, because collaborative approaches to staff development have positive effects on students’ learning too. Teachers, as colleagues who share the same interests and undergo similar difficulties, are encouraged to exchange views with openness. These times of collegial dialogues are to be planned collaboratively. The requirements are feasible. In order to create a deliberate systematic use of the influence of the school on teacher development, it is recommended by researchers to have flexible timetables.

2.6. Activities for Teacher Development

A) Peer-Observation: Benefits

Educational researchers regard observation as one of the important activities for self-development amongst teachers. It involves visiting a class of another teacher to observe different aspects of teaching. Its purpose, in this context, is to gather information about teaching. It does not involve evaluation. Richards and Lockhart (op. cit.) cite two kinds of observation. One that is carried out by student teachers in pre-service education, and peer-observation in which one teacher observes a colleague's class. Okwen (op. cit.) mentions four categories of observation in the general meaning of the term depending on the purpose for which it is carried out. Observation, as he explains, can be for training, assessment or observer development. Self-observation is another form. It can be done by recording one's lesson. It makes teachers gain awareness of their teaching. A teacher can distinguish between effective and ineffective classroom practices during observation. However, it is not easy in reality to face one's shortcomings due to the anxiety that is experienced during the process of self-observation.

For observation to contribute to development, it should include planning. It should consist of pre-observation and post-observation meetings, beside the observation itself. The same views are expressed in Richards and Lockhart, Bradley and Okwen. In the pre-observation orientation session, the two teachers meet to discuss various relative data for the observer to be aware of the kind of class, students, material and teaching approach. A focus for the observation has to be identified. Richards and Lockhart assert that the outcome from observation becomes higher when there is a focus. This involves a task to be given to the observer such as filling in a form that may be a checklist or that may require descriptive data.

The recorded data, as Bradley asserts, must be objective and provide the basis for post-observation discussions. When a group of teachers is observing, the scope of the discussion gets wider due to the amount of data collected.

The most essential factors in successful observations are having a clear, specific purpose, together with objective recording, followed by an open discussion. Making the observation more systematic and productive includes the use of observation instruments for collecting data. Day (1994) points out that descriptive (qualitative) data is useful “*when the observer wants to capture a broad picture of a lesson rather than focus on a particular aspect of it*” (ibid: p.44). It also makes the observer aware of the complexity of the classroom. Gebhard (1992) asserts that when a classroom is videoed or audiotaped, the amount of learning can increase, if these are used in conjunction with the observer’s notes during observation. This enables the observer to focus on certain points later, and learn more by viewing or listening to the tape to take additional notes, while focussing on that area.

The observed teacher as Niakaris and Basigal (op. cit.) assert “*should not perceive herself as the model teacher with the model lessons, nor allow the (observing teacher) to view her as such*” (Ibid: p.43). To make observation a positive experience, Richards and Lockhart limit the observer’s role to gathering information. Regular practice of this technique reduces the anxiety experienced by some and makes them more confident.

Feedback is very important in the observation process. Successful feedback is more effective when it is given right after the observation, or within two hours, as Bradley recommends. The success of the feedback depends also on the objective and non-judgemental data that was collected during observation. It has to be a two-way process during discussion.

To sum up, much can be gained from observation whether of oneself, by recording one's own class or of other teachers. Above all, it makes the teachers gain insight into their teaching performance. They become more aware of their actual performance and, therefore, decide on what and how to develop it. Observation allows teachers to see teaching differently and learn new ideas they can apply in their classrooms. Although this technique is widely applied in the UAE, there is a need to see whether the expected gains are reached as part of directing the school life to cater for teacher development. Based on my experience, many teachers reject observation. They experience insecurity, distrust or embarrassment. There are also cultural differences behind this. The observed teacher is usually considered superior, whereas the fact is that he or she is only more confident than others who reject being observed. In addition, some teachers are believed to put on an act when being observed that is not inherent of their ordinary, unobserved classes. This has made the technique of peer-observation not very favourable among teachers. There is a need, as explained earlier, to see whether teachers carry out this task for its benefits or because it is obligatory, and find out ways of improving it.

B) Reflection: Journal writing

There is a need to adopt a research attitude to the teacher's life to achieve development. This may be achieved by encouraging teachers to reflect on their own practice. Reflection has many advantages added to the fact that it is a prerequisite for change. Journal writing is the most commended practice that employs reflection as part of the process by researchers such as Ramani (1987) Bartlett (1994), Richards and Lockhart (op.cit.), Evans and Nation (1989) and Bailey (1990)

Ramani is the first researcher to call for introducing a reflective element in teaching. By reflection she means that teachers attempt to critically analyse their beliefs and practices. Reflection, as she describes it, is a method for integrating theory and practice. She rejects teacher-training courses that are theory based. She believes that practice should be integrated in them and sees that it is the duty of the teacher educator to encourage teachers to reflect on their practice. Wildman et al (1990) back up this argument by considering systematic reflection an essential teacher development tool. Evans and Nation (1989) believe that critical reflection leads to curriculum development too. In addition, changing behaviour comes as a result of assessing one's own practice. There are conditions that constrain reflection such as time and effort. In most cases, reflection requires using the teachers' own time and balancing their working life with their private life. Hence, for some teachers, it becomes rather unsystematic. To facilitate reflection, Clift et al (1990) recommend that teacher educators provide tasks to help the teachers in coping with the practice of reflection within the school time.

Among the techniques that require reflection is keeping a teaching journal. Teaching journals are also known as diary studies. They are "*written or recorded accounts of teaching experiences*" (Richards and Lockhart, op. cit. p.6). Kathleen Bailey (1990) states that a teaching journal is "*a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular, candid entries...and then analyzed for recurring patterns or salient events.*" (Bailey in Gebhard ,1992, p. 40). Teachers record ideas and events for the purpose of later reflection. As for the benefits of journal writing, Bailey attests that teachers develop powerful insights in their profession. Consequently, they achieve the goal of personal development. A teaching journal, as she explains, may contain the teacher's personal

reaction to classroom or school events. If a teacher has questions or observes problems while teaching he or she can add this to his or her journal. Furthermore, a journal may refer to ideas that the teacher needs to remember or analyse, and take action in the future, as Richards and Lockhart recommend. Similarly, Bartlett (1994) suggests including beliefs and views about teaching in the teaching journal. Other valuable additions are transcribed conversations with pupils and critical classroom incidents in a lesson.

Porter et al (1990) and Walker (1985)- both in Richards and Lockhart- outline the main procedures for keeping a journal. They recommend that a teacher attempts to make entries on a regular basis and review the entries regularly. A teacher should aim to spend “*5 or 10 minutes after (he or she) teach(es) a lesson either to write or (to) record it*” (bid: p.7). It involves asking questions of oneself in order to clarify certain points and develop an understanding of their profession.

In her description of the process of journal writing, Bailey (1990) pointed out the need to “*study the journal entries, looking for patterns and significant events.*” (Bailey in Gebhard, 1992, pp.40-41). Richards and Lockhart go even a step further in suggesting that teachers share their journals and discuss them regularly. They propose that a collaborative network among teachers makes teachers benefit from the comments of their peers by gaining awareness. Collaborative journal keeping, according to the two researchers, narrows the focus for discussion. On the other hand, they confirm the views of teachers who regard journal keeping as a burden; however, they attest that the benefits to be gained make it worthwhile to keep a teaching journal.

Teaching journals are recommended to be kept in teaching portfolios. A teaching portfolio is a collection of documents that provide evidence of the quality of the teacher's work. The teacher utilises this to reflect on his or her own teaching, thus the teaching portfolio aids development. Teachers need to edit some documents or materials for their teaching portfolio so as to demonstrate their growth and development. It serves as a manifestation of the teacher's major "*strengths and teaching achievements*" (Bastidas,1996, p.24), and evidence of the quality of the teacher's teaching performance. It also serves as a "*vehicle for reflection, improvement, and achievement*" (ibid: p.24).

In conclusion, reflection implies professional learning and contributes to teacher development. Teaching journals are a form of reflection. They are highly recommended by researchers everywhere. As teachers perform complex functions in their daily schoolwork, it is advisable for administrators to facilitate this useful practice. There is a need, however, to see whether this technique is employed by teachers in the UAE, and how to make better use of it as a development tool. In case where it is not practised, there is a need to find out why teachers do not use it and how they can be encouraged to adopt it.

Chapter III

Design of the Study: Methodology and Procedures

3.1. Introduction

In the attempt to study the various teacher development practices that are available in the UAE and find out the possibility of introducing some of the self-directed methods of development mentioned in the previous chapter, a large-scale inquiry was set up. The inquiry had two instruments. The first one involved the administration of a questionnaire to a sample of 158 teachers of English all over the UAE. The second method involved the use of interviews with school principals, supervisors and senior officials. They were designed to obtain more information regarding the current training provided and the extent to which some self-directed methods can be adopted.

In this chapter, I shall describe the target subjects in this research, the rationale and justifications for selecting this group and the research instrument I adopted. Finally, I intend to illustrate the research procedures.

3.2. The Subjects

3.2.1. The Rationale for the Selection of the Target Subjects Covered by the Research

The subjects for this research included school principals, supervisors (of English), officials from the MOEY, and EL teachers. There are several reasons for choosing these different groups. First, they contribute to making up the INSET system in the UAE. Senior officials decree the main training activities. Official training courses are held on an equal basis round the UAE once a decree is sent to educational zones to train teachers on certain issues. Training co-ordinators receive such decrees and make them known to the concerned personnel in each educational zone. Beside their role in following up the officially designed courses, they help in organising venues and services for locally designed training programmes. They have the right information regarding the training that is carried out outside the school hours. Third, supervisors are the nominated trainers for the majority of the different training courses. They also have a say whether the teachers are in need of training and in which aspect of their performance. They visit teachers in their classes to evaluate their performance and are, therefore, capable of finding out areas in which teachers need training. Fourth, school principals are also required to evaluate the teachers in their schools. They decide if their teachers need training in other areas that are not related to the curriculum. Fifth, teachers of English, the trainees, are the particular people who concern me in my job as a supervisor of English. The kind of training that they receive has always been my primary concern. While I strive to provide the best services that I can, I wanted to inquire into introducing ways in which they can help themselves to improve both in their job and in their

command of the foreign language. Sixth, I have been working as a supervisor and teacher trainer since 1993. I have come to find out that teachers, whether nationals or expatriates, need different kinds of training. Nationals are allowed to enter the service without prior experience. The majority of them are not specialised in education. Expatriates, on the other hand have had previous work experience but need familiarisation with the educational system in the UAE and constant up-dating of teaching techniques. Supervisors are in charge of INSET which raises an issue whether it is wise to make a single person accountable for change. In my opinion, it should be a joint responsibility, as teachers have to be accountable for their own professional development too.

The main concern for me was choosing the right group of teachers. To draw a representative sample of the research population, the principle stated by Oppenheim (1996) was taken into consideration. He states that “ *a representative sample of any population should be so drawn that every member of that population has specified non-zero probability of being included in the sample*”, (Ibid: : p.39). The research was to be carried out on teachers of English. Representatives were selected in accordance with the cluster sampling method suggested by Oppenheim.

3.2.2 Description of the Subjects:

A) General Information of the Planned Target Group

The target subjects for this research included school principals, supervisors (of English), Ministry officials and EFL teachers, as mentioned above. They all work for the Ministry of Education and Youth. There are ten educational zones in the country. According to the statistics for the academic year 1998-1999, there are 688 schools in these zones. The total number of teachers in the UAE is 21,821 as seen in table (1).

Table (1) Total number of teachers in the UAE by nationality and sex

Stage	Nationality		Sex		Total
	Nationals	Expatriates	Male	Female	
Primary	3,636	6,933	3,877	6,692	10,569
Preparatory and Secondary	2,912	8,440	5,111	6,141	11,452
Total	6,548	15,373	9,038	12,833	21,821

[adapted from: Ministry of Education, Planning and Evaluation Sector, Information and Research Department, Documentation and Statistics Section, Summary of Educational Statistics (1998-1999)]

There is a total of 2,238 teachers of English in all zones. There are also 688 school principals and 60 supervisors of English. The sample surveyed was deemed sufficient to allow the investigator to draw conclusions from the findings regarding the possibility of introducing self-directed methods for staff development in the UAE. The teachers' sample included 158 teachers from ten educational zones, representing approximately 7% of the total number of teachers of English (2,238). The actual distribution of teachers in the three stages of education, according to sex and nationality is seen in table (2).

Table (2): Teachers of English in the UAE classified according to their qualifications, nationality and sex.

Qualifications		Diploma		Bachelor		Post Graduate		Sub-Total		Total
Stage ↓	Nationality ⇒	UAE	Other	UAE	Other	UAE	Other	UAE	Other	
Primary	Male	1	246	9	277	0	7	10	530	540
	Female	13	383	122	323	0	4	136	710	846
	Total	14	629	131	600	0	11	146	1240	1386
Preparatory	Male	0	12	2	456	0	16	2	484	486
	Female	2	8	117	327	1	9	120	344	464
	Total	2	19	119	783	1	25	122	828	950
Secondary	Male	0	3	2	390	0	21	2	414	416
	Female	1	3	73	396	0	13	74	412	486
	Total	1	6	75	786	0	34	76	826	902

[adapted from: Ministry of Education, Planning and Evaluation Sector, Information and Research Department, Documentation and Statistics Section, “Statistics of Administrative and Teaching Staff According to Qualification and Specialisation” (1998-1999)]

The interviewees’ sample included four groups. The supervisors’ sample included 5 supervisors, representing 8.4 % of the total number of supervisors 60. The school principals’ sample included 6 principals, representing 1% of the total number of principals 688 but covering 100% of the three stages of education. As for the Ministry officials, 4 representatives were selected. There was one training co-ordinator, representing 10% of the total number of co-ordinators, the senior Inspector of English, and the head of the Planning Department of the Human Resources Management Directorate.

3.3. Instruments of data collection

The two research instruments, the questionnaire and interviews, are equally important for the study, and complement each other. The issue of teacher training is within the hands of administrators while the teachers can provide feedback on the outcome and the efficiency of the training courses. On the other hand, teachers practice self-directed development activities, therefore, take up the professional accountability. Teacher trainers, the supervisors, have access to schools and are in charge of evaluating teaching performance- in collaboration with school principals. Supervisors and principals can determine teacher-training needs, and whether it is possible to introduce a certain development activity or not. Further, they can estimate to what extent teachers are prepared to take up the responsibility for their own professional development. The questionnaire was designed to gather as much information as possible from the teachers. It was expected to facilitate the task of data gathering and save time. Interviews with teachers would have been time consuming due to the large sample drawn and the amount of information required. In addition, the MOEY supervises ten educational zones. The distance ranges from 30 minutes' to 6 hours' drive. Therefore, questionnaires only were chosen as the tool to survey the teachers. Interviews, however, were very easily carried out because of the convenient number of interviewees 14. The researcher opted for using interviews to strengthen the findings in this sense (see also 3.3.2.1. below). There is merit in using multiple methods, the most obvious is to overcome the limitations of each method, and thus increase reliability of data gathered.

3.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire

The principal survey instrument, as stated earlier, is a detailed questionnaire. It is expected to collect information on INSET activities in the UAE, and to investigate into current self-directed methods practised by teachers. The main aim is to find out to what extent self-directed methods of development are truly practised and whether they can be introduced where they are not. Factual information as well as opinions and attitudes were aimed at. Therefore, the questionnaire included different parts and varied types of questions. It appeared to be long due to the large print used to facilitate reading. However, the layout of the questions made it easy for respondents to finish the task within a convenient time, as was seen during the piloting phase. The questionnaire was designed and revised several times to make it clear and easy to complete. Variety was ensured to achieve maximum benefit. It was sent to my research supervisor who approved of it; then I started the survey.

A cover letter was attached to each questionnaire. The purpose of the letter was to:

- a. Explain the purpose of the survey.
- b. Encourage participation by convincing the respondents that their responses will be held in strict confidence.
- c. Ensure maximum response by encouraging recipients to participate and send the questionnaire back on time. The importance of their participation was pointed out.
- d. Appeal to them to be accurate in completing the questionnaire., as I wanted them to feel how grateful and thankful I am for their favour of giving away their time and efforts to help a complete stranger in getting a degree.

Respondents wrote their school names and the zones they come from on the questionnaire cover below the letter. Although in educational settings, the positive results of the survey are

considered a sufficient reward for participation, as Best and Kahn (op.cit.) indicated. I even promised to send gifts to randomly chosen schools, this was to show how much I appreciated their contribution (the gifts were paid subscriptions to EFL magazines). Another reason was that I needed to increase the number of returns.

Section I: Personal Data, consisting of sixteen questions identifies the respondent's personal, academic and work characteristics. The purpose of this was to provide an easy start for the respondents as well as to see whether there is any correlation between any of these factors and the responses to the rest of the questionnaire. In addition, it ensures that the sample consists of subjects who have the characteristics of the research population.

Section II: Training Courses, consisting of two parts that deal with current training courses available to teachers in the UAE. In part (A), Questions 1 and 2 require information on training courses offered by the MOEY that were actually attended in the previous year and their content and length. The aim of this was to form an idea about the type and frequency of training offered on an official basis. Question 3 is expected to find out the extent to which teachers are self-directed towards training that is not imposed on them. Part (B) focuses on the subjects' attitudes and opinions regarding official training courses. Question 1 consists of 22 statements. The subjects were asked to respond to the statements by indicating their opinions and attitudes on a five-point scale as in The Likert Method mentioned by Best and Kahn (1989) and Oppenheim (1996). Question 2 aims at finding out the respondent's preferences as to the person who decides on training needs. Respondents were asked to rank four responses in order of preference.

Section III: Self-Development Activities, consisting of five sub-groups of questions that deal with the most well known self-directed teacher development activities. Each sub-group of questions aims at getting as much information as possible regarding the activities that are practised on an individual basis, and whether they can be generalised amongst teachers.

Finally, the respondents are thanked for their contribution and asked to comment generally on the possibility of introducing self-directed methods in teacher training in the UAE. The main aim was to make up for areas that are not covered in the questions.

3.3.2. Interviews

3.3.2.1. Rationale for conducting interviews in the Research - The Purpose of Individual Interviews

The interview is an oral questionnaire as Best and Khan (op. cit.) define it. Some writers argue for the superiority of the interview over the questionnaire. Compared to the questionnaire, interviews provide more valid answers as Martinez (1993) claims. To the contrary, Best and Khan consider each research instrument appropriate in a given situation.

There are several reasons for using the interview as a research instrument. First, the researcher believes that interviews help in revealing facts that cannot be obtained in written form. This view is backed up by Best and Khan who attest that the interview has the advantage of revealing confidential information as *“people are more willing to talk than write”*,(ibid: p.201). Second, the researcher also believes that interviews enrich the findings

by covering areas that other instruments are in capable of covering. Questionnaires, for example contain sets of questions that cannot be altered or added to once sent to respondents. Interviews, on the other hand, though may be planned earlier, allow the researcher to probe on issues that may arise during the interview. Oppenheim (op.cit.) who states that the purpose of interviews is not to gather facts and statistics but to develop ideas also backs this up. Last, the researcher has developed the skills needed for interviews throughout her career as a supervisor and teacher trainer who is involved in appraisal interviews and interviews for recruiting new teachers. This is in accordance with Oppenheim's view that the interview requires higher order interpersonal skills.

As for the number of interviewees, Oppenheim's view was taken into consideration. He argues that quality and not quantity determine the number of the interviews. Whereas the type of interviews selected were influenced by the purpose each one achieves. The researcher chose to use different types depending on the interviewee's job. As agreed by the researchers mentioned above, interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Moreover, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions encourage the interviewees to elaborate on the topics discussed and thus enrich the data gathered. Therefore, in-depth interviews were conducted with teacher trainers , the supervisors, principals and Ministry officials that consisted of different sets of questions. Comparable findings are assumed within the groups of supervisors and principals due to the care taken in wording the questions. Interview questions aimed at getting as much information as possible from the interviewees.

3.3.2.2. Description of the Interview

(A) Aims of the Interviews

Interviews aim at gathering personal information, which are thought to be the most essential for the study. The interviews focus on the current INSET courses and self-development activities practised. Interviewees were consulted regarding what would facilitate the introduction of self-directed methods to promote teacher development.

(B) Types of Interviews

The interviews conducted in the study with groups A (the school principals) and B (the supervisors) were structured or standardised. They consisted of a series of questions and answers. Interviews with group C (Ministry officials) were unstructured (not standardised). They consisted of open-ended questions followed by probes. In the case of structured interviews, comparable findings were sought. Taylor and Bogan (1984) state that “*identically worded questions.. assume comparable findings.*” (ibid: p.77). As for the semi-structured interviews, they were chosen due to the nature of the interviewee’s job and what he or she can contribute to the findings from that perspective.

Structured interviews provide varied data in a comparatively short time. Their purpose is that of data collection. Unstructured interviewing is flexible and dynamic. Open-ended questions require greater depth of response as Best and Khan (op. cit.) point out. Martinez (op.cit.), however, warns against bias caused by the formulation of questions that influence the respondents. Leading questions that imply specific answers are of this kind. I tried to avoid these.

(C) Description of the Interviews

Questions in the interviews were open-ended. Following is a description of each part:

Part I: Included personal questions.

Part II: This part differed according to the group as follows.

Group (A): This part for group (A) concentrated on gathering information on the current teacher training programmes available to EFL teachers and organised by the schools or the zone. They elicited the topics covered, how they are administered and who runs them. Principals were asked to explain how they determine their teachers' training needs.

Group (B): This group included the trainers themselves. They were asked to comment on the effectiveness of INSET offered to teachers.

Part III: This focused on the current self-directed development activities from the perspective of the interviewee either as a principal or a supervisor and trainer. Therefore, it included similar questions for both groups (A and B). They were asked to comment on the self-directed development activities that are practised by their staffs in the school and how to facilitate the approach in the future. As for group C, every respondent was asked suitable questions according to the post held.

3.3.2.3. Criteria for Selecting The Respondents for the Interview

The chosen sample of the research population was a typical example of the characteristics of the research population. Interviewees of different nationalities and work places were selected.

Interviewees in group (A) represent the four stages of education and the various school types according to students' gender. This was opted for to ensure variety of work environments. As for group (B), different educational zones were selected to widen the perspective and enable the investigator to compare the findings as much as possible. Interviewees in group (C) were the closest administrators connected with the topic of the study. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) refer to Glaser and Strauss (1967) call this type of sampling 'theoretical sampling'. The actual number of interviewees to be interviewed is not as significant as what each of them has to offer. I tried to vary the type of people interviewed according to their job. I felt satisfied by the data obtained when I got a full range of perspectives and found that interviews with additional people ceased to yield new insights. At this point, I was satisfied with the number of interviews conducted.

3.3.2.4. Conducting the Interviews

It was not an easy job to conduct the interviews with busy professionals. I had to carry them out amidst the many working responsibilities that I had too. I conducted interviews with two supervisors then I applied for an annual leave to be able to carry out the research. I was able to fix appointments with school principals in different parts of the UAE, as well as with ministry officials and supervisors in different educational zones. Most of the interviewees were glad to be given the opportunity of expressing their views and concerns about teacher training. They were enthusiastic about the topic as well. Interviewees A.O. was particularly helpful in providing minute details of the current training with complete frankness.

At first, I greeted the interviewee and thanked him or her for accepting to participate in the research and explained to him or her the purpose of the research and its significance. I also

sought permission for recording the interview. Interviews with school principals and one ministry official was done in Arabic. (see the translated transcript in Appendix III). Each interview took around 15 to 30 minutes. The interviews were conveniently conducted in meeting rooms at the venues or interviewees' offices. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed on the same day of the interview. Recording interviews made transcription easier and preserved the actual wordiness given by the interviewees. The permission for recording was granted by the entire sample. A few notes were taken during the interview of the major points mentioned by the subjects. It should be noted that the interviews with school principals and some of the senior officials were conducted in Arabic. They were translated with due care to preserve the meaning conveyed.

3.3.2.5. Analysis of interviewees

Table (3) Interviewees classified according to job title, gender and qualifications.

Classifications ⇒	Gender				Qualifications				Total
	Male		Female		B.A.		M.A.		
Job ⇓	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Supervisors (group A)	3	21.4	2	14.28	4	28.6	2	14.28	5
Principals (group B)	2	14.28	4	28.6	6	42.86	0	0	6
Ministry Officials (group C)	1	7.14	2	14.28	3	21.4	1	7.14	3
Total	6	42.86	8	57.14	13	92.86	3	21.43	14

The principals' sample covers the different stages of education. There is one principal each working in a lower primary and a higher primary schools. There are two principals from the

preparatory and secondary schools, one from a boys' school and one from a girls' school in the two stages.

3.4. The Research Procedures: The Design and Administration of the study.

3.4.1. Developing the Questionnaire

I started my research by carrying out a review of the available literature on EL teacher training and development in general and in the UAE in particular as outlined in chapter 2. I designed the outline of the questionnaire accordingly and prepared the questions that I needed for the research. I designed it to include different types of questions to suit the type of information needed as explained earlier and to cater for the respondents' convenience. Another reason for this procedure was to promote reliability as some questions were double checked in the questionnaire.

3.4.2. The Piloting Phase

To pilot test the instrument, I tried out the questionnaire with 7 colleagues and teachers, who were excluded from the survey to eliminate biased responses. This enabled me to make the necessary amendments. Teachers with average language competency needed clarifications of the meanings of some terms, which were mainly related to self-directed development. Therefore, I included definitions of the self-directed activities to eliminate any misunderstanding. Some found the print was too small. Therefore, I had to change the layout of the questionnaire. I also checked the words that were misprinted.

3.4.3. Distributing the Questionnaires

It was convenient for me to distribute the questionnaires at the beginning of the school year. However, it was rather difficult to travel to far regions. Meanwhile, I was assigned, without prior notice, a co-ordinator to a group of experts from the UK. They were to meet teachers to discuss issues related to the English Language curriculum. This required travelling to distant areas. We met with 140 teachers randomly selected from ten educational zones to participate in that survey. They were selected as a representative sample, as stated earlier in (3.2.1.) They had different training backgrounds, and worked in various levels of schools. They were a random sample for a survey related to the English curriculum. Supervisors in every zone were asked to select teachers according to the cluster sampling method. The survey was for a major project and the findings were planned to have statistical significance. The questionnaire for this research was handed to teachers in addition to the major one (permission to do this was granted by her Excellency the Undersecretary for Educational Programs and Curricula, Dr. Sheikha Al-Shamsi). The teachers were given self-addressed envelopes for each questionnaire to facilitate the returns. Questionnaires administered personally have several advantages as Best and Khan (op. cit) point out. This was true in my case because I was able to explain the purpose of my study, and hand them copies of the questionnaires, which were to be returned by school mail via the MOEY mailing service. They were so keen and interested in the topic that they agreed to pass on more copies of the questionnaire to their colleagues. The total number of copies actually distributed was 160 copies. I even received more copies than I had prepared 170 because some teachers made extra copies. This indeed was very helpful when sorting out the responses. Luckily, I was able to exclude the copies that were incomplete 7 or where filled out by novice teachers 5 (as specified in question 12 of the first section of the questionnaire). The teachers came from

different schools, and this widened the scope of the survey to include respondents from different backgrounds and work environments. I made it clear to the teachers that the research was done for statistical purposes. I also explained that the research did not have to do with the policy of the MOEY, and that the findings will exclusively be for this particular research. This was an attempt to encourage them to express their own views when answering questions.

Obviously, I was astonished by the success of the returns process. I have written in the cover letter that I needed them within a month. This saved me the follow up process as I started receiving them within the specified period and a few arrived within a fortnight later. I had had prepared the analysis sheets and was able to work on the analysis. Together with the feeding of statistical software, this took up the two months of December 1999 and January 2000. This was done on weekends and spare time after duty hours. Contrary to my expectations, I enjoyed this process too. This part of the research marked the turning point in the process.

3.5. Limitations of the Methodology adopted

The investigator is aware that the methodology adopted has certain limitations:

- 1) The sample was not completely random since it relied on personal contact and teacher willingness to cooperate, therefore no statistical significance can be claimed. This does not, however, affect the validity of the findings.
- 2) There is always the danger in interviews and questionnaires to participants known to the researcher that they will answer with what they think he or she wants to hear. This is always a potential threat to reliability.

- 3) Teachers feel sensitive to discuss issues related to the relation that they have with their supervisor, as supervisors carry out appraisal of teaching performance. This is also a potential threat to reliability.

Chapter IV

Findings and Discussion of Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of this study in relation to the research questions mentioned in chapter I. The main significant findings are dealt with.

- 1) Teacher training in the UAE does not follow a systematic approach.
- 2) No systematic approach is followed to specify teacher training needs. Supervisors and principals are consulted to point out what their subordinates need. Very few of them consult the teachers on this.
- 3) Teachers of English in the UAE practise those activities decreed by the MOEY and are not familiar with certain development activities.
- 4) There are certain factors that affect the practice of self-development school-based activities.
- 5) It is possible to eliminate certain obstacles that hinder the application of self-directed school-based development activities for teachers of English in the UAE.

Significant findings are drawn from all collected data, and are presented qualitatively for the most part.

4.2. The Actual Group in the Study

(1) Teachers

In the teachers' sample, there were 158 EFL teachers. There were 18 teachers from Abu Dhabi, 18 from Dubai, 6 from Sharjah, 21 from Ajman, 23 from Umm Al-Qaiwain, 21 from Ras Al-Kaimah, 10 from Fujaira, 18 from Al-Ain, 6 teachers from the Western Educational Zone and 17 from the Eastern Educational Zone. (see: Teacher Profile below).

(2) Teacher Profile

A) Level of school

Table (4) Respondents classified according to the level of their schools

School Level	Lower Primary	Upper Primary	Preparatory	Secondary
Frequency	35	26	36	61
Percentage	22.2%	16.5%	22.8%	38.6%

With reference to table 2 in chapter III, there is a total of 61 primary schools' EFL teachers in the sample who form 4.4% of the total number of primary schools' EFL teachers in the UAE which is 1386. Preparatory schools' EFL teachers in the sample, on the other hand form approximately 4% of the total number of preparatory schools' EFL teachers which is 950. In addition, secondary schools' EFL teachers in the sample represent 7% of the total number of secondary schools' EFL teachers which is 902.

b) Type of School

Table (5) Respondents classified according to the type of their schools

Type of School	Boys' School	Girls' School
Frequency	67	91
Percentage	42.4%	57.6%

It is worth mentioning that female teachers are more in number than male teachers in reality, as girls' schools have only female teachers, while boys' schools have female teachers up to grade 5 in the primary stage. According to table (1), female respondents in the survey form approximately 0.7% of the total number of female teachers in the UAE, the same applies to male respondents.

c) Number of teachers of English in the Staff at School.

Table (6) Respondents classified according to the number of staff members in their schools

No. of Teachers of English at school	3-4	5-7	8 and above
Frequency	40	58	60
Percentage	25.3%	36.7%	38%

This information was obtained to see whether this factor has any significant effect on the respondents' attitudes towards the various training and development activities.

d) Teaching Hours Per Week.

Table (7) Respondents classified according to the number of hours they teach per week.

Teaching Hours Per Week	Up to 18	19-21	22-24	Other
Frequency	94	27	35	2
Percentage	59.6%	17.1%	22.2%	1.3%

This information was obtained to see whether the workload has any significant effect on the respondents' attitudes towards the various training and development activities. The average workload in the three stages is 18, 21 and 24 for secondary, preparatory and primary stages respectively. The two respondents in the 'other' section of the table above had a teaching load of 6 hours a week (beside other administrative duties). The above table reveals that 60.1% of the teachers have the average workload.

e) Age

Table (8) Respondents classified according to their age range.

Age range	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
Frequency	28	85	37	7
Percentage	17.7%	53.8%	24.1%	4.4%

This table reveals that the respondents are from a wide range of ages.

f) Gender

Table (9) Respondents classified according to their gender.

Gender	Male	Female
Frequency	67	91
Percentage	42.4%	57.6%

As mentioned earlier, there are more female teachers in the UAE. With reference to table 2, male teachers included in the sample represent 4.7% of the total number of male teachers. Similarly, female teachers in the sample represent 5% of the total number of female teachers of English.

g) Nationality

Table (10) Respondents classified according to their nationality.

Country	No. of Teachers	Percentage
UAE	23	14.6%
Egypt	35	22.2%
Jordan	26	16.5%
Syria	34	21.5%
Palestine	14	8.9%
Lebanon	2	1.3%
Tunisia	17	10.8%
Sudan	4	2.5%
Other	3	1.9%

Other countries of nationality mentioned were Iraq (2) and Tanzania (1). As seen from the table above, the respondents are from the main nationalities that constitute the teaching force in the UAE.

h) Marital Status

Table (11) Respondents classified according to their marital status.

Marital Status	Single	Married	Other
Frequency	21	133	4
Percentage	13.3%	84.2%	2.5%

This information is expected to reveal if the respondents' attitudes towards training and development activities are affected by their family responsibilities.

i) Number of Children

Table (12) Respondents classified according to the number of their children.

No. of Children	None	1-3	4-6	More than 6
Frequency	28	90	40	10
Percentage	17.7%	40.7%	25.7%	6.3%

This information is also expected to reveal if the respondents' attitudes towards training and development activities are affected by their family responsibilities.

j) Residence of Family Members

Table (13) Respondents classified according to the residence of their family members.

Residence of Family Members	In the UAE	Outside the UAE
Frequency	137	21
Percentage	86.7%	13.3%

Likewise, this information is expected to reveal if the expatriate respondents' attitudes towards training and development activities are affected by their family responsibilities.

k) Overtime Work

Table (14) Respondents classified according to work in evening centres.

Teaching in Evening Centres	yes	No
Frequency	18	140
Percentage	11.4%	88.6%

This information is expected to reveal whether this factor has any significance reflected in responses obtained. As seen above, the sample represents those who have extra job responsibilities.

l) Teaching Experience

Table (15) Respondents classified according to the range of their teaching experience (years of service) in the UAE.

Range in Years	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	More than 20
Frequency	17	46	46	29	20
Percentage	10.8%	29.1%	18.4%	18.4%	12.7%

The respondents have a wide range of experience.

m) Academic Qualifications

Table (16): Respondents classified according to their academic qualifications.

Classifications	Qualifications			Type of Degree	
	Diploma	Bachelor	Masters	Arts	Education
Frequency	28	119	11	75	83
Percentage	17.7%	75.3%	7.3%	47.5%	52.5%

Teachers holding a teaching diploma are employed in primary schools. As seen in the table, the sample represents the different qualifications and educational backgrounds.

4.3. The Structure of Current INSET

With reference to the facts that were gathered about in-service training courses in the UAE, it was found that teacher training courses are characterised by the following:

4.3.1. Frequency

Official training courses provided in the various zones in the previous year show that not all teachers get the same chances for training. With reference to question 1 in part II of the questionnaire, it was found that the majority of the subjects had absolutely no training in the previous year as in table (17)

Table (17): Respondents considering the number of training courses – provided by the MOEY attended last year.

No. of courses	None	One	Two	Other
Frequency	90	55	13	0
Percentage	57%	34.8%	8.2%	0%

The total number of courses attended by the whole population of the survey was 81. Approximately 43% of the respondents were trained last year. This finding is not affected by any factor as training courses are obligatory for the total number of population represented in the sample. This implies that some teachers opt for not joining the training provided. With respect to educational zones, it was found that there is no significant difference in the number of training courses available to teachers throughout the country. However, it was found that most of these courses are directed to teachers in preparatory and secondary schools irrespective of the years of experience. Thus teachers in the lower primary cycle received the least training. As a whole, training provision does not appear to be satisfactory. This was also expressed by most of the interviewees . Interviewee (A.O.) comments on the frequency of training courses and expresses dissatisfaction with the training offered. He says: *“The supervisors carry out the training for teachers who are recruited at the beginning of the year for about four days. Sometimes they do what we call training based on needs of the teachers as seen by the supervisor through his assessment of professional skills, so they do in-service training. In other words, the amount of training is not enough due to the responsibilities of the supervisor”* Interviewee (A.S.) explains that *“(Training courses) deal with deficiencies found in the teachers’ performance as well as their relationships with the students.”*

Interviewee (K.S.) expresses the same view as interviewee (H.M) and explains that: *“The class visit is the main technique used (for INSET). This is followed by a post observation*

conference. In which a supervisor discusses the various aspects of the lesson,”. In some cases individual supervisors carry out extra training opportunities for their teachers. Interviewee (R.B.), for example, explains a personal initiative with the supervisors in the same educational zone : “We chose to do this every fortnight, for different cycles. Every time we focus on one cycle (stage). Either we do it alternatively as supervisors or we call guest speakers from universities and colleges. We spend two hours on this. Sometimes we offer different topics and leave the choice for teachers. In general, these workshops can be said to be optional. These are held on weekends”.

Interviewee (A.N.) brings about the issue of attendance and says: “. There are teachers who do not care to attend training seminars. If the teacher is for improving and self-developing. I think good results will be found.”

4.3.2. Length of courses

Table (18) : Length of training courses attended

Length of courses	Less than one week	1-2 weeks	3-4 weeks	Other
Frequency	65	7	2	0
Percentage	41.1%	4.4%	54.4%	0%

(The total number of teachers who were trained was (81) as stated in table (17) above)

Teachers are offered courses of short duration. The longer courses are administered to those who qualify for promotion as supervisors or senior teachers. Some are offered in one morning or evening session as interviewee (H.M.) asserts. Interviewee (K.A.) refers to training programmes as: “These are activities related to low performing teachers, their supervisors

meet with them one evening to deliver what he has on the topic. On the other hand, there is training on new course-books. It also takes one or two sessions with some books. Sometimes, the teachers are called again to discuss the curriculum if some problems arise.” In addition, individual efforts at schools vary. Some schools do not have special plans for their teachers, as interviewee (A.M.) asserts, others appear to be more active. Interviewee (A.S.) explains that in her school, they have “a special plan for two years. (They) have covered a wide part of it until now. The outcome is encouraging.”

As referred to earlier, interviewee (R.B.) explains that some training activities are held within two hours only.

4.3.3.Optional Training : TESOL Arabia Conferences

In the previous year, three major conferences were directed to teachers in the UAE. They were held on weekends. Attendance was optional and was, in some cases, free of charge. It was found that only a few teachers working for the MOEY attempted to take up the chance.

Table (19): Respondents who attended TESOL Arabia conferences last year, classified according to the conferences that they have attended:

A. Creativity in the Language Classroom
B. TESOL Arabia '99
C. Assessment and Teacher Education

Conference code	A	B	C
Frequency	7	6	8
Percentage	4%	4%	5%

Out of the 158 subjects, only 21 of them opted for more training in addition to the training they receive by the MOEY. Eleven of them attended one conference, eight went to two conferences and only two attended all the conferences offered by TESOL Arabia. Cross-

tabulation with educational zones to examine the effect of distance of venue was done. It revealed that 9 respondents from Dubai constituting 50% of respondents from Dubai went to the conferences held in Dubai. Another instance is that 3 out of 6 respondents from Al Ain went to the conference that was held in Al-Ain. Thus distance is not a significant factor that affects the teachers' choices. As for the effect of the number of years of experience, 9 out of 17 respondents 53% within the experience range of (6 to 10 years) went to the conferences. Whereas 2 out of 20 teachers (i.e. 5%), within the least range of experience, did the same. There is also no significant effect of sex or nationality on the responses obtained. The effect of the years of experience on this is not clear as interviewees have given several other factors. The researcher is aware that the data obtained is insufficient to draw any conclusion regarding the effect of distance or years of experience. It is clear, however, that a small percentage of teachers opt for additional training by attending conferences in addition to the formal training offered by the MOEY.

With regard to distance, interviewee (K.S.) clarifies why some teachers do not go to such conferences: *“most conferences are held in Dubai or Al-Ain which are a few hours’ drive from here. They are also held during weekends. In addition, not all conferences are free. Some of them are rather costly to attend. The Ministry should sponsor some teachers to attend them.”*

Interviewee (R.B.) has a lot to say about TESOL Arabia (see appendix III). She explains that teachers opt for attending these conferences when they know their timings. She justifies the rising number of attendees by saying: *“The reason for this increase beside making the conference known is that the material they get from the workshops are encouraging... It is useful, therefore, to inform teachers of the timings of these conferences.”*

4.3.4. Attitudes of teachers towards training courses

Teachers were asked to express their views regarding current INSET offered by the MOEY in the UAE and administered by supervisors, the official trainers to measure their attitudes.

As for specifications of training needs, teachers are in some cases asked to specify the areas in which they need training at. Supervisors also decide on training needs and they plan the courses accordingly.

Table (20) : Respondents considering if teachers should be asked to specify their training needs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	35	60	11	30	22
Percentage	22.1%	38%	7%	19%	13.9%

It was noted that 60% of the teachers who agreed/ strongly agreed to the statement fall within the second and third categories of ranges of experience. Cross-tabulation revealed no other significant factor affecting this finding. Interviewee (A.I.) explains the basis on which principals depend when deciding on training needs by saying : *“I depend mostly on classroom observations and recommendations of the appraisal reports of the previous year. Besides, I ask teachers to specify the points in which they need to get training. I do this in my first general meeting with them.”*

Table (21) Respondents considering if supervisors should continue to decide on specifying teachers' training needs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	22	63	23	37	13
Percentage	13.9%	39.9%	14.6%	23.4%	8.2%

As shown above, 53.8% of the teachers either agree or strongly agree to supervisors' specifications of the teachers' training needs. There are 45% of the total number of female respondents, who are among them, as compared to 32% of the total number of the males in the sample, who agreed/ strongly agreed, to the statement. Consulting supervisors to specify their teachers' training needs is the main procedure for determining needs adopted by the MOEY as interviewee (K.A.) explains. The training process, she says: *"starts by distributing a questionnaire to supervisors to find out what areas of training their teachers need training on. They are asked to specify the names of the teachers who are in need of training and in which areas"*. Interviewee (A.O.) explains why this approach is adopted. He says: *"The main tool for assessing the teachers' needs is the supervisor who visits the teachers in their classrooms. They usually record ... these needs in the cumulative register ... while they are discussing the lessons with the teachers, they also ask the teachers if they need any training in any professional skill."*

Table (22) Respondents considering making attendance of training courses optional.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	24	51	27	27	29
Percentage	15.2%	32.3%	17.1%	17.1%	18.4%

There is no significant difference among the responses when checked against years of experience, sex and nationality.

Table (23) The content of the courses is repeated.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly agree
Frequency	38	50	18	39	13
Percentage	24.1%	31.6%	11.4%	24.7%	8.2%

It can be seen that 55.7% of the respondents confirm that there is no variety in the content of the training received. With reference to their years of experience, no differences in responses were detected as even teachers with the least number of years of experience are of the same view as their peers. There is no significant difference with regard to sex and nationality too.

Interviewee (A.M.) says that most training courses *“deal with classroom management, (and) behavioural problems among students. Some of them deal with teaching techniques.”*

Interviewee (A.I) clarifies that training courses deal with : *“issues concerning classroom management, dealing with students, the teaching-learning situation and teaching techniques. Generally, teachers in such schools (secondary) do not need help with the subject of their specialty. They have an excellent command of the subject matter.”*

Interviewee (K.A.), who is a training coordinator, asserts that the number of teachers who miss the training is increasing due to the factor of *“repetition”*, teachers say that *“there is nothing new to learn”*. She also mentions the inconvenient timing and the teaching workload. She says: *“Most of these activities are held in the evening. Teachers go to school in the*

morning and they have to spend around four hours in the evening. They want to plan for their lessons the following day. The supervisors' visits to them are sudden (unannounced). Some teachers do not want to leave their work in evening centres because they are paid on the number of periods they teach."

Table (24): Respondents considering the information obtained as compared to the time allotted for training.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly agree
Frequency	38	40	18	46	16
Percentage	24.1%	25.3%	11.4%	29.1%	10.1%

There is no significant effect of sex, nationality, or years of experience on the responses obtained. For instance, about 54% of the respondents within the second range of experience (6-10) are among those who agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement. Similarly, 50% of the respondents in the highest range of experience (more than 20) are of the same view.

Table (25): Respondents considering the content of the training as up-to-date.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	30	56	35	27	10
Percentage	19%	35.4%	22.2%	17.1%	6.3%

The number of the respondents who are undecided increased as compared to table (23) which presented the opposite view. This may be due to touching a topic sensitive to teachers as stated in the limitations of the methodology adopted. More teachers (54.4%) are within the

positive view. There is no significant relation between the number of the years of experience and the responses obtained. Interviewee (A.A.) explains that some courses “*deal with changes in the curriculum*”, therefore, teachers are up-dated in that sense.

Table (26): Respondents considering the suitability of the content of the training courses for self-learning.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	14	46	26	50	22
Percentage	8.9%	29.1%	16.5%	31.6%	13.9%

There is a slight difference between male and female teachers considering this statement. Cross-tabulation revealed that 33% of the female sample ‘agree’ to the statement while 23.8% of the male respondents are of the same view. In addition 9 respondents from Egypt, forming about 41% of the respondents ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement. There is no other significant factor affecting responses obtained.

Table (27): Respondents considering the mode of delivery of content as learner-oriented.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	25	78	18	24	13
Percentage	15.8%	49.4%	11.4%	15.2%	8.2%

There is no significant relation between the number of years of experience and the responses obtained. With regard to sex, 22% of the female respondents ‘strongly agree’ with the statement, while 7% of the male respondent are of the same view. On the other hand, 13% of

the male respondents ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement as compared to 4% of the female respondents who are of the same view. As mentioned earlier, the mode of delivery depends on the choice of the supervisor. Interviewee (A.I.) compares the learner oriented-approach to directive modes of training by saying: “*Based on our previous experiences in training, teachers do not get that much from lectures. Therefore, all the training activities for this year depend on workshops*”. There is a tendency towards making training activities learner oriented as interviewees (K.N.) and (T.S.) assert.

Table (28): Respondents considering the number of training courses as sufficient.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	12	57	14	49	26
Percentage	7.5%	36.1%	8.9%	31%	16.5%

Comparing the two extremes, there are more teachers who ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement than those who ‘strongly agree’. With reference to the years of experience, 50% of the teachers within the highest range of experience ‘agree’ with the statement. On the other hand, 35% of the teachers in the second range (6-10 years) ‘disagree’ with the statement. There is no significant factor that affects this finding. Interviewee (H.M) is against this statement too. He believes that “*training courses are a few in number*”.

Table (29): Respondents considering the effect of current training courses as positive.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	48	66	22	16	6
Percentage	30.4%	41.8%	13.9%	10.1%	3.8%

It appears that the majority of the respondents ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ with the statement. There is no significant factor that affects the responses obtained. Therefore, teachers are satisfied with the outcome. However, senior officials have a different point of view. Interviewee (A.O.) explicitly states that there is a general dissatisfaction with INSET in the UAE . Interviewee (Z.A.) holds the same view too (see appendix III).

Table (30): Respondents considering training courses in providing teachers with chances of examining their own teaching.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	33	81	17	23	4
Percentage	20.9%	51.3%	10.8%	14.5%	2.5%

The above table displays that the majority of the respondents believe that current training courses do not provide teachers with chances of examining their own teaching. There is no significant factor affecting the responses given. Interviewee (S.S.) believes that this element is missing in the current courses (see appendix III).

Table (31) Respondents considering the effect of current training courses on improving teaching skills.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	12	52	15	62	17
Percentage	7.6 %	32.9%	9.5%	39.2%	10.8%

As shown in the above table, 50% of the respondents ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement. There is no significant factor affecting the responses and the number of the respondents who are undecided is high. Interviewees, however, contradict this finding. Interviewee (Z.A.) refers to trainees’ comments that *“there are teachers who complain about training courses. They attend a training programme without any benefit.”* Interviewee (A.O.) goes even a further step in saying: *“I don’t think that anybody is satisfied with what is called in-service training these days”*. He argues that the main reason is the heavy load that the supervisors themselves have (see appendix III).

Table (32): respondents considering the worksheets prepared by the trainers as useful.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	22	81	25	27	3
Percentage	13.9%	51.3%	15.8%	17.1%	1.9%

A noticeable minority ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement, while the majority ‘agree’ with the statement. There is no significant factor affecting this finding. The number of the ‘undecided’ is high. This finding may be affected by the limitations of the methodology as stated earlier. This is, however, in accordance with the general satisfaction expressed by teachers as seen in table (29) above. Interviews revealed that some trainers take special care in preparing the training material. For example, interviewee (K.S.) uses case studies in workshops: *“I find them particularly useful, because I can focus on weaknesses in practice without offending anybody. Many aspects of the teaching performance can be improved by using case studies. I have collected these during my classroom observations.”*

Table (33): Respondents considering the statement that trainers are well-prepared. Trainers are well prepared.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	29	62	39	26	2
Percentage	18.4%	39.2%	24.7%	16.5%	1.3%

The majority ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement while the undecided respondents grew up to one-fourth of the sample. This may be due to the factor of bias as stated in the limitations of the methodology. No other factor was found to be of significance in affecting the responses.

Interviewee (S.S.) refers to a drawback in saying : *“The most important obstacle is the material itself. We prepare the material but we do not have people for preparing our worksheets, transparencies and so on. We have to prepare it ourselves. Even photocopying.”*

Table (34): Respondents considering the mode of delivery of training courses as theoretical and depending on the lecture format .

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	27	55	32	37	7
Percentage	17.1%	34.8%	20.3%	23.4%	4.4%

There are 51.9% of the sample who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement, while there are 27.8% of them who ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’. The number of the undecided respondents is high. Hence, more respondents are with the view that training courses are

theoretical and depend on the lecture format. There is no significant factor affecting the responses. Interviewees back up this finding. First, interviewee (T.S.) points out that: *“Teacher training everywhere consists mainly of lectures”*. Second, interviewee (A.M.) reports what teachers say about training courses: *“Teachers say that even when the title says that it’s a workshop, this turns out to be merely one of the traditional lectures.”* Third, interviewee (A.S.) points out that, compared to lectures, *“workshops are more successful”*. The choice is left to the trainer regarding the mode of delivery, as she says. Forth, interviewee (M.N.) also says: *“In most of the cases, they take the lecture form. There are supervisors who prefer to give workshops”*. Last, interviewee (A.A.) asserts that *“this (form of training) depends on the trainer and the subject at hand.”*

Table (35): Respondents considering follow up after training.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	12	48	26	41	31
Percentage	7.6%	30.4%	16.5%	25.9%	19.6%

There is no significant factor affecting the opinion expressed. Interviewee (Z.A.) elaborated on the importance of follow up after training courses. She explains that this is difficult to do : *“Following up the training outcome is missing. We do have some excellent training programmes but there is a difficulty in following up the effect of the training on trainees,”* (see appendix III).

Table (36): Respondents considering the teachers being helped to identify their own training needs by their supervisors.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	63	70	15	6	4
Percentage	39.9%	44.3%	9.5%	3.8%	2.5%

Comparing the two extremes, the majority of the respondents are with the opinion of being helped by their supervisor to identify their training needs. There is no significant factor affecting this finding.

Interviewee (A.N.) explains the current system for identifying training needs: *“Training of old-handed teachers is done too- according to the needs that I decide on while observing their classes. These needs are recorded in their final appraisal (reports). There is a department in the Ministry that summarises the training needs of all teachers in the country and classifies them according to groups in each zone.”*

Table (37) Respondents considering the positive effect of training courses

After attending a training course, you feel the need to learn more	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	41	71	20	20	6
Percentage	25.9%	44.9%	12.7%	12.7%	3.8%

Training courses in general have positive effects on the trainees. Very few respondents ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement. There is no significant factor affecting this response.

Interviewee (K.S.) expresses satisfaction with the current training within the available facilities but also sees the need for improvement: *“Supervisors do their best to help their teachers. Any way, I think that in-service teacher training in general needs to be improved.”*

Table (38): Respondents considering the theoretical benefit gained from training courses.

Attending training courses increases your knowledge	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	52	67	22	13	4
Percentage	32.9%	42.4%	13.9%	8.3%	2.5%

The majority of the respondents are with the opinion that attending training courses increases their knowledge. This is with regard the theoretical input. Interviewees, on the other hand, had a different point of view. With reference to the comments under table (31) above, interviewee (Z.A.) explains one reason for this by saying: *“ not all the supervisors are qualified to be trainers”*.

Table (39): Respondents considering the practical benefit gained from training courses

Attending training courses improves classroom performance	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	48	76	15	17	2
Percentage	30.4%	48.1%	9.5%	10.8%	1.3%

The majority of the respondents are with the opinion that attending training courses improves classroom performance. This is with regard the practical input. This confirms the findings in tables 29 and 30. There is no significant factor affecting this opinion. Contrary to this,

interviewee (Z.A.) raises the issue that peer-observation “*makes up for the lack of the practical aspect in training courses*”. Principals and supervisors, she adds, recommend that teachers carry out peer observations to “*complement the training on the aspect of performance which they need training on*”.

Table (40): Respondents considering the need for receiving certificates of attendance of training courses.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	63	70	18	5	2
Percentage	39.9%	44.3%	11.4%	3.1%	1.3%

It is clear that respondents are with the view that certificates of attendance of training courses are essential. There is no significant factor affecting this finding. Interviewee (A.M.) states that “*teachers also need to be encouraged by providing incentives like honour or thanks certificates from the educational zone and the Ministry.*” This, she adds, “*seems to be ignored*”. Interviewee (A.S.) refers to a school initiative by saying that “*we highly encourage teachers who give demonstration lessons by giving them certificates to thank them*”. She explains that “*teachers need to feel the importance of the activities that they practise and they will do when they are rewarded for it.*” In addition, interviewee (H.M.) mentions the importance of providing teachers with incentives. “*rewarding those who work to encourage those who do not work is a good strategy*”.

Table (41): Respondents considering being paid for attending courses outside the working hours/days.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	39	39	35	30	15
Percentage	24.7%	24.7%	22.2	19%	9.5%

There are more respondents who are with the view that the teachers should be paid. The number of teachers who are undecided is large too. There is no significant factor affecting this finding. Interviewee (A.M.) recommends pay for training courses offered during weekends so as to encourage attendance.

Table (42) Respondents considering people who should be involved in identifying training needs.

[Question: (In your opinion, who do you think should identify what teachers need for training? Please *rank* from 1 to 4)]:

Rank	1	2	3	4
The School Principal	3	34	74	47
	1.9%	21.5%	46.8%	29.7%
The Supervisor	38	84	30	6
	24.1%	53.2%	19%	3.8%
The Teacher	112	18	20	8
	70.9%	11.4%	12.7%	5.1%
Another teacher	5	22	34	97
	3.2%	13.9%	21.5%	61.4%

Respondents considered the order of the personnel who should be involved in identifying training needs in the following order: The teacher comes first, then the supervisor, after that the school principal and finally other teachers. No significant difference is found in responses

with regard to sex. For instance, in the case of ‘supervisors’, 15 male respondents forming 22.4% of the total number of male respondents ranked the supervisor as first to identify training need. This is against 22 female respondents forming 24% of the total number of female respondents. There is no significant factor with regard to years of experience or nationality that affects the responses obtained. Interviewee (Z.A.) explained how principals can specify training needs . She said: *“As it is known, one of the responsibilities of a school principal is following up and assessing the teaching performance inside the classroom. When they observe their teachers, they will get to know the training needs of their staff. The register of the observed lesson contains a scale. The principal builds the training upon the results of his or her evaluation report. Teachers may be grouped according to the common points of defects in their performance.”*

Interviewee (A.M) explains that principals also have access to teachers’ lesson plans. She says that: *“the teacher’s daily lesson plan may show deficiencies in planning”*. Besides, interviewee (A.S.) illustrates the nature of the job of a school principal. *“The job of a principal is of two natures. It is administrative as well as supervisory... A principal is also an on-the-job teacher trainer, thus he is partly a supervisor”*. Interviewee (M.N.) explains the rationale behind this practice in saying: *“Classroom observation reveals a lot about teachers’ training needs.”* As a school principal, (A.I.) consults the teachers regarding their training needs in the first general meeting. On the other hand, interviewee (S.S.) explains another practice for identifying training needs by saying: *“last year we gave questionnaires for the teachers so that they can choose which field they want to have training in. After that, we chose the most important topics and we had that training at the beginning of the year”*.

4.4. Self-development Activities

4.4.1. Journal Writing

Table (43) Respondents considering practising journal writing.

Do you practise journal writing?	Yes	No
Frequency	3	155
Percentage	1.9%	98.1%

The three respondents who practice journal writing do this in 1 to 3 hours every week. One of them writes when having a problem. The other two write once a week. They are all male teachers. One is Jordanian, the other two are Syrians. Regardless of the year of service as each is from one of the range (1-5 years) practices journal writing. One is a teacher in the primary stage, the other two are from secondary schools. Thus the workload does not influence this practice, neither the qualifications nor the age range. One of them teaches in an evening centre. However, the number is too small to be indicative of any significant finding of any factor that encourages the practice.

Table (44) Respondents who do not practise journal writing considering the possibility of carrying out journal writing.

Do you think it is possible to carry out journal writing?	Yes	No
Frequency	148	7
Percentage (according to the number of teachers who do not practice journal writing)	95.5%	4.5%

Only a few respondents are positive regarding the possibility of practising journal writing. Interviews with supervisors revealed a parallel finding as none of them mentioned this practice.

Table (45) Respondents stating resource for learning about journal writing

Where did you learn about journal writing?	Frequency	Percentage
A. I have never heard of it before.	54	34.2%
B. I have read about it.	56	35.4%
C. At a training course.	13	8.2%
D. A colleague (another teacher)	26	16.5%
E. Other	9	5.7%

Other resources mentioned included mainly graduate studies and training courses in the teachers' own countries. One teacher within the highest range of experience learnt about this in a training course. This may indicate that training courses do not include teacher development techniques as part of the content. This finding was backed up by interviewees. Supervisors interviewed stated that content of training courses is decided by the MOEY. It focusses on curricula changes, classroom management and teaching techniques. Non of the interviewees mentioned that development activities are covered even theoretically. Interviewee (K.S.) explains that: *“teachers need to know more about the opportunities or possibilities available for them. Training courses should aim at informing teachers of different means of self-development. This is missing in our courses. We would like to do more for our teachers but we have to adhere to what is assigned to us by the Ministry.”* Interviewee (S.S.) backs up this argument (see appendix III).

Table (46) Respondents stating three most important reasons for not practising journal writing

Reasons why some teachers (or you) do not practise journal writing, kindly circle <u>three</u> most important reasons:	Frequency	Percentage
A. It is a burden on time.	149	94.3%
B. Requires energy.	138	87.3%
C. They have not heard of it.	128	81%
D. It does not help the teacher in any way.	45	28.5%
E. Other.	10	6.3%

Time and effort required are the major factors that affect the practise of this self-development approach. Teachers are overloaded with a huge number of lessons and are asked to carry out administrative duties and follow-up co-curricular and extra curricular activities. This leaves no room for built-in development that requires intellectual effort and time strains. Cross-tabulation reveals no significant factors affecting the findings. Interviewee (T.S.) mentions these obstacles in practicing development activities. She says: *“Development requires time and effort, beside a supporting environment ... Beside the big number of periods that they (teachers) have, school activities take up most of the time of primary school teachers.... They rarely have time for development activities. If they do any, then you are sure that is done at their own inconvenience. I think that extra-curricular activities should be minimised”*. Interviewee (A.M.) refers to the work environment as one of the obstacles. She says: *“ Teachers are overworked...In better work conditions, it is possible for teachers to practice other development activities. They need encouragement too, as well as the support of others.”*

4.4.2. Self-Appraisal

Table (47) Respondents who practise self-appraisal.

Do you practise self-appraisal?	Yes	No
Frequency	43	115
Percentage	27.2%	72.8%

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers of all nationalities in practising self-appraisal. However, 15.2% of the respondents who practise self appraisal are within the ranges of experience (6 to 10 years) and (11 to 15 years).

Table (48): Respondents who practise self-appraisal considering frequency of the activity.

How many times do you assess your performance?	Frequency	Percentage (according to the total number of sample)
A. When I have a problem	31	19.6%
B. Once a week	4	2.5%
C. 2-4 times a week	7	4.4%
D. Daily	1	0.6%
(Teachers who do not practise self-appraisal)	115	72.8%

Both male and female respondents gave similar responses. There is no significant factor that affects the finding. Interviewee (T.S.) mentions that her staff: “*evaluate themselves. They point out their weaknesses and plan on how to improve them.*” However, they do not register any of this to observe their development.

Table (49): Respondents who do not practise self-appraisal considering the possibility of carrying out the activity.

Do you think it is possible to carry out self-appraisal.	Yes	No
Frequency	98	17
Percentage (according to the number of respondents who do not practise self-appraisal).	85.3%	14.7%

The majority of the respondents see that it is possible to practice self-appraisal (in the UAE).

There is no significant factor that affects the finding.

Table (50): Respondents stating resource for learning about self-appraisal.

Where did you learn about self-appraisal?	Frequency	Percentage
A. I have never heard of it before.	29	18.4%
B. I have read about it.	75	47.5%
C. At a training course.	25	15.8%
D. A colleague (another teacher)	16	10.1%
E. Other	13	8.2%

There is no significant factor that affects the responses. For example, with regard to nationality (10) Jordanians out of (26) have read about this technique. Similarly, (18) Syrians out of (34) have done the same. It appears that a work colleague can be an informative resource for teacher development.

Table (51): Respondents stating three most important reasons for not practising self-appraisal

Reasons why some teachers (or you) do not practise self-appraisal, kindly circle <u>three</u> most important reasons:	Frequency	Percentage
A. It is a burden on time.	152	96.2%
B. Requires energy.	136	86.1%
C. They have not heard of it.	142	89.9%
D. It does not help the teacher in any way	34	21.5%
E. Other	10	6.3%

Other reasons were mentioned. First, teachers do not care about the results of their teaching. Second, they are afraid to face their weaknesses. Third, this technique requires sincere attempts and teachers tend to over-estimate themselves. Fourth, there is no need for the writing process as this can be done orally. Fifth, some teachers lack self-confidence. Last, there is no self-awareness and therefore teachers do not feel the need for this approach. There is no significant factor affecting the results obtained. However, interviewee (A.A.) mentions time restrictions by saying: *“teachers will be willing to do anything if they get the time and energy for it. There is too much written work to check and daily ‘detailed’ lesson plans are a burden too. There are also lots of ex-curricular activities that take up their time. Had they got the extra time, they would have practised all the well-known activities”* (see appendix III)

4.4.3. Peer-Observation

Table (52): Respondents who practise peer observation

Do you practise peer-observation?	Yes	No
Frequency	155	3
Percentage	98.1%	1.9%

The three respondents who do not participate in peer-observation activities agreed to the possibility of carrying out peer-observation. This development technique appears to be the most common practice in state schools. Interviewee (R.B.) explains that peer-observation is not “*going on very well. Because the teaching load is very high and tiring for teachers*” (see appendix III)

Table (53): Respondents who practise peer-observation considering number of classes observed in a year.

How many classes did you observe last year?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
1-3 classes	100	63.3%
4-6 classes	36	22.8%
More than 6 classes	19	12%

Female teachers tend to practice peer observation more often as 13 out of the 19 teachers who observe more than six classes are female teachers. There is no other significant factor that affects this finding. Interviewee (K.S.) clarifies that peer-observation follows a prepared scheme in every school, the current situation, he says, “*is satisfactory in the current work conditions.*”

Table (54): Respondents who practise peer-observation considering their motive for observing their peers.

What was the main reason for observing other teachers?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. It is a school policy.	51	32.3%
B. Recommended by the supervisor.	67	42.4%
C. I felt a need for learning from other teachers.	35	22.2%
D. Other .	2	1.3%

A common motive for observing teachers is carrying out the supervisors’ recommendations. The second factor is the school policy. Only one-fifth of the sample were urged to do it because of self-awareness for the need to develop by learning from others. Differences in nationality does not have any significant effect on the teachers’ attitudes. As for the number of the years of experience, cross-tabulation revealed that teachers who have the most experience and considered peer-observation as an opportunity for learning were only 2 out of the group of teachers with the most experience (19). This is backed up by interviewee (A.A.) who asserts that *“Secondary school teachers have long years of experience. The longer experience they have the least they are inclined towards observing others. However, they have to do it because if they do not, this is going to be taken into consideration in their cumulative registers and in their final appraisal report.”*

Interviewee (S.S.) explains that teachers have different attitudes towards this practice. She says: *“In some schools, intervisitations are performed as a duty that should be done. In other schools, they prepare for the activity more thoroughly”*

Table (55): Respondents who practise peer-observation considering the focus while observing their peers.

Was there a <u>focus</u> for observation?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. I observed everything in the lesson without writing.	47	29.7%
B. I wrote about some of the points in the lesson.	87	55.1%
C. I used a checklist.	21	13.3%

There is no significant factor that affects the teachers' responses. Interviewees recommended providing a focus for observation. Interviewee (Z.A), for example, explains that: *“school principals classify their teachers according to the special instructional skills they possess. In case of peer-observation, observers can focus more on these points. There are teachers who are excellent in some aspects of performance. It is better for observers to focus during observation on these aspects, or observe a part of a lesson”*. Policies vary in each school. Interviewee (M.N.) assures that in his school, *“there is a scheme which is prepared by the staff of each subject. Every week, they visit one teacher. They use a checklist that was designed by the school administrative council.”*

Table (56): Respondents who practise peer-observation considering having a post-observation discussion.

Do you have a discussion after the observation?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. Yes	76	48.1%
B. No	24	15.2%
C. In some cases.	55	34.8%

To achieve the maximum effect, it is essential to carry out a systematic approach with regard to peer observation. This does not seem to be the case, as seen from the table above. There is no significant difference in responses among teachers with regard to nationality, years of

experience or sex. Interviewee (A.O.) assumes that post-observation discussions are catered for as they are essential. “Supervisors provide the teachers with a special observation form to help them focus their attention on certain teaching aspects when they discuss the lesson during the post observation conference.” On the other hand, interviewee (H.M.) explains that this is done if time permits : “ The benefit is even doubled when we have time for post-observation discussions, which is not the case all the time.” Moreover, interviewee (S.S.) refers to time constraints that are caused by the teaching load (see appendix III).

Table (57): Respondents considering the reasons why some teachers do not practise peer-observation, and their attitudes towards peer-observation.

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3=undecided 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Some teachers criticise their colleagues	47	79	11	13	8
	29.7%	50%	7%	8.2%	5.1%
2. We have overlapping timetables (we work at the same time).	40	74	14	22	8
	25.3%	46.8%	8.9%	13.9%	5.1%
3. Teachers are over-loaded.	74	55	14	10	5
	46.8%	34.8%	8.9%	6.3%	3.2%
4. I feel <i>anxious</i> when my colleagues observe me.	10	33	17	64	34
	6.3%	20.9%	10.8%	40.5%	21.5%
5. Teachers feel bored when observing their colleagues.	15	38	23	64	18
	9.5%	24.1%	14.6%	40.5%	11.4%
6. It does not help the teacher in any way.	5	11	21	72	49
	3.2%	7%	13.3%	45.6%	31%
7. Only new teachers are to observe their more experienced colleagues.	17	18	14	71	38
	10.8%	11.4%	8.9%	44.9%	24.1%
8. There is nothing new that teachers can learn from old colleagues	5	9	15	75	54
	3.2%	5.7%	9.5%	47.5%	34.2%
9. I welcome visitors but see that there is no need for me to visit other teachers	6	13	11	84	44
	3.8%	8.2%	7%	53.2%	27.8%

The reasons above aim at finding out ways of improving the practice by measuring the teachers' attitudes. The points are considered in detail below:

- (1) As seen above, the number of teachers who strongly agree or agree with the statement that some teachers criticise their colleague is close to 80% of the total number of respondents. There is no significant factor that affects this finding. Interviewee (T.S.) explains that her staff *“have overcome the difficulties in this matter. For example, they do not criticise each other.”*
- (2) Overlapping timetables is one of the main reasons connected with the work environment that affect the practice of peer-observation in the UAE state schools. The total number of the respondents who disagree or strongly disagree is comparatively lower than those who are with the statement. Interviewees (H.M.) and (S.S.) state that there is no time for post-observation discussions due to this factor.
- (3) The factor that teachers are over-loaded was found to be affecting teachers in all types of schools with no significant differences in the respondents' nationality, sex or years of experience. Interviewee (S.S.) agrees with this.
- (4) Less than 30% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that some teachers experience anxiety when observed by others. Hence anxiety is not a major factor affecting the practice. There is no significant factor that affects the responses obtained.
- (5) The same thing can be said about experiencing boredom when observing other teachers. There is no significant factor affecting the finding. Interviewee (A.S.) contradicts this finding in saying *“The young teachers accept this (peer-observation) willingly. The old-handed teachers are reluctant and tend to show signs of boredom during observation.”*

(6) As for the statement that peer-observation does not help the observer in any way, about 86% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with it. There is no significant factor that affects the finding. Interviewee (H.M.) meets teachers who have this attitude. He states: “ *The more experienced (teachers) are repulsive at the beginning, they say that they do not gain any benefit*”

(7) Seventy percent of the respondents disagree or strongly disagree to the statement that peer-observation is for novice teachers only. Respondents who are with the statement are not influenced by any significant factor. Interviewees , on the other hand, came up with an opposing view. Interviewee (Z.A.) says: “*The problem lies within the old-handed teachers*” and states several reasons for this attitude. She explains that novice teachers are positive about this issue. Interviewee (R.B.) agrees with this (see appendix III).

(8) Respondents are also aware of the learning opportunities when observing old colleagues. There is no significant factors that affect the findings.

Interviewee (A.N.) explains how teachers come to this final positive attitude due to continuous efforts from supervisors. In addition, interviewee (R.B.) explains the role of the supervisor as a model in this respect. (see appendix III).

(9) About (80%) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that they do not need peer-observation as a development technique. Interviewee (A.I.), however, asserts the opposite attitude: “*Some teachers, particularly old-handed ones, like to be visited but are reluctant to visit others unless they are obliged.*”

On the other hand some interviewees hinted that such attitudes do not exist with primary school teachers. For instance, interviewee (A.M.), who is a higher primary school principal, says that “*They (teachers) like exchanging classroom visits with teachers who are even in other schools.*”

4.4.4. Reading

Table (58) Respondents considering reading on methodology

Do you read on methodology?	Yes	No
Frequency	144	14
Percentage	91.1%	8.9%

There is no significant difference in responses with regard to sex, nationality or years of experience.

Table (59): Respondents who read on methodology considering the average number of references read per academic year

Q. How many references approximately do you read during the academic year?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. 1-5	119	75.3%
B. 6-10	14	8.9%
C. more than 10	11	7%

The majority read from 1 to 5 books per year. There is no significant difference in responses with regard to sex, nationality or years of experience.

Table (60): Respondents considering motives for reading on methodology.

What makes you read?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. When I have a problem	27	17.1%
B. When I write a paper for my supervisor	78	49.4%
C. Other	39	24.7%

Other reasons mentioned for reading included enrollment for higher studies and self-development. There is no significant difference in responses with regard to sex, nationality or years of experience. In addition, interviewee (A.I.) asserts that: *“most teachers develop themselves in the subject matter of their specialisation by reading. Some teachers do not read because of their overloaded timetables.”*

Interviewee (A.N.) follows a different strategy to create a motive for reading. He says : *“I ask every teacher to submit a research paper. This makes them read a lot.”*

Table (61): Respondents who read considering resources of material read. (more than one response given)

Resource	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. Staff / school library	50	31.6%
B. A public library	44	27.8%
C. A teacher resource centre	14	8.2%
D. My supervisor	42	26.6%
E. Own library	98	62%
F. Other	10	6.3%

The other resource mentioned in the ‘others’ section is the Internet. Interviewee (H.M.) asserts that some teachers utilise the Internet as a source of educational articles. Interviewee

(S.S.) also declares the same by saying : “*I have some teachers who use the Internet for preparing researches or getting information for their research*”. This is based on personal initiatives as she asserts. Interviewee (K.S.) explains that the supervisors provide their teachers with references (see appendix III). Interviewee (K.S.), on the other hand, promotes joining TESOL Arabia as a means for networking and staying updated (see appendix III).

Table (62): Respondents considering potential strategies for encouraging teachers to read.

How can teachers be encouraged to read?	1	2	3	4	5
A. Giving teachers an assignment to complete	33	66	22	22	15
	20.9%	41.8%	13.9%	13.9%	9.5%
B. Asking them to plan for staff presentations	43	77	15	18	5
	27.2%	48.7%	9.5%	11.4%	3.2%
C. Providing a good staff library	91	47	10	6	4
	75.6%	29.7%	6.3%	3.8%	2.5%
D. Making a timetable of free time for reading	60	58	23	13	4
	38%	36.7%	14.6%	8.2%	2.5%
E. Reducing the work load	98	38	12	7	3
	62%	24.1%	7.6%	4.4%	1.9%

It is generally agreed that the above strategies may encourage teachers to read. Providing a good staff library comes in the first place then comes reducing the workload. Following that is the suggestion of making a timetable of free time for reading. Other suggestions included arranging symposia, raising teachers’ awareness, motivating teachers, enrolling in post-graduate studies, providing incentives, linking promotion with evidence of development, providing teachers with periodicals, broadcasting TV programmes addressed to teachers, asking them to write book reviews or summarise books and making the Internet available to teachers. Interviewee (Z.A.) emphasises the importance of reducing the workload and

establishing resource centres (see appendix III). Interviewee (T.S.) agrees that staff presentations compel teachers to do better research which implies further reading round the topic of the presentation and interviewee (A.A.) recommends asking teachers to write book reviews. On the other hand, interviewee (M.N.) raises the issue of the lack of job insecurity and job specifications as factors that affect the practice. Interviewee (A.I.) considers confidentiality of appraisal reports a hindrance to development initiatives in saying: “*teachers need to be told of the results of their appraisal report. There is no use in keeping it confidential*”. Moreover, interviewees (H.M.) and (R.B.) attest the positive outcome of staff presentations (see appendix III).

4.4.5. Research

Table (63): Respondents who wrote a research in the previous year.

Did you write a paper last year?	Yes	No
Frequency	144	14
Percentage	91.1%	8.9%

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers’ responses, of all nationalities, within all the ranges of years of experience. The highest percentage of those who do not write researches is among UAE nationals, forming 22% of the total number of nationals in the sample. All the Tunisian and Sudanese teachers wrote researches in the previous year. This might be a practice which they are familiar with in their country of origin; however, this needs further investigation as none of the interviewees mention this.

Table (64): Respondents who wrote research papers considering the number of references used for the research paper written.

How many references approximately did you use for the research?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. 1-5	125	79.1%
B. 6-10	12	7.6%
C. more than 10	7	4.4%

The majority of the teachers use limited numbers of resources for writing their assignments. Interviewees like (A.N.) explain that books are hard to find (see appendix III).

Table (65): Respondents who wrote research papers considering the motive for writing the research paper.

What makes you write?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. When I have a problem	15	9.5%
B. There is a notice in the cumulative register that forces teachers to write.	102	64.6%
C. Other	27	17.1%

More than 64% of the respondents are driven by laws and regulations to provide proof of professional development. Interviewee (A.O.) asserts this. He says: *“There is one item under the heading of self-development in the cumulative register. This includes writing research papers or studies. In addition, supervisors discuss with the teachers the kind or sort of the subject of the research paper that they are going to write about. This could be considered as*

a sort of contract that this is an evidence of development.” Interviewee (A.I.) explains that “Some teachers prepare researches if their supervisor recommends this.”

Table (66): Respondents who wrote a paper considering the topic of the paper.

What was the topic of the paper?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. It was on teaching techniques.	124	78.5%
B. It was on grammatical points.	10	6.3%
C. It was a publication on a national occasion.	4	2.5%
D. For a competition.	0	0%
E. Other.	6	3.8%

In spite of the several competitions that are set annually by educational bodies in the UAE, non of the participants consider them as a motive for research. It could be also that teachers are not aware of the various competitions. This needs further investigation.

Table (67): Respondents who wrote research papers considering the length of the paper.

What was the length of the paper?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. 1-5 pages	80	50.6%
B. 6-10 pages	41	25.9%
C. more than 10 pages	23	14.6%

Approximately, 50% of the respondents produce short assignments. Interviewees (T.S.), (H.M.) and (R.B.) agree that staff-presentations help in producing better quality researches (see appendix III).

Table (68): Respondents who have not written a paper considering reasons for not doing so.

The reason that you have not written a research paper?	Frequency	Percentage (according to total number of sample)
A. I have enough experience.	2	1.3%
B. There is no good library around.	1	0.6%
C. I do not have time for writing.	9	5.7%
D. There is nothing new to learn.	1	0.6%
E. Other	1	0.6%

Time is the major obstacle when it comes to writing researches. This is backed up by assertions from interviewees that teachers are overworked.

Table (69): Respondents considering having access to a computer and (or) the Internet

Do you have access to:	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
A computer	108	68.4%	50	31.6%
The Internet	37	23.4%	121	76.6%

Two-thirds of the respondents have access to a computer but about fifth of them have access to the Internet. Interviewees commented on the benefits of the latter. Interviewee (Z.A.) mentions that *“Making the Internet available for all the teachers... enables teachers to discover a different world of possibilities for development.”* There are individual effort to provide such facilities. Interviewee (M.N.) explains that in his school they *“have access to the Internet Some teachers know how to use it. (They) have introduced innovations in*

their classes as a result of using the Internet.” In addition, interviewee (R.B.) explains that in some schools *“teachers are forced by their schools to attend computing courses. They can use this for preparing their worksheets. Many teachers deal with the Internet”* where it is available.

4.4.6. Action Research

Table (70) Respondents considering carrying out an action research in the UAE.

Have you ever carried out an action research?	Yes	No
Frequency	2	156
Percentage	1.3%	98.7%

The two teachers who carried out action research were one from the UAE and one from Jordan.

Table (71): Respondents who have never carried out an action research considering reasons for not doing so.

Kindly specify the reason for not carrying out this type of research.	Frequency	Percentage (according to the total number of sample)
a. It is a burden on time.	74	46.8%
b. It does not help the teacher in any way.	18	11.4%
c. Requires energy.	49	31%
d. Other	15	9.5%

In the ‘other’ section, teachers mentioned that they did not know the process for carrying out action research. Time and energy demands are the main causes of teachers neglecting this means of development. Interviewee (S.S.) regrets that not all teachers know how to carry out action research.

Interviewee (H.M.) refers to the importance of providing teachers with incentives to encourage them to overcome the time obstacle: *“Most of the teachers,”* he says, *“complain about lack of time but some teachers overcome this problem, therefore, they should be rewarded.”*

Table (72): Respondents considering the resource for learning about action research

Where did you learn about action research?	Frequency	Percentage
a. I have never heard of it before.	50	31.6%
b. I have read about it.	48	30.4%
c. At a training course.	14	8.9%
d. A colleague.	8	5.1%
e. At university	32	20.3%
f. Other	6	3.8%

Other resources mentioned are current supervisors, previous supervisors in their own country, and the Internet. The findings were not affected by any significant factor. Interviewee (S.S.) declares that supervisors feel the need for updating their teachers but also they have time and work constraints (see appendix III).

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Summary

The study was designed to find out whether it is possible to introduce self-directed in-service teacher development activities. The main purpose of the study was to find out about the methods that are currently in practice and investigate into the possibility of introducing them where they are not practised. Factors that would facilitate the introduction of self-directed methods were detected.

The researcher has used two instruments to inquire into the current INSET activities and the proposed ones. A questionnaire was used to survey EFL teachers , and interviews were conducted with the concerned personnel in the MOEY. The groups interviewed included school principals, supervisors (who are also the trainers) and Ministry officials. They all have direct contact with teacher training prospects. A total of 172 participants responded in the survey and represented the actual sample which consisted of 158 teachers and 14 administrators.

Five major research questions were answered.

5.2. Major Findings

In summary, the following findings emerged from the study:

- 1) The results indicated that INSET is not systematic in the UAE.
- 2) The results indicated that the number of courses offered are inconsistent and insufficient.
- 3) INSET activities are organised outside the working hours. There are no incentives and, therefore, some teachers may choose not to attend.
- 4) Teachers do not gain the overall benefit on an equal basis.
- 5) Neither the needs of the school nor individual needs are taken into consideration when planning for INSET. There are decreed courses based on supervisors' and principals' observation of teaching performance.
- 6) With reference to interviews, senior officials and trainers are not satisfied with the available training and hope for a better prospect. Teachers, on the other hand, are satisfied with the outcome of the current training programmes despite their rarity. Research findings indicate that where there is training, there are positive effects on teachers (tables 37-39).
- 7) The workload is a major hindrance in practicing self-development activities. Teachers agree that they do not have sufficient time at school to practice self-directed development.
- 8) Peer-observation is the most commonly practised self-directed development activity.
- 9) Teachers read very few resources and write very few theoretical researches as part of the requirements as a proof of development.
- 10) The teachers' attitudes were not affected by domestic responsibilities as cross tabulation with major points on the questionnaire revealed this.
- 11) Given the above negative aspects of INSET, there stems a need for teachers to practise self-development activities like journal writing, self-appraisal and action

research. It was found that these activities are rarely practised. It was discovered that some teachers did not know that such methods exist.

- 12) Only a small percentage of teachers is self-directed towards development. When teachers were consulted if it were possible to practice certain chosen activities, the majority were positive, provided that some constraints concerning time and effort are seen to.
- 13) Many teachers demonstrate a naturally reflective style in their daily work, however this takes an unsystematic nature. The benefit is gained by encouraging teachers to reflect in writing to keep a record of experience.

5.3. Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the results of the study. Many of the summary statements in the findings contain conclusions. However, they are listed here and expanded in the light of all the findings regarding the responses of teachers and administrators.

- 1) INSET in the UAE does not follow a defined system. Teachers are not directly consulted when defining training needs. Based on the current high workload and the training prospects available, teachers feel satisfied by what they are given in training courses.
- 2) There is no follow-up system to examine the effectiveness of the training courses provided. The supervisors and ministry officials are not satisfied by the outcome, contrary to the teachers' responses.
- 3) Teachers practise self-directed development activities on a limited scale. Many of them are 'report-driven'. They practice certain activities to gain the approval of their

supervisors and principals who are in charge of their final appraisal reports. They practice activities like peer-observation, writing researches (short essays) and read educational references occasionally. These are either included in the cumulative register or a recommended school policy.

- 4) Self-development activities like journal writing and self-appraisal are rarely practised. It was found out that some teachers do not know that such methods exist. However, the ideas were welcomed by teachers on the basis that work conditions are improved to allow for the time and effort needed.

5.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings presented in this study, I purport to provide some recommendations to facilitate the shift in teacher training to make it more of a self-help approach:

1. As for identifying training needs, respondents agreed that teachers should be consulted, beside the known strategy of consulting supervisors and school principals. There are initiatives of distributing questionnaires but it is recommended that this be generalised to cover all zones.
2. Offering certified training courses would lead to improvement of the rate of attendance (table 40). There are currently individual initiatives throughout the UAE which have proved that this element encourages later participation. Respondents also considered the incentive of pay for training courses offered during weekends so as to encourage commitment.

3. Special times should be considered for incorporating training within the timetables of all schools to make it easy for supervisors to call teachers to a central place for training during the working hours without affecting the progress of lessons.

4. Coaching and practice at classroom level is highly recommended. Developing the individual has to be linked with the development of the institution. Continuous school-based self-development activities mentioned by researchers elsewhere can be tried out in the UAE.

5. Peer-observation is a good training opportunity for both parties observer and observed. The outcome from observation becomes higher when there is a focus for peer-observation as the observer knows what to look for. This may involve writing a descriptive account of the lesson or using a checklist. It appeared from the survey conducted that teachers in the UAE are familiar with observation. However, it does not take the systematic approach that would multiply the gains for teachers. There are even more chances of improving the practice such like :-

- Providing for a time for post-observation discussion.
- Providing certificates for teachers who give demonstration lessons.
- Reducing the workload.
- Reducing the workload on certain days to provide time for such practices.

6. It seems that most teachers are driven by their supervisors' recommendations (table 50). Supervisors should insist on certain activities for the sake of the betterment of educational practices. Alternatively, it is recommended to raise the teachers' awareness of the positive outcome they get from each development activity.

7. The researcher recommends intensive planning of staff development times or meetings. These should include staff presentations, awareness-raising conferences or

reviews of current progress in development. These can also be utilised by connecting teachers who have similar interests. Bringing the staff together initiates dialogue and generates agendas representing common concerns.

8. A systematic network has to be founded to support staff development. As stated earlier, this provides a deliberate exposure to various educational issues. Peer networking can play a catalytic and a supportive, non-competitive role.
9. Encourage teachers to keep a portfolio of development feedback obtained from the various techniques practised to keep a record of development.
10. Planning for staff presentations are prerequisites that facilitate the teacher's attempts at development.
11. Constructing flexible time-tables to allow for staff development activities to take place.
12. Providing well-resourced staff libraries may encourage teachers to read. There are also other requirements that may encourage this development practice such as writing researches and planning for staff presentations.
13. Job rotation and involving teachers in management processes broadens their experiences. It is recommended to involve teachers in management practices.
14. Building up a resource file for teachers. The resource files include used materials such as supplementary materials, exercises and past tests. It is recommended that this is to include a collection of creative teaching techniques and activities that are learnt in training courses or due to individual efforts in reading.
15. Designing tasks to aid teachers in developing as a strategy at experimenting their own work.
16. Providing time allotted for reflection is another recommended action to be taken by administrators.

17. Making the Internet available for teachers to benefit from the vast databases and teaching resources that it encompasses.

5.5. Suggestions for further investigations:

This study was intended as a first step in shifting the focus of INSET in the UAE to make it trainee-oriented. As a result of the study, the following were identified for further investigation.

- 1) A study to investigate into the effect of the dual roles of supervisors as assistants and assessors of teachers.
- 2) A study to find out the effectiveness of school-based self-development activities on teacher development in the context of UAE schools.
- 3) A study to investigate into the means of following up the effect of training courses on teachers.
- 4) Further studies to be conducted to replicate and elaborate upon the results.

5.6.Limitations

This study was affected by the following limitations:-

- 1) The results of the study may have been significantly influenced by the degree of cooperation and interest of the participants.
- 2) Varying research instruments contributes to the validity of the research findings. The researcher regrets that time was the major obstacle in using observation and case studies.

- 3) The above findings relate to English Language teachers and may not be generalisable to teachers of other subjects.

In the end, although this research went through many and many reviews, I admit that this is the work of a human. I have to apologise for errors that have escaped my notice.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

The Questionnaire:

Towards Effective In-service Teacher Development in the UAE: Getting teachers of English to be in charge of their own professional growth.

A Questionnaire

Dear Colleagues,

This questionnaire is an important part of my research for an MA Degree at the University of Bath in the United Kingdom. It can never be successful without consulting the people who have the information and opinions that play a major role in any training activity: you, the teacher. Therefore, this is an attempt to examine the system with you to discover ways of improving it. All the information will be confidential; no body will have access to them except me: the student, not the supervisor. You may respond in Arabic if you feel it saves your time.

I am grateful that you have agreed to help. I need this back by November 10th, 1999. As a way of thanking you, ten of the participating schools will receive mystery gifts for the benefit of the English staff. Kindly use the self-addressed envelop provided. To be eligible for the draw on November 15, please complete the box below.

Kind regards,

Fatma Alwan



School :

Educational Zone:

I. Personal Data:

1. **School:** A. lower primary B. Upper primary C. Preparatory D. Secondary
2. **Type of school:** A. Boys B. Girls
3. **Number of teachers of English:** A. 3-4 B. 5-7 C. 8 and above
4. **Teaching hours per week:** A.12 to 18 B.19-21 C.22-24 D. Other.....
5. **Your age range :** A. 20-30 B. 31-40 C. 41-50 D. 51-60

6. **Sex :** A. Male B. Female
7. **Nationality :** A. UAE B. Egypt C. Jordan D. Syria
E. Palestine F. Lebanon G. Tunisia H. Sudan I. Other (please specify).....
8. **Marital status:** A. Single B. Married C. Other (widowed, divorced)
9. **Number of children:** A. None B. 1-3 C. 4-6 D. more than 6
10. **Are your family members staying in the UAE?** A. Yes B. No
11. **Do you teach in an evening centre?** A. Yes B. No
12. **Is this your first year of teaching?** A. Yes B. No
13. **If the answer is no: How many years of experience (service) do you have?**
A. 1-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 16-20 E. More than 20
14. **Qualifications:** A. Teaching Diploma B. Bachelor C. post-graduate
15. **Type of degree:** A. Arts B. Education C. Other (please specify).....
16. **Other qualifications:** (please specify)

II. Training Courses:

1. **Number of training courses- provided by the Ministry of Education- attended last year:**
A. None B. One C. Two D. Other (specify).....
2. **Length of training courses attended:**
1. Title/Topic:
A. less than one week B. 1-2 weeks C. 3-4 weeks D. other (please specify).....
2. Title/Topic:
A. less than one week B. 1-2 weeks C. 3-4 weeks D. other (please specify).....
3. Title/Topic:
A. less than one week B. 1-2 weeks C. 3-4 weeks D. other (please specify)

3. If you have attended any of the TESOL Arabia conferences last year, tick the ones that you have been to:

- A. *Creativity in the Language Classroom* (at Zayed University)
- B. *TESOL Arabia '99* (at AL-Ain Hilton)
- C. *Assessment and Teacher Education* (at Zayed University)

4. Training Courses administered by supervisors:

Throughout your work as a teacher, your supervisors were also the trainers in some of the training courses. Kindly indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statement

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3=undecided 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree

1. You should be asked to specify your training needs. (1 2 3 4 5)
2. Your supervisor should continue to specify your training needs. (1 2 3 4 5)
3. There are some teachers who do not attend the training. (1 2 3 4 5)
4. The content of the courses is repeated. (1 2 3 4 5)
5. In training courses, they give you very little information in a long time. (1 2 3 4 5)
6. Training courses provide teachers with up-to-date input. (1 2 3 4 5)
7. The content of the training course cannot be obtained by teachers on their own. (1 2 3 4 5)
8. Current courses are learner-centred, teachers are given the chance to work and discuss. (1 2 3 4 5)
9. Training courses are sufficient in number. (1 2 3 4 5)
10. Training courses have a positive impact on the teacher's performance. (1 2 3 4 5)
11. Training courses provide teachers with chances of examining their own teaching. (1 2 3 4 5)
12. Training courses have positive effects on improving teaching skills. (1 2 3 4 5)
13. Trainers prepare useful worksheets. (1 2 3 4 5)
14. Trainers are well prepared. (1 2 3 4 5)
15. Training courses are theoretical and depend on the lecture format . (1 2 3 4 5)
16. Trainers visit your classes as part of the training to follow up without counting the visit for your final appraisal report. (1 2 3 4 5)
17. Supervisors should help teachers to identify their own needs. (1 2 3 4 5)
18. After attending a training course, you feel the need to

- learn more. (1 2 3 4 5)
19. Attending training courses increases your knowledge. (1 2 3 4 5)
20. Attending training courses improves classroom performance. (1 2 3 4 5)
21. Teachers should be given certificates for attending training courses. (1 2 3 4 5)
22. Teachers should be paid for attending courses outside the working hours/days. (1 2 3 4 5)

5. In your opinion, who do you think should identify what teachers need for training? Please *rank* from 1 to 4 the following:

- the school principal
- the supervisor
- the teacher (self-appraisal)
- another teacher (a critical friend)

III. Self-development Activities

Following are self-directed teacher development activities. (They are defined to clarify any misunderstanding that may occur). Kindly, read them carefully and respond as directed.

- (1) Journal writing :** The teacher writes his/her reaction to teaching events . Recording events and ideas make teachers analyse their work and help for later reflection. It also makes the teacher aware of anything wrong in his/her performance.

(Kindly answer the questions in the part of the table that corresponds to your response)

1- Do you practice journal writing?	
A. YES	B. NO
i - How many hours do you spend on writing your journal every week? A. 1-3 B. 4 -6 C. More than 6 hours	i - Do you think it is possible to carry out journal writing? A. Yes B. No
ii - How many times do you write? A. When I have a problem B. Once a week C. 2-4 times a week D. Daily	
2- Where did you learn about journal writing? A. I have never heard of it before. B. I have read about it. C. At a training course. D. A colleague (another teacher) E. Other (please specify)	
3- Reasons why some teachers (or you) do not practise journal writing, kindly circle <u>three</u> most important reasons: A. It is a burden on time. D. It does not help the teacher in any way B. Requires energy. E. other: (please specify)..... C. They have not heard of it.	

(2) **Self-appraisal:** The teacher assesses her/his own performance by writing, filling in a form or completing a checklist of required criteria.

1-Do you practice self-appraisal?	
A. YES	B. NO
i - How many times do you assess your performance?	ii - Do you think it is possible to carry out self-appraisal?
A. When I have a problem	A. Yes B. No

<p>B. Once a week C. 2-4 times a week D. Daily</p>	
<p>2- Where did you learn about self-appraisal? A. I have never heard of it before. B. I have read about it. C. At a training course. D. A colleague (another teacher) E. Other (please specify)</p> <p>Reasons why some teachers do not practise self-appraisal, circle three most important reasons: a. It is a burden on time. b. Requires energy. c. They have not heard of it. d. It does not help the teacher in any way. e. Other (please specify)</p>	

(3) Peer observation: This is known in the UAE as intervisitations, model lessons and demonstration lessons.

1- Do you practise peer observation?	
A. YES	B. NO
<p>How many <u>classes</u> do you observe in a year? A. 1-3 B. 4-6 C. More than 6 classes</p>	<p>Do you think it is possible to carry out peer observation?</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">What was the main reason for observing other teachers?</p> <p>A. It is a school policy. B. Recommended by the supervisor. C. I felt a need for learning from other teachers D. Other (please specify):</p> <p>.....</p> <p>iii- Was there a <u>focus</u> for observation?</p> <p>I observed everything in the lesson without writing. I wrote about some of the points in the lesson.</p> <p>C. I used a checklist.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Did you have a discussion after the observation?</p> <p>A. Yes B. No. C. In some cases.</p>	<p>A. Yes B. No</p>
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2- Reasons why some teachers do not practise peer observation, and your views on observing your colleagues. Kindly indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3=undecided 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree

- 1) Some teachers criticise their colleagues. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 2) We have overlapping timetables (we work at the same time). (1 2 3 4 5)
- 3) Teachers are over-loaded. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 4) I feel *anxious* when my colleagues observe me. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 5) Teachers feel bored when observing their colleagues. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 6) It does not help the teacher in any way. (1 2 3 4 5)

- 7) Only new teachers are to observe their more experienced colleagues. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 8) There is nothing new that teachers can learn from old colleagues. (1 2 3 4 5)
- 9) There is no need for me to visit other teachers. (1 2 3 4 5)

(4) Reading and writing :

4. A. Reading:

1- Do you read on <i>methodology</i> (books, articles ...etc on teaching techniques)?	
A. YES	B. NO
<p>i- How many references approximately do you read during the academic year?</p> <p>A.1-5 B.6-10 C. more than 10</p> <p>ii- What makes you read?</p> <p>A. When I have a problem B. When I write a paper for my supervisor C. Other (please specify)..... </p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where do you usually get your educational books and magazines from? (you may choose more than one option)</p> <p>A. Staff / school library B. A public library (specify) C. A teacher resource centre (specify) D. My supervisor E. Own library F. Other (specify)</p>	<p>i- The reason(s) that you do not read educational books :</p> <p>A. I have enough experience. B. There is no good library around. C. I do not have time for reading. D. My English is not very strong. E. other (please specify)</p>
<p>2 - How can teachers be encouraged to read? Kindly indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.</p> <p>1= strongly agree 2=agree 3=undecided 4=disagree 5= strongly disagree</p> <p>A. Giving them an assignment to complete (e.g. writing a paper)(1 2 3 4 5) B. Asking them to plan for presentations in front of the staff. (1 2 3 4 5) C. Providing a good staff library. (1 2 3 4 5)</p>	

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| D. Making a timetable of free time for reading. | (1 2 3 4 5) |
| E. Reducing the work load. | (1 2 3 4 5) |
| F. Other (please specify) | |

4.B. Writing research papers:

1-Did you write a paper last year?	
A. YES	B. NO
<p>How many references approximately did you use?</p> <p>A.1-5 B.6-10 C. more than 10</p> <p>ii-What makes you write?</p> <p>A. When I have a problem</p> <p>B. There is a notice in the cumulative register that forces teachers to write.</p> <p>C. Other:</p> <p>iii- What was the topic of the paper?</p> <p>A. It was on teaching techniques.</p> <p>B. It was on grammatical points.</p> <p>C. It was a publication on a national occasion.</p> <p>D. For a competition.</p> <p>E. Other (please specify):.....</p> <p>iv- What was the length of the paper?</p> <p>A. 1-5 pages</p> <p>B. 6-10 pages</p> <p>C. More than 10 pages</p>	<p>The reason that you did not write a research paper last year:</p> <p>A. I have enough experience.</p> <p>B. There is no good library around.</p> <p>C. I do not have time for writing.</p> <p>D. There is nothing new to learn.</p> <p>E. Other (please specify)</p>
2- Do you have access to the following (at school or at home):	

A computer A. yes B. no
The Internet A. yes B. no

(5) Action Research: The teacher plans how to solve a problem or introduce changes. Then he/she carries out the plan by observing the changes and reporting the results.

1. Have you ever carried out an action research (in the UAE)?	
A. YES	B. NO
<p>i- Please write the purpose of the last action research that you did? </p>	<p>Kindly specify the reason (s) for not carrying out this type of research: A. It is a burden on time. B. It does not help the teacher in any C. Requires energy. D. Other: (please specify)</p>
2- Where did you learn about action research?	
<p>A. I have never heard of it before. B. I have read about it. C. At a training course. D. A colleague (another teacher) E. At University F. Other (please specify)</p>	

Finally, I would like to thank you for sparing me part of your time. I appreciate your help. If you have comments on the possibility of introducing self-directed methods in teacher training, I will be grateful if you write them in the space below:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU

Appendix II
Interview Questions

Group A: (School Principals)

Part (1)

- 1- What is the nature of your job?
- 2- How many years of experience do you have?
- 3- What are your qualifications?

Part (2)

- 1- Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?
- 2- What topics are covered in such courses?
- 3- What form do these activities take: lecture, workshop, ...?
- 4- Who runs them?
- 5- How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?
- 6- Do you use any evaluation system for these seminars?
- 7- How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?
- 8- What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?
- 9- What possible self-development activities can be introduced?
- 10- What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?
- 11- Do you wish to add anything?

Group: B (The Supervisors)

Part (1)

- 1- How many years of experience do you have?
- 2- What are your qualifications?
- 3- As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

Part (2)

- 1- What type of training is available for teachers of English?
- 2- To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?
- 3- How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?
- 4- What other development activities do your teachers practise?
- 5- What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?
- 6- Do you wish to add anything?

Group C : Ministry Officials

Part (1)

- 1- What is the nature of your job?
- 2- How many years of experience do you have?
- 3- What are your qualifications?

Part (2) A

- 1- What is your opinion of current in-service teacher training?
- 2- How does the Ministry decide on training needs?
- 3- Is there anything that shows teachers what is expected of them as professionals?
- 4- How do teachers respond to inter-visitations in general?
- 5- How can you encourage teachers to take up their professional accountability?
- 6- Would you like to add anything?

Part (2) B

- 1- What is the system for in-service training for which principals are responsible?
- 2- What is the role of supervisors as trainers?
- 3- What are your plans regarding making teachers acquainted with self-development activities?
- 4- How are the evaluation sheets of training programmes utilised?
- 5- Do you wish to add anything?

Part (2) C

- 1- Could you describe the training process, please?
- 2- What is your job in this process?
- 3- What can you say about the rate of attendance?
- 4- How are training courses evaluated?
- 5- Would you like to add anything?

Appendix III

Transcriptions of Interviews

Group A: (School Principals)

Interview of interviewee: A. A.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I work as a school principal. Our school is a secondary school for boys. A principal plays two main roles, one is administrative and the other is related to supervision of all the administrative and teaching staff. I evaluate their performance and help them improve.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have been working for 14 years, five of which as a school principal.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in Islamic Studies.

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: There are training activities that take place at school; however, they are organised by the Educational Zone. The school organises seminars that deal with classroom management issues.

Q: What topics are covered in such courses?

A: They deal with changes in the curriculum. They are for teachers who teach that book when introducing it for the first time. A course is held at the beginning of the year. In previous years, we had seminars on classroom management, assessment and computing.

Q: What form do these activities take: lecture, workshop, ...?

A: A mixture of both. This depends on the trainer and the subject at hand.

Q: Who runs them?

A: The supervisors.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: I visit the teachers to evaluate them. During my visits, I can decide on what the teacher needs to improve.

Q: Do you use any evaluation system for these seminars?

A: No. We depend on the remarks that teachers give.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: This is a secondary school. Secondary school teachers have long years of experience. The longer experience they have the least they are inclined towards observing others. However, they have to do it because if they do not, this is going to be taken into consideration in their cumulative registers and in their final appraisal report.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: They write research papers if their supervisor asks them to.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: In general, teachers are very busy, they do not have the time even to use the school library. Every year, we have special funds to supply the school library with books that we buy from book fairs but only a few teachers benefit from them. They can be encouraged to read,

in the first place, if they do not have this much of a workload, of course. They may be asked to write book reviews or short reports.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: As I said, the Ministry should reduce the work load. Teachers will be willing to do anything if they get the time and energy for it. There is too much written work to check and daily 'detailed' lesson plans are a burden too. There are also lots of ex-curricular activities that take up their time. Had they got the extra time, they would have practised all the well-known activities, such as reading and self-appraisal and many more.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: I hope that we will be provided with sufficient place at school to have a special staff room for every subject. I believe that teachers will support each other and will have some form of competition if they sit together and discuss their subjects and their work.

Interviewer: Thank you for giving me a part of your busy time and for your thoughtful responses.

Interview of interviewee: A. I.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am the principal of this school, which is a secondary school for girls.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have 18 years of experience, as a teacher, a school assistant and a principal. I have been working as a principal for 5 years. I worked in different levels of schools from lower primary to secondary. My job is to assess and offer advice to teachers regarding their performance.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in Arabic Language and a Higher Diploma in Administrative Management.

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: Yes, we do.

Q: What topics are covered in such courses?

A: Issues concerning classroom management, dealing with students. The teaching-learning situation and teaching techniques. Generally, teachers in such schools (secondary) do not need help with the subject of their specialty. They have an excellent command of the subject matter.

Q: What form do these activities take : lecture, workshop, ...?

A: Mostly workshops. Based on our previous experiences in training, teachers do not get that much from lectures. Therefore, all the training activities for this year depend on workshops.

Q: Who runs them?

A: Supervisors run workshops for their teachers. In addition, we invite well-known speakers from other institutions.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: I depend mostly on classroom observations and recommendations of the appraisal reports of the previous year. Besides, I ask teachers to specify the points in which they need to get training. I do this in my first general meeting with them.

Q: Do you use any evaluation system for these courses?

A: Not exactly. That sounds a nice idea. I think we should find a way of evaluating these seminars. We always depend on what teachers say and their reaction to the workshops.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: We have special plans for this. Teachers must observe other teachers. Some teachers, particularly old-handed ones, like to be visited but are reluctant to visit others unless they are obliged.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: We have rare initiatives. Some teachers attend training courses which are offered by other institutions, but they are only a few. Some teachers prepare researches if their supervisor recommends this.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: Training courses are good for teachers. They can learn from them. Most teachers develop themselves in the subject matter of their specialisation by reading. Some teachers do not read because of their overloaded timetables.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: Reducing the teaching load is the first thing to do. Further, teachers need to be told of the results of their appraisal report. There is no use in keeping it confidential. I had a teacher who improved a lot when I told her of her appraisal report.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Ambitious teachers try harder. Some teachers do not bother because they have a secured career. They find it satisfactory to stay where they are as they are.

Interviewer: You have certainly got to the core of the matter. Thank you very much for your thoughtful responses. I appreciate that you have allowed me a part of your busy time.

Interview of interviewee: M. N.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am a principal of a preparatory school for boys. As a principal, I have to carry out classroom visits of my teachers and evaluate their performance with the help of the supervisor of every subject.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have been working for 12 years.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in geography.

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: The Ministry organises the training activities. We encourage training courses to be held in this school.

Q: What topics are covered in such courses?

A: When there is a new book, a special course is organised for teachers of that particular book.

Q: What form do these activities take: lecture, workshop, ...? Who runs them?

A: In most of the cases, they take the lecture form. There are supervisors who prefer to give workshops.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: Classroom observation reveals a lot about teachers' training needs.

Q: Do they have any evaluation system for these courses?

A: Yes, there is a checklist at the end of the course, but I doubt that anyone looks at them. Or at least, this is what teachers always say.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: There is a scheme which is prepared by the staff of each subject. Every week, they visit one teacher. They use a checklist that was designed by the school administrative council.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: We have access to the Internet at school. Some teachers know how to use it. Teachers have introduced innovations in their classes as a result of using the Internet.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: Teachers will come up with many ideas provided they are given the time for it. They have crowded timetables.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: The whole system needs to be changed. Everyone in the school seems to be doing some work he is not supposed to do. The Ministry is very demanding. Expatriate teachers also feel insecure. They do not know whether they will be on the job next year or in their countries. The Ministry seems to have ambitious development plans that could not be achieved without job security of the people involved.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Thank you, and good luck.

Interviewer: Thank 'you, for giving me part of your busy time. I am sure that your ideas will enrich my research findings.

Interview of interviewee (A. S.)

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am a preparatory school principal. The job of a principal is of two natures. It is administrative as well as supervisory. The principal is asked to follow-up the attendance of all those who work at school, and follow-up students results. Therefore, it's a complicated job. A principal is also an on-the-job teacher trainer, thus he is partly a supervisor. We are also asked to evaluate teachers.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have a total of fifteen years of experience. I have worked previously for eight years as a teacher of Arabic, then as a senior teacher for five years. I have been in this position for three years.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in Arabic Language

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: Yes, we have a training plan for all the teachers. They deal with deficiencies found in the teachers' performance as well as their relationships with the students. Deficiencies is not the right term to use though. It is mainly lack of experience. The majority of my staff are young. They are inexperienced, of years of experience ranging from one to three.

Q: What topics are covered in such courses?

A: As I said, I have a special plan for two years. We have covered a wide part of it until now. The outcome is encouraging.

Q: What form do these activities take : lecture, workshop, ...?

A: Both. Workshops are more successful. It depends on what the trainer can offer.

Q: Who runs them?

A: We take the care in selecting successful lecturers. They can either be from the university staff or from the Ministry of Education.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: We brainstorm a group of teachers by the end of the academic year. They point out areas to be included in the training. Then the School Administrative Council meets to discuss and approve of the major areas. There is a wide choice which is to be considered in the future. Currently, we have selected the most important needs.

Q: Do you use any evaluation system for these courses?

A: A written one. This provides useful feedback since they fill in anonymous questionnaires. The results are discussed in the Council's meetings. I certainly believe that teachers can respond more frankly when writing than when talking about anything.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: The young teachers accept this willingly. The old-handed teachers are reluctant and tend to show signs of boredom during observation. We often choose the most outstanding performers. I accompany teachers in these demonstration lessons. We also discuss and

evaluate the lesson... Regardless of the specialisation. We highly encourage teachers who give demonstration lessons by giving them certificates to thank them.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: I encourage lesson reports. This is writing about outstanding events in the lesson. I realised that graduates from the faculty of education have good ideas.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: Keeping a teaching portfolio is a possibility.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: Incentives is the key word!, Teachers need to feel the importance of the activities that they practise and they will do when they are rewarded for it.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: I'd like to have 'your' recommendations after you finish your research. You made me feel the importance of teachers seeking to develop themselves. This will facilitate our job.

Interviewer: I will be glad to supply you with whatever you ask for. Thank you for giving me part of your awfully busy day. I really appreciate your consent to having this interview, and greatly value your contribution to my study.

Interview of interviewee (A. M.)

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I work as a principal of a higher primary boys' school. My job is to supervise the educational process in my school and recommend changes in teaching behaviours where it is needed.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have been working for twenty years. I worked for six years as a science teacher, then I became an administrative supervisor for six more years. After that I spent 7 years as a school assistant and I have been a school principal for a year. I have practised the work of the school principal thoroughly when I was an assistant.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a Bachelor of Science.

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: Not exactly. None of the schools that I have worked in does such a thing. Sometimes, however, we have lectures organised by the educational zone where our school is the venue. You know, of course, that they are using school buildings for training courses.

Q: What topics are covered in such courses?

A: They deal with classroom management, behavioural problems among students. Some of them deal with teaching techniques. On national or religious occasions, we do organise lectures related to national and religious themes.

Q: What form do these activities take : lecture, workshop, ...?

A: Oh, no, no ! No certainly no workshops!, Lectures. Teachers say that even when the title says that it's a workshop, this turns out to be merely one of the traditional lectures.

Q: Who runs them?

A: A supervisor, a teacher or even a well-educated parent of one of the students. University professors are only available on Thursdays which is not convenient for teachers. They feel reluctant to sacrifice a weekend especially when they have had experience of the kind of training they are used to. It will be a different matter if they are paid for the attendance.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: Classroom visits reveal a lot about what teachers lack. In addition, the teacher's daily lesson plan may show deficiencies in planning. During post-observation sessions, I also get an idea of what a teacher needs training on.

Q: Do you use any evaluation system for these courses?

A: Teachers say if they have learnt something worthwhile or not. Don't tell me questionnaires!. They are administered in formal training courses but I do not think that they are properly analysed. If the Ministry had been doing this, better training would have been offered. Nothing changes as a result. That is what teachers keep repeating.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: They are very enthusiastic!, They like exchanging classroom visits with teachers who are even in other schools.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: They attend lectures organised by other educational bodies out of their sheer will. Some also prepare researches.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: Teachers are overworked. They do not have time to breathe during the school day.

Q: Can you elaborate on this, please?

A: In better work conditions, it is possible for teachers to practice other development activities. They need encouragement too, as well as the support of others.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: First of all, the system of having twenty-four hours teaching time in five days has to be changed. Teachers are also in charge of many other administrative duties once they arrive at school and sometimes until after the school day ends. For example, they supervise bus students and observe students during breaktime. They also check and correct every single written work done by the students. They write, type and correct exam papers. They produce students' report cards and so on so forth. Let alone activities. It's the whole system that needs to make a space for development.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Teachers also need to be encouraged by providing incentives like honour or thanks certificates from the educational zone and the Ministry. This seems to be ignored.

Interviewer: Thank you for giving me part of your busy time. Most of what you said has enriched my research.

Interview of interviewee (T.S.):

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am the principal of a lower primary school for boys. I follow-up teaching performance and students results. We have lots of administrative duties.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A.: I have been working for nineteen years. I have taught for one year, then I became an administrative supervisor. After four years I was promoted as a school assistant. Six years later I became a principal. I have been in this post for eight years.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in geography.

Q: Do you organise training activities for the teachers in your school?

A: Nothing of the sort. Teacher training everywhere consists mainly of lectures. Teachers do not need lectures, they need practical things. I believe that they learn from each other through class observation.

Q: How do you decide on the needs of your teachers?

A: I visit them regularly in their classes. I can easily find out what skills they are in need of developing while doing this.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: They are very enthusiastic about peer-observation. When teachers are relaxed and when they have a very understanding boss, they will accept every thing you recommend. I am not

strict, I only believe that everything should be systematic. No training will be of any help to the teacher if she works in an unsupporting environment. My staff have overcome the difficulties in this matter. For example, they do not criticise each other.

Q: What other forms of self-directed development do your teachers practise?

A: They evaluate themselves. They point out their weaknesses and plan on how to improve them.

Q: Do they write about this?

A: They don't have to unless they choose to do this. After I visit them. I make sure that they talk about the points that they did not like in their lessons.

Q: What possible self-development activities can be introduced?

A: I think you mean researches, don't you? Teachers do not benefit that much when they write theoretical researches because they just write summaries of what they read. They only benefit from them, and work hard on them when they are asked to give staff presentations. In this way, they really benefit and exchange experiences. I agree that teachers should work on their own to help themselves.

Q: What will facilitate this approach? What changes should be introduced first?

A: Development requires time and effort, beside a supporting environment, as I said before. Beside the big number of periods that they have, school activities take up most of the time of primary school teachers. They are exhausted. They work very hard to satisfy all: the Ministry, the Zone, the principal, the parents and the students. They rarely have time for development

activities. If they do any then you are sure that is done at their own inconvenience. I think that extra-curricular activities should be minimised. .

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: No, thank you.

Interviewer: I appreciate your help in granting me part of your duty time. Thank you for your frank and thoughtful comments.

Group: B (The Supervisors)

Interview of interviewee: R.B.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: 18 years

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in English Language.

Q: As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

A: I am a supervisor of English. I have many things to do in my job, regarding the school. Before visiting teachers in the classroom, we have a meeting with the teacher, inside the classroom, I observe the teaching, then after that we sit with teachers, discuss things. Listen to them if they have anything to explain and, not only give them recommendations regarding their teaching. We are very diplomatic with them. We also give them the opportunity to talk and express their needs.

Q: What type of training is available for teachers of English?

A: Other than that we have training. We chose to do this every fortnight, for different cycles. Every time we focus on one cycle (stage). Either we do it alternatively as supervisors or we call guest speakers from universities and colleges. We spend two hours on this. Sometimes we offer different topics and leave the choice for teachers. In general, these workshops can be said to be optional. These are held on weekends, we cannot force teachers to come. It was very difficult at the beginning for them. But after they came several times and they realised that they are really gaining benefit, they keep on coming without feeling forced to do it. So, it is optional now. At the end of the year we offer them certificates for attending these sessions.

On the other hand, if we have something for three days, we give them certificates. This is the course that we receive orders from the Ministry that we have to design these courses under these titles. And sometimes they give us the material. These require certificates of attendance. But when we do design the workshops on a personal basis that we call the guest speakers we don't give certificates.

The guest speakers come from different colleges and universities, such as Zayed University, the Higher Colleges of Technology, the American University in Dubai, and sometimes from the UAE University in Al Ain. Most of them are from TESOL Arabia.

Q: To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?

A: I think that English has reached a very good standard, because really we have teachers who care for their students and the most important thing that we focused in during all these years is that the educational material that they have to use in their classroom, that is teaching aids, they have to do it by themselves. That is why, different workshops took place and teachers know how to use the aids that they use in their classroom. So, because of that you feel that the classes are lively, and of course the standard is improving year after year. Most of the teachers complain that the book itself does not help them. And they don't have time because it is too lengthy.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: I won't say that this thing is going on very well. Because the teaching load is very high and tiring for teachers. So they do not visit each other regularly. That is why I encourage teachers to attend part of a lesson either at the beginning or the end. I am not happy with that,

we cannot force the teachers because they are doing something alternative which is attending the workshops.

Q: What other development activities do your teachers practise?

A: Some of them attend training activities offered by TESOL Arabia. Last year, TESOL Arabia Conference was designed for teachers in Dubai. And because new, we were in doubt that the teachers would come. As a complimentary notice, we invited ten teachers from every zone. So the attendees were 275 teachers. As for this year, it was different. The invitation was open to all. They were asked to pay fees and came from all over the UAE , the total number reached 620. The reason for this increase beside making the conference known is that the material they get from the workshops are encouraging. The first conference was like propaganda for the coming one. It is useful, therefore, to inform teachers of the timings of these conferences.

As for the attendance in Al Ain, the conference lasts three days and most of them cannot leave their families. If they go for one day, there is still the distance and the fact that it is held on a weekend.

As for the use of computers, teachers are forced by their schools to attend computing courses. They can use this for preparing their worksheets. Many teachers deal with the Internet and some schools have Internet in their classes, this is of course limited to some schools only.

Q: What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?

A: When we deal with teachers as friends, this is very important. A supervisor should be friendly with teachers and explain how a supervisor also gains from attending training activities. You become a model for them if you invite them to accompany you, this will

encourage them. Some will feel shy and go, some of them are self-directed, others have to do it because they do not want to be regarded as reluctant. When the supervisor is there, they are encouraged to go. We have a number of teachers who are reluctant but now it is reducing.

We have staff presentations for different cycles. I invite other teachers to come and indirectly I focus on the reluctant ones. You cannot de-motivate teachers by telling them that they are reluctant, you can follow other means. In the case of presentations, for example, I tell them that everyone will have her turn in presenting, therefore we need to watch others.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: I hope we can change all teachers' attitudes towards the work, make them aware of the importance of their taking care of themselves as professionals. Finding out what they need and going for what will help them to improve without forcing them to do this, as it is the case everywhere.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your valuable contribution to my research.

Interview of interviewee: S. S.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have 21 years of experience.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in English Language and Literature.

Q: As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

A: We have many job responsibilities. A supervisor has to appraise the teaching performance of her or his group of teachers and train them as well. To be able to do this, we observe classes, discuss them with teachers, check their lesson plans, check their students' written work and exam results, follow-up the teachers' work regarding extra curricular activities, and check the correction of examinations. We also check the examinations for the end of every semester. There are many times throughout the school year when we are called for correcting exam papers for job applicants from different Arab countries. We have meetings with the Senior Inspector several times throughout the year. This is in addition to the well-known agenda, of course. There are training courses to be administered throughout the year.

Q: What type of training is available for teachers of English?

A: With reference to what we have done this year, I think that we have carried out training on five topics, before that last year we gave questionnaires for the teachers so that they can choose which field they want to have training in. After that, we chose the most important topics and we had that training at the beginning of the year in October. I think it was good to have this in-service training. Compared to last year, training was only for the new book and the new teachers. This year we have in-service training, and I think this one is very good because the teachers came because they asked for that course. So I think it is better to ask

them what they want and plan the training according to what they want, what they need training in.

Q: What are the problems that you face as a trainer?

A: The most important obstacle is the material itself. We prepare the material but we do not have people for preparing our worksheets, transparencies and so on. We have to prepare it ourselves. Even photocopying.

Q: To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?

A: This can be done. If we want to do it in a better way, we have to reduce the number of periods for the teacher. We cannot ask teachers who have twenty-four hours to go for intervisitations. Once for example I took my teachers to the American school. When they got back to their schools, they had four period each to teach, which is very tiring. Unfortunately, there was no time for discussion too.. If you want to make intervisitations within the school, they have that single meeting period, which may be the only free period to have for a break or even to prepare for other classes. We can in fact utilise staff meetings for workshops too. Sometimes, I go only for that meeting after visiting one school. I think it is a very good thing to have staff meetings but not every time the teachers are ready to come to that period. Sometimes the timetable changes without prior notice on the same day.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: In some schools, intervisitations are performed as a duty that should be done. In other schools, they prepare for the activity more thoroughly. Some demonstration lessons focus one

aspect of teaching that the teacher is really good at. Demonstration lessons are really exceptional. Teachers seek to show their best. There are teachers who use all the available technological media. I particularly remember the teacher who used the 'data show' for her lesson.

Q: What other development activities do your teachers practise?

A: I have some teachers who use the Internet for preparing researches or getting information for their research.

Q: What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?

A: I do not know whether we can make teachers responsible for their development. First of all, they should be given less periods so that they can practise development activities. They shall have time to use the Internet. However, resources are not available for all teachers. No schools in our zone have the Internet. We also have to prepare them to be ready for this approach. Get them to develop awareness to take up the responsibility. It is hard to change teacher attitudes without proper training.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: I hope that we have more facilities and free hands to do what we want as supervisors. Let us be released first from routines and we can help teachers to do whatever we wish them to. We are bound to the number of teachers. The number of visits,. Schools themselves do not have facilities. There are many things that I would like my teachers to know about but there are the constraints of time and workload. This year for example I gave a workshop on action research. It is a pity that many of them do not know it. I cannot imagine how much they do

not know about. *After all of these years, this was the first time that they hear of the existence of action research!*

Interviewer: I hope so. Thank you very much for your very helpful responses.

Interview of interviewee: H.M.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have a total of 30 years experience, seventeen of which are in the UAE.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in English Language .

Q: As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

A: Actually, we have so many jobs to fulfill. The first thing is to uplift the standard of performance of teachers in the classroom. We assist and assess them. In a way, that will be reflected positively in the classroom for the students to gain the benefit.

Q: What type of training is available for teachers of English?

A: We don't have enough time for training teachers, because we have so many responsibilities to meet. Whenever we go to schools, we have to arrange class visits. We have to make some sort of pre-observation discussion and then we observe one period and spend at least half a period with the teacher discussing the lesson. This is if the teacher is free. In the primary cycle, teachers are overloaded with twenty-four periods. So, whenever you visit the teacher, you hardly have time to discuss the period or the class you visited with her.

Q: What are the problems that you face as a trainer?

A: So one of the difficulties is that we are running short of time, and we have so many formalities. The C.R. (cumulative register) is to be filled. Oral discussions are more important, in my opinion. That is because we tell the teacher so many remarks and write some of them in the CR due to the limited space.

Q: To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?

A: Well, actually, we do not ask teachers to limit themselves to what we tell them. We recommend that they elaborate their knowledge by other means. I used to have teachers in one school who used to have articles from the Internet. Accordingly, I sometimes help in transferring the benefit to teachers in other schools.

Q: What other development activities do your teachers practise?

A: I usually ask the teachers to write a research- a micro research. Then we have a meeting in which we discuss these researches. To prepare these researches, teachers are encouraged to read books as well as articles from the Internet. Each has a turn to deliver a lecture to her colleague. At the beginning of the year, the teachers should be told to choose the topic they wish to write about. We also make some sort of inter-visitation programme among teachers on a weekly basis. In addition, there is micro-teaching and inter-school visitation.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: The more experienced ones are repulsive at the beginning, they say that they do not gain any benefit, but if you try to convince them to find a way to see what's new and try to implement them, they will see for themselves. In my opinion, people are apt to develop. People are keen on developing. Once they know what is wrong, and they get an inviting spirit, they do it. When they see the outcome, they are encouraged. They realise that peer-observation adds to their experience. The benefit is even doubled when we have time for post-observation discussions, which is not the case all the time. As I said before, teachers have busy timetables.

Q: What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?

A: Of course, they should be provided with incentives. Motivation for the teacher is very important. The Ministry should reward those who exert great efforts; who show ideas and try to implement them. In other words, rewarding those who work to encourage those who do not work is a good strategy. Most of the teachers complain about lack of time but some teachers overcome this problem, therefore, they should be rewarded.

Interviewer: What can be done to that?

A: We have two alternatives. Either to lessen their load or to to make up time at school for development. Teachers are really busy. They should have ample time for discussion if the time for preparing lessons at school is used for this purpose. They can read, prepare researches, observe others and so on.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Not only teachers should be asked to develop themselves. Supervisors should do this too.

Interviewer: I have to agree on that. Thank you very much for your thoughtful responses.

Interview of interviewee: (A.N.)

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have been working as a supervisor for seven years. I have previously worked as a senior teacher and a teacher of English in two different zones. In all, I have 25 years experience in the UAE.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in English Language .

Q: As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

A: As a supervisor, my duty is to assess the teaching performance of a number of teachers. This year I have 65 teachers. There are 17 of them who work in remote areas. Beside this, I carry out teacher training programmes decreed by the Ministry of Education.

Q: What type of training is available for teachers of English?

A: In fact we hope for better training in the future, especially if we get to have active training centres throughout the UAE. The current system for training is simple. A circular is issued by the senior inspector, we get informed of it via the coordinator in the zone. I participate with the other inspectors in the zone. The training is done annually for new comers. Training of old-handed teachers is done too- according to the needs that I decide on while observing their classes. These needs are recorded in their final appraisal. There is a department in the Ministry that summarises the training needs of all teachers in the country and classifies them according to groups in each zone. We also receive a decree for this.

Q: To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?

A: This depends on the type of supervisor, I mean his initiative. In fact, if the supervisor is sincere enough in his job, he can improve the teaching performance. Therefore, in addition to

the training decreed by the Ministry, every supervisor has his own activities. In other words, we plan extra training according to individual schools' needs. It also depends on the teachers themselves. There are teachers who do not care to attend training seminars. If the teacher is for improving and self-developing. I think good results will be found.

Q: What are the problems that you face as a trainer?

A: There are time constraints and the fact that supervisors play different opposite roles. They assist teachers but they also assess them.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: As a supervisor, I always call for it, and teachers under my supervision do it a lot. This is the same for my other colleagues in the zone. It is a way of self-development. They can learn teaching techniques from their peers. This enriches their lessons with teaching aids too. You know that teachers have attitudinal varieties, so inter-visitations is very fruitful. However, at the very beginning, old handed teachers , who have had many years of experience were against it. They used to say that teachers with less experience need to observe them and not the other way round. It took us, supervisors, a great deal of effort to convince them. Nowadays, whenever they attend, they feel that it is very useful in the pursuit for development.

Q: What other development activities do your teachers practise?

A: I ask every teacher to submit a research paper. This makes them read a lot.

Q: What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?

A: The point of self-direction in development is there in the Cumulative Register, so teachers at the moment care so much that everyone of them introduces and submits a research. This means that he reads a paper or a certain research, get it concise and is ready to discuss it among his fellow teachers. Finding resources is a big problem. Most teachers who submit researches rely on themselves to collect references. They buy them from book fairs. Resources are not readily available for them in schools at the moment. That is the most important thing in fact. So, resources are number one. Even I admit that current training is unsatisfactory, and that in-service training should be systematised. That is a very important thing. They need special trainers. Teachers need the most up-to-date programmes. Supervisors rely on themselves when obtaining training material. In some cases we have a central training that we should convey to the teachers. We do not benefit very much from this. We prepare our own material. This means, the content of the training is differs from one zone to the other. Therefore, the main problem is resources if you look at it from the perspective of supervisors too.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: No, thank you.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your thoughtful responses.

Interview of interviewee: K.S.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: I have 24 years of experience.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A. in English Language .

Q: As a supervisor of English, what are your job responsibilities?

A: As a supervisor , my main job is to evaluate the teaching performance. I also carry out the training according to the Ministry's decrees.

Q: What type of training is available for teachers of English?

A: The class visit is the main technique used. This is followed by a post observation conference. In which a supervisor discusses the various aspects of the lesson, whether positive or negative. Teachers observe demonstration lessons too. Beside this I use case studies with my teachers. I find them particularly useful, because I can focus on weaknesses in practice without offending anybody. Many aspects of the teaching performance can be improved by using case studies. I have collected these during my classroom observations. This is, of course, done in the form of a workshop whenever the school timetable allows. Some schools have meeting days for members of staff. I repeat this in every school. I hope that special times will be considered for incorporating training within the timetables of all schools to make it easy for us to call teachers to a central place for training. This will also allow for inter-school visitations.

Q: What are the problems that you face as a trainer ?

A: Currently, I am overloaded with a big team of teachers covering all educational stages. There are schools in remote areas that can hardly have more training than the usual classroom visits of their supervisors. In addition, our job is full of surprises. They call us for meetings at the zone or at the Ministry when we have planned to do something else.

Q: To what extent has this approach in teacher training helped in teacher development?

A: Supervisors do their best to help their teachers. Any way, I think that in-service teacher training in general needs to be improved.

Q: What other development activities do your teachers practise?

A: I encourage the teachers to prepare researches. Sometimes they leave the choice for me and sometimes they choose to write on a certain topic if they find suitable resources. Most of the time, I provide them with references. Not all teachers have access to a good library, as you know. We have also established a resource centre that is in its first stages. There is the problem of getting enough funds to buy books. We get most of the books during book fairs. There are several ones throughout the year, especially during TESOL Arabia's Conferences. This is as you know, an organisation of the teachers of English. My teachers like to attend their workshops. They find them informative, as I do too. Good teachers apply what they learn, as came to find out during my class visits or when giving demonstration lessons.

Interviewer: This sounds interesting. So, why are there teachers who do not go to TESOL Arabia's conferences?

A: You see, we are in (...), most conferences are held in Dubai or Al-Ain which are a few hours' drive from here. They are also held during weekends. In addition, not all conferences

are free. Some of them are rather costly to attend. The Ministry should sponsor some teachers to attend them.

Q: How do your teachers respond to peer-observations?

A: They carry them out according to a special scheme in every school. I think this is satisfactory in the current work conditions.

Q: What can be done to facilitate self-direction in teacher development?

A: First, teachers need to know more about the opportunities or possibilities available for them. Training courses should aim at informing teachers of different means of self-development. This is missing in our courses. We would like to do more for our teachers but we have to adhere to what is assigned to us by the Ministry.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Joining TESOL Arabia is a good means of teacher networking. There is also the Teachers' Association. Both have useful newsletters. Teachers everywhere should be encouraged to benefit from them.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: Thank you, that's all.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. You have mentioned points that are of great value.

Group C : Ministry Officials

Interviewee: A.O.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am the Senior Inspector of the English Language in the Ministry of Education.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A.: I have been working in the Emirates since 1966. I worked as a teacher, then a supervisor of English. I have been in the position of a senior inspector for 3 years.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have an M.A.

Q: What is your opinion of current in-service teacher training?

A: I don't think that anybody is satisfied with what is called in-service training these days because the training is carried out by the supervisors in the Ministry. The supervisors, as you know, are overloaded with various responsibilities and their major role according to the teachings of the Ministry is to evaluate teachers. Each supervisor has about sixty-five teachers or sometimes more. He has to visit them at least two or three times a year. Some schools are located in remote areas.

The training is, in fact, carried out in the following way. The supervisors carry out the training for teachers who are recruited at the beginning of the year for about four days. Sometimes they do what we call training based on needs of the teachers as seen by the supervisor through his assessment of professional skills, so they do in-service training. In

other words, the amount of training is not enough due to the responsibilities of the supervisor. I believe that training needs special trainers who are dedicated for this job. Recently, the Ministry has embarked on a new project in the field of training. They established training centres in the educational zones, and we hope that the Ministry will be able to provide these centres with resident trainers who can undertake this job.

Q: How does the Ministry decide on training needs?

A: The main tool for assessing the teachers' needs is the supervisor who visits the teachers in their classrooms. They usually record or write these needs in the cumulative register as well as their own notebooks. Surely, while they are discussing the lessons with the teachers, they also ask the teachers if they need any training in any professional skill. Therefore, we can say that these are the two tools that help the supervisors to decide what professional skills these teachers are in need of developing.

Q: Is there anything that shows teachers what is expected of them as professionals?

A: There is one item under the heading of self-development in the cumulative register. This includes writing research papers or studies. In addition, supervisors discuss with the teachers the kind or sort of the subject of the research paper that they are going to write about. This could be considered as a sort of contract that this is an evidence of development. There is a good number of supervisors who provide their teachers with printed material or techniques for helping teachers to develop. One can think of various ways for helping teachers develop themselves. Supervisors should think of issuing a newsletter in which teachers take part in writing certain topics. This would help the majority of the teachers too.

Q: How do teachers respond to inter-visitations in general?

A: I can say that most of our teachers use inter-visitations as a technique under the supervision of their supervisor. I came to know that supervisors provide the teachers with a special observation form to help them focus their attention on certain teaching aspects when they discuss the lesson during the post observation conference. This planning has helped a lot. Some teachers in certain zones carried this a step further where they use what is called 'team teaching'.

Q: How can you encourage teachers to take up their professional accountability?

A: First of all, we should activate the role of the supervisor to help these teachers to change and to change his techniques of supervision. Therefore, we have to decrease the load of the supervisor as far as the number of teachers is concerned. In addition, we have to alleviate the burden of the teachers themselves. They keep on complaining about their workload and that they do not have time for self-development, and I agree with this. They are highly overloaded. If we can find a way of dedicating one or two periods for example per week for self-development, I think this would also help to encourage or increase the level of dedication to self-development.

Q: Would you like to add anything?

A: I wish you good luck.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your valuable contribution of ideas to my research.

Interview of interviewee: Z.A.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am head of the Planning Department of the human Resource Management Directorate in the Ministry of Education.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A.: A total of 19 years. Ten of which as a principal, then as an administrative supervisor. Later I became a senior administrative supervisor.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A.

Q: What is the system for in-service training for which principals are responsible?

A: As it is known, one of the responsibilities of a school principal is following up and assessing the teaching performance inside the classroom. When they observe their teachers , they will get to know the training needs of their staffs. The register of the observed lesson contains a scale. The principal builds the training upon the results of his or her evaluation report. Teachers may be grouped according to the common points of defects in their performance. In general, the training is carried out by the supervisors. Principals observe lessons and discuss them with the observed teachers. Sometimes teachers tend to argue with the principal and object to the mentioned remarks.

Q: What is the role of supervisors as trainers?

A: Training is a burden on the supervisor too. In most cases, there is no prior planning that the supervisor is involved in. Many supervisors have a high percentage of teachers. On the

other hand, the supervisor has his own training plan. This is prepared from a wider perspective with consideration of the training needs in the educational zone. Consequently, the supervisor is under pressure if he or she is asked to carry out the specific training programme needed for one of the schools beside the scheduled programmes. When this is planned in advance, in the previous academic year, the supervisor can do something to cater for the needs in that school. Most schools inform the supervisor of the needs of their teachers, at the beginning of the year, after he prepares his own plan. If we put in mind the other administrative jobs, the supervisor needs to carry out many responsibilities at the educational zone. This is not to forget that not all the supervisors are qualified to be trainers. This is a problem. These are traits that not all supervisors possess. For example, there are teachers who complain about training courses. They attend a training programme without any benefit. This is due to the disqualified supervisor who was carrying out the training. Therefore, the aim of the programme for which it was designed, was not achieved. These are just some of the obstacles that principals and supervisors face. We say that if the principal is to be viewed as a resident trainer, we have to make them undergo an inclusive training programme to give them the qualifications that they lack. In this way, the educational supervisor will be accountable for the technical part that is related to the subject of their specialisation. This is of course in coordination with supervisors. If the principal takes up the educational part, this will reduce the burden placed on supervisors and will enable them to focus on technical matters. As I see it, there are teachers who have a very good command of their subject matter but lack the instructional skills and vice versa. These are problems that need to make both the principal and the supervisor partners who share the accountability from two different perspectives. I think the outcome will be more satisfactory with partnership from the side of the teachers too.

Q: What are your plans regarding making teachers acquainted with self-development activities?

A: Up until now, nothing has been planned regarding self-directed development. However, as for the general development scheme, there is an agreement with the UAE University and an expert from Jordan to specify the teaching qualities that the teachers should have. This shall be the basis on which training needs are to be decided, and later, the training required. Concerning self-directed development, I think that this is not possible with the current teaching load. The teachers are overloaded with a large number of teaching periods. The matter is different with the new teachers, of course. They are still enthusiastic and considerate. A lot of them have started using computers in their lessons. The problem lies within the old-handed teachers who have been in service for many years. Their enthusiasm has deteriorated due to the lack of incentives and motivation. In addition, they have a, somewhat, secure job in which they perform their duties as recommended. This is not to deny the existence of some distinguished number of teachers who, no matter what difficulties and de-motivation that they are encountered with, do not give up their efforts. In general however, we can see that the main requirement for taking up the professional accountability by being self-directed is mainly a reduced teaching load beside incentives. More facilities are required too. Well-equipped resource centres are necessary. Books are not affordable for many teachers, especially expatriates. When we have a well-resourced school library for all the teachers at school, ...I feel that we do not lose anything as this is for the benefit of all the teachers. Making the Internet available for all the teachers, for instance, enables teachers to discover a different world of possibilities for development. This will encourage them to utilise it. As for peer-observation, teachers who have more years of experience do not ask for them that much. The novices, however, do ask for them. In other words, they are self-directed in this issue. They do ask for more lessons to be observed other than these organised

by the school. Nowadays, we require school principals to classify their teachers according to the special instructional skills they possess. In case of peer-observation, observers can focus more on these points. There are teachers who are excellent in some aspects of performance. It is better for observers to focus during observation on these aspects, or observe a part of a lesson. This activity (peer-observation) makes up for the lack of the practical aspect in training courses. It can be as a follow up activity that the supervisor or principal should aim to encourage teachers to do to complement the training on the aspect of performance which they need training on. This can be done in other schools too.

Q: How are the evaluation sheets of training programmes utilised?

A: Currently, as for the training courses that are organised in training centres, we seek to examine the evaluation sheets of the programmes. The current instrument is open and requires more work in analysing the results. In addition, the limited number of employees makes it an obstacle in the evaluation process. Evaluation is done but the overall feedback is not obtained. There is nobody whose job is to do exactly this. We have recently revised the evaluation instrument and we do ask training centres to carry out a thorough analysis. This process has only been recently introduced.

There is a problematic issue that I would like to refer to. Following up the training outcome is missing. We do have some excellent training programmes but there is a difficulty in following up the effect of the training on trainees. We face a problem in that the trainers are different from those who evaluate the effect on the teaching practice. It is either the principal or the supervisor and they both do not know the content of the training. If the trainer is the supervisor, then it is difficult for him to observe the teacher for follow up without counting the visit. This is due to the limited span of time he has and the large number of teachers he is in charge of. We are currently discussing how we can follow up training outcomes.

Sometimes obstacles face teachers when they try to implement what they have learnt. Follow up will help eliminate these problems. Certificates of attendance in this case should be given after the examination of the teacher's performance in practice. Until now, certificates are given for attending some training courses.

Q: Do you wish to add anything?

A: I hope the training will take the systematic aspect, as it should be. Once we decide on training needs with respect to teaching qualities, we can implement better training programmes and have more scientific evaluation with consideration of the effect of the training course on the teaching performance.

Interviewer: Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful examination of the topic. This is sure to enrich the findings of my research.

Interview of interviewee K.A.

Q: What is the nature of your job?

A: I am a training coordinator.

Q: How many years of experience do you have?

A: 19 years, 12 of which as a zone training coordinator.

Q: What are your qualifications?

A: I have a B.A.

Q: Could you describe the training process, please?

A: Well, if you call it a process. It starts by distributing a questionnaire to supervisors to find out what areas of training their teachers need training on. They are asked to specify the names of the teachers who are in need of training and in which areas. They also send a copy of this to their senior inspectors. Senior inspectors collect these reports from all zones and plan on the topics of the training accordingly. At the beginning of the school year, we receive a decree, which contains a plan for training. The names of the teachers who need training are also provided. These are activities related to low performing teachers, their supervisors meet with them one evening to deliver what he has on the topic. On the other hand, there is training on new course-books. It also takes one or two sessions with some books. Sometimes, the teachers are called again to discuss the curriculum if some problems arise. In addition, there are fixed training courses for promotion to administrative jobs. Nowadays it is not surprising to be called to courses on computer (programming).

Q: What is your job in this process?

A: Mainly a coordinator!, I receive the decree. Then I ask one of the schools to host the training if it is for an evening, if it is longer, I check the timing with the training centre. I make sure that supervisors and teachers know about the courses. I send a circular to tell them of the place and time. I check that the training facilities are OK. The place, the equipment and even attendance.

Q: What can you say about the rate of attendance?

A: Oh, no. This is a problem, as a matter of fact. Many teachers miss the training. The number is growing every year for many reasons.

Q: And they are..?

A: First of all, repetition. There is nothing new to learn as they say. Also they do not like to have their supervisor as the trainer. At least this is what they say in the evaluation sheets. They ask for someone with different ideas. Others say that they lectures depend on theory and they need something practical. In addition, most of these activities are held in the evening. Teachers go to school in the morning and they have to spend around four hours in the evening. They want to plan for their lessons the following day. The supervisors' visits to them are sudden (unannounced). Some teachers do not want to leave their work in evening centres because they are paid on the number of period they teach.

Q: You mentioned something about evaluation of training courses.

A: Yes, surely we do that, but we started this only recently. That is why we get to have training centres and variety in types of training like workshops and different trainers from the UAE University. These are the things that teachers asked for. I collect the evaluation sheets

and analyse them then send a report of the findings to the 'Human Resource Department' in the Ministry. We have also introduced certificates of attendance and letters of thanks to schools that host the training.

Q: Thank you for this valuable clarification. Would you like to add anything?

A: No thank you, unless you have more questions.

Interviewer: I appreciate your help and contribution to my research, thank you very much.