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Educational Leaders' Attempts at Holding the Fort: A Transformative Endeavor in Lebanon

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Introduction

A Nation's Impact on Education

“It is certain that peoples are in the long run what the government makes of them: warriors, citizens, men, when it wishes, or just populace and rabble when it so pleases.”

Jean Jacques Rousseau
(as cited in Cook, 1975, p. 108)

Educational experiences are shaped by a country's political and economic structure as well as its cultural values and demographics. Educational institutions, particularly schools, are a reflection of society and are impacted by societal changes. Along those lines, a country's status and mode of government dictate its educational practices. On the other end, a country that is masked in corruption, uncertainty, and instability struggles to maintain educational practices in accordance with international standards. Cook (1975) argues that the “leading” cause of corruption in countries is bound to be a result of “political and economic inequality.” Cook (1975) reiterates what Rousseau has discussed in efforts to promote public education, “There can be no public education without prior removal of the causes of corruption from the society at large” (p. 114). A number of theorists and researchers have explained, determined, discussed, and showcased how educational reforms are caused, impeded, and ordained by crises beyond actual academic and instructional matters to reach regional, economic, and political ones (Cook, 1975; Dewey, 1903; Freire, 1996; Rousseau, 2016).

Leadership

Stodgill (1974), attempting to define leadership, expressed that there are “almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p.7). Therefore, this article does not intend to define leadership or identify the different types of leadership but instead adopts Burns' (1978) definition. Burns (1978), known as the ‘father’ of transformational leaders, “posited an understanding of leadership that placed the leader in a position of communal influence with his followers” (Hicks & Given, 2013, p. 9). Burns (1978) explains that this reform to leadership encourages leaders to act “as agents of their followers” (p. 3) and is based on “a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders” (p. 4). Burns' (1978) proposes four domains to understanding transformational leadership, which include (1) idealized influence, (2) inspirational motivation, (3) intellectual stimulation, and (4) individualized consideration. Various progressive definitions of and approaches to transformational leadership remain rooted in and retrieved from Burns (1978).

Transformational leadership style has had relevance in the field of education (Michel et al., 2010; Hussin & Waheed, 2016; Pietsch & Tulowitzki, 2017) and would be the most logical to associate this article with, especially amid nationwide chaos, necessitating reformative practices and changes.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to describe the educational reforms that have taken place in Lebanon, a country that has encountered a great deal of instability on a national scale as it pertains to the economy, to political practices, to health-related concerns, and to life-threatening instabilities. The article briefly presents these national turbulences that shook the operational foundations of schools in Lebanon. It, then, discusses educational leaders' roles in the process, and to what extent these leaders have adopted transformative practices in order to guarantee the schooling systems' survival amid the chaos.

The article attends to the following question: How have educational leaders in Lebanon been transformative in their response to the various crises on schooling systems and operations?

Very little is known about what is going on within the educational field in Lebanon under the current crisis, which seems to have no end in sight but, instead, is further exacerbating. Many academic institutions are struggling to sustain their operations while others have terminated theirs. The research on the topic is still scarce and is yet to be developed. Therefore, the article's significance remains in its ability to shed much needed light on the current situation and how educational leaders are navigating through.

For the purposes of this article, leaders within academic institutions (or educational leaders) are regarded as those who embody the four domains of transformational leadership proposed by Burns (1978) and are not restricted to school directors or principals but also incorporate teachers and staff members. As such, possessing educational leadership is regarded as a trait not a position.

The Case of Lebanon

Demographics

Table below summarizes essential demographics about Lebanon.

Table 1
Lebanon's Demographics

Name	Lebanese Republic (Referred to as Lebanon)
Location	Western Asia, on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea
Area	10542 km ²
Capital	Beirut
Government	Unitary, multiparty republic with one legislative house
Population	6.8 million people of mostly Arab origin
Refugees per Capita	1.5 million Syrian refugees and 13,715 other nationality refugees*
Official Language	Arabic
Religions	Christians, Muslims, Druze, and less than 1 percent practice other religions, such as Judaism, Baha'ism, Buddhism, and Hinduism
GDP per capita	4,649.5 USD as of 2020
Unemployment Rates	29.6% as of January 2022
Adult Literacy Rates	95.07% as of 2018

Immigration Rates A 4.5-fold increase in the number of emigrants between 2020 and 2021

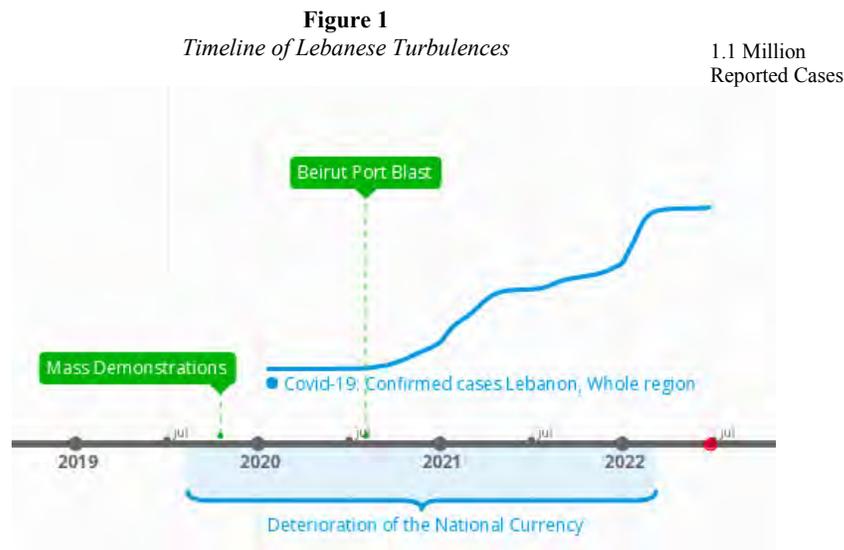
**Lebanon has the highest concentration of refugees per capita; more than one-quarter of its population is constituted of displaced refugees from the region (Relief Web, 2022).*

The Turbulence

Despite its small size, Lebanon has had its fair share of nationwide turbulences that further instigated conflict and instability among the Lebanese population. Lebanon's most recent challenges erupted in 2019. This is not to undermine that many nationwide struggles have been the subject of many historical, influential milestones in Lebanon. However, these historical highlights are outside the scope of this article. The overview below of the nationwide turbulences in Lebanon is an illustrative one not a comprehensive, detailed one. It highlights major turbulences throughout the past few years to provide a better understanding of the situation.

A Timeline

The figure below provides an illustrative timeline to Lebanon's unparalleled humanitarian catastrophes that continue to drive the country into poverty and jeopardize the population's well-being, economic progress, social welfare, as well as national and regional stability.



Mass Demonstrations. On October 17th, 2019, mass demonstrations were held across Lebanon. While this came directly after the Minister of Telecommunications, at that time, announced a six-dollar fee on WhatsApp users, the protesters had more pressing, basic rights that have not been met, such as access to water and electricity. The protests called for overhauling of the ruling class, which was accused of organized corruption. October 17th, 2019 was marked as the day of the Lebanese uprising and revolution against its oppressive system. These recent events, among other accumulated struggles in Lebanon, have impacted the country on various levels, including its economic standing, its health care outlets and resources, and its mounting political tension as the enforced road blocks led to the closing of many public and private institutions.

COVID-19 & The Challenged Health Sector. Lebanon suffered and continues to suffer from the repercussions of the surging COVID-19 pandemic. Lebanon reported its first case of COVID-19 on February 21st, 2020 and was subject to continuous nationwide lockdowns. Nonetheless, COVID-19 was not the only deterrent to the challenged health sector in Lebanon. The political and economic situations have also taken their toll on health systems (Ahsan, 2021).

When confronted with the pandemic, the country was in a precarious position due to a shortage of cash, resources, and foreign currency. The government of Lebanon was unable to set aside a stimulus package to help equip both public and private hospitals with much-needed resources to fight the disease due to the county's dire economic circumstances (Bizri et al., 2021; Treasury, 2020). In a correspondence, medical doctors, Saliba and Taher (2021), summarize the call of all medical professions,

We often find ourselves deprived of the tools needed to serve the suffering and the drugs needed to soothe their pain... We need a reliable supply of electric power. With the fuel shortage, operating rooms in rural hospitals have changed their operation schedules around the availability of electricity... The Lebanese healthcare system is exsanguinating... We are calling for help - any help - because human lives are at stake (pp. 403-404).

In July 16, 2021, the Ministry of Public Health announced the end of subsidies on imported medication. Not only did medicine prices increase to, at least, three-fold their initial price, but medicine shortages still persisted.

Assassinations and Explosions. The Lebanese people endured further assassinations, explosions, and a Hiroshima-like blast to its Beirut port.

Assassinations. In June 2020, a Beirut-based bank's ethics and fraud risk director was found stabbed to his death in their home's parking. On December 21st, 2020, a photographer who worked for the Lebanese Armed Forces, was shot to death by gunmen. Later in December, a custom officer died due to a blow to the head. Just a couple of months later, in February 2021, a political activist was assassinated and the following month, a Lebanese Armed Forces Major was shot dead in his apartment.

Explosions. On August 4th, 2020, a Hiroshima-like explosion at Beirut Port shook the Lebanese population, leaving more than 220 fatalities and up to 6,500 injuries. "An uncontrolled fire in an adjacent warehouse ignited ~2,750 tons of Ammonium Nitrate (AN), producing one of the most devastating blasts in recent history" (Al-Hajj et al., 2021). On August 15th, 2021, around a year after the blast to the port, a fuel explosion in Akkar killed 33 people and injured 79. A number of people were around the explosion site to access fuel that has been at great shortage in Lebanon, justifying the many deaths and injuries.

Financial Struggles. In 1997, the peg exchange rate of the US dollar currency as opposed to the Lebanese Lira was set at 1,507 LBP to \$1. The economic crisis became more apparent to the public right after the revolution in October 2019; Lebanese residents could no longer access their dollar accounts through ATMs, which was a common practice in Lebanon. Instead, residents were forced

to turn to exchange stores to access the USD currency. This gave rise to a currency black market, and exchange rates started increasing (Alarabiya, 2019). The currency in the black market continually increased since then amid other commotions reaching as high as 40,550 Lebanese Lira per \$1 in October 2022 as opposed to the initial peg exchange of 1,507 Lebanese Lira to \$1 prior to the summer of 2019.

In February 2021, the minimum wage in Lebanon was declared as one of the lowest in the world with \$2 a day (Relief Web, 2021). In March 2021, 78% of the Lebanese population was in poverty, 36% of which are in extreme poverty. Just a few months later, the World Bank announces that Lebanon is currently experiencing a severe economic crisis since the mid-nineteenth century (World Bank, 2021). Prices of common goods as well as food sky-rocketed with some increasing by 400% their original price. Therefore, food insecurity in Lebanon is reaching catastrophic levels (Kharroubi et al., 2021).

Several local and international businesses closed their doors temporarily or permanently due to the collapse. About one out of every five businesses surveyed by the World Bank (2021) is confirmed or expected to be permanently closed, manufacturing businesses that remain open are operating at 35% of capacity, and nearly half of the businesses have been impacted by the Beirut Port explosion. Since October 2019, one in every five workers has lost their job, and 61 percent of businesses polled have reduced their permanent workforce by 43 percent on average (World Bank, 2021).

Moreover, the financial situation also led to fuel shortage. Lebanon is a country that is highly dependent on private transportation. In the year 2021, fuel was in short, and people could no longer fill their car tanks to go to work. Many had to wait in cues for hours to get their cars filled with a minimum amount of fuel. Not to mention, the surging prices of fuel; a tank cost 43,500 LBP (~ 29 USD at peg exchange rate) in June 2021 and, in just one year (June 2022), increased to 691,000 LBP (~ 460 USD at peg exchange rate).

Other Turbulent Matters. In addition to the points elaborated on above, the Syrian refugee crisis, the ongoing influence of foreign actors and their local proxies, US-imposed sanctions, endemic corruption, a culture of nepotism and entitlement among political dynasties, dysfunctional power-sharing, and deep-seated sectarian divides are also part of the current emergency (Abouzeid et al., 2021). Lebanese political leaders continue to opt for interim measures that have buffered and postponed the full impact of the crisis at the cost of worsening it and narrowing the window of opportunity to address it (International Crisis Group, 2021). This strategy appears to be based on the fact that significant reform is likely to impact important political actors' vested interests, thereby jeopardizing their ability to sustain and reproduce political power and support (International Crisis Group, 2021).

The Education Sector in Lebanon

General Overview

The educational system in Lebanon is composed of two sectors, a private one and a public one. The private sector charges for admission whereas the public sector is mostly free of charge or at a considerably lesser fee. Schools in Lebanon, private and public, are unequally distributed among

the provinces. Greater Beirut area houses the most schools and universities. Also, the majority of private school facilities are better equipped than public school facilities.

In September 1998, new school curricula were in place. The curriculum states that students must follow the same programs throughout all three cycles,

1. Primary, Grades 1 to 6
2. Intermediate, Grades 7 to 9 (National exams are administered in Grade 9, referred to as the Brevet Exams)
3. and Secondary, Grades 10 to 12 (A second round of national exams are administered in Grade 12, referred to as the Baccalaureate Exams)

In the second year of secondary school (Grade 11), students begin to branch out to one of the emphasis areas and continue to branch out further in the third year of secondary school (Grade 12), preparing them to more easily pursue their higher education. The languages of instruction in Lebanese schools are Arabic, French, or English.

When it comes to the primary stage of the educational system, public and private schools are different. Private schools have always included a preschool phase and have admitted kids as early as three years old, whereas public schools have not given considerable attention to the preschool period and have required pupils to be five years old to be enrolled in kindergarten until the 1990s. As a result, pupils in private schools attend nursery school for one year, kindergarten one for another year, and kindergarten two for a third year. This could help to explain why students who attend private schools typically perform better academically than students who attend public schools. Nonetheless, a child's and subsequently a young person's ability to access quality education and learning outcomes depends on their family's ability to pay for private schooling. Fees of private schooling vary considerably with some reaching 17,500 USD per one academic year excluding registration and stationery.

Implications of the Accumulated Crises on the Schooling System

A third of the school-age population, or about 700,000 kids, did not attend any classes in the academic year 2020-2021, and the 1.3 million children who were enrolled frequently received inadequate instruction during extended school closures brought on by anti-government demonstrations, Covid-19, the Beirut port explosion, and the economic crisis.

Mass Demonstrations. Due to the road blocks, school operations, just like any other institution in the country, shut down. Some schools believed that discontinuing their operations during the revolution goes in solidarity with the demonstrators, who are demanding that the government attends to their basic needs.

COVID-19 Lockdowns. School closures in March 2020 due to imposed national lockdowns have disrupted the education of about 1.2 million children enrolled in private, state, and UNRWA schools, as well as 30,000 children and teenagers involved in non-formal education (UNICEF, 2020). Children had a maximum of 11–18 weeks of schooling offered through any modality in 2019–2020, compared to 31–33 weeks in a regular school year (Save the Children, 2021). Remote

learning participation rates differed significantly between states, grade levels, and student populations, owing to disparities in internet, computer, and electrical access (UNDP, 2020). Children without devices, internet connectivity, or steady electricity were unable to participate in distance learning. The absence of internet connection and access to digital technology in the wake of COVID-19 has also exacerbated already-existing multidimensional deprivation, particularly in isolated and rural areas of the nation (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2021).

The Beirut Port Blast. The Beirut Port blast damaged at least 183 schools and is estimated to have impacted access to learning and education support for more than 85,000 children and youth (Abouzeid et al., 2021).

The Economic Crisis. Eighty percent of Lebanon's families are now in poverty, rendering many school-related expenses, like transportation, unaffordable. Over 60% of kids in Lebanon attended private schools before to the crisis with approximately 120,000 children who transferred into public schools as of 2020. According to Abouzeid et al. (2021), there were reports that 1,600 schools closed due to the economic crisis. Schools were struggling to buy basic supplies, such as stationery, computer equipment, and hygiene materials for COVID-19, and that they only had a few hours of power each day, if any at all.

Educational Leaders' Responses

Schools in Lebanon endured the consequences brought in by the concurrent circumstances differently, depending on their resources and demographics as well as the resources and demographics of their student body. For instance, schools within urban and populated areas in Lebanon were at an advantage to schools within rural and less dense areas due to resource availability as well as better internet connection and less electricity blackouts. Schools' abilities to actively manage situations as well as the extent to which teachers have received professional training also played a great role in weathering the circumstances imposed (Abdul-Reda Abourjeili & Harb, 2020). Therefore, responses to the crises ranged from doing "nothing at all" to "rethinking how the system works."

The sections below elaborate on the response measures, their challenges, and implemented solutions that educational leaders have engaged in to survive the imposed academic turmoil. The information is retrieved based on the professional experiences of the authors as well as a vast review of published resources. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to mention that the evidence does not certainly concede to a great degree with the practices of each and every school in Lebanon, due to the novelty of the circumstances and the underdeveloped literature, but is a general representation of the responses to the crises by the majority of schools.

School Response to 2019's Mass Revolutions

Initial Response

Schools' initial response was to close down, some in support of the mass revolutions, presuming that resumption of in-class attendance was inevitable a short while after the revolution erupted. However, talk about the revolutions' continuity in closing down major institutions in the country

persisted. Some schooling operations stopped while others sent homework packets in the form of worksheets and exercises that compensate for the lost time and that keep children ‘looped in’ on the learning.

Challenges

In many cases, there was little quality control on the submissions received from homework. It seemed that students most often submitted the work done with little to no errors, associating this with parental support. Parents perceived errors on homework as a lack of acquisition of the learning outcomes, resorting to helping their children complete the assignments, and, therefore, miscommunicated their child’s abilities. Some other students were not able to submit any work at all due to the parents’ inability to follow up on their children’s schooling.

Solutions

Due to the short-lived school closures as a result of the road blocks, educational leaders intended to revisit what has been done at home in terms of homework to better understand where children stand when it comes to the learning, and they preferred to do so at school, in a face-to-face setting.

Due to the critical learning curve, especially in early schooling years, some educational leaders identified milestones that students are required to overcome through proving experiential activities, instead of worksheets and workbook exercises to be completed as temporary fixes to keep students busy. Integration among disciplines was one way to provide these experiential activities. For instance, language, mathematics, and physical education teachers collaborated to create one activity that allows preschoolers or first graders to write, to identify, and to jump through different numbers. These activities became less dependent on the binary of right and wrong answers and actively engaged students in the learning process. Students were asked to video-tape themselves, voice record themselves, or just expressively write/draw and submit these assignments via the platforms adopted by the respective schools.

School Response to the Deteriorating Lebanese Economy

Initial Response

As an initial response to the deteriorating Lebanese economy, several private schools cut instructors’ pay, stopped paying them, and, in some cases, fired them, justifying the need to sustain operations. At least 3,000 teachers have been fired, around 10,000 have received half-pay or no pay. Other institutions have engaged in salary negotiations with teachers, resulting in lower pay (Abdul-Reda Abourjeili & Harb, 2020; HRW, 2021). In fact, teachers, from both, the private and the public sector, went and continue to go on strikes until this day due to the lack of revisited salary scales.

Some private schools have raised tuition by up to 80% without allowing parents to see their budgets and insisting on payment of a particular sum in US dollars rather than settling all of the tuition fees in Lebanese pounds (HRW, 2021).

Challenges

“The crisis has caused a significant reduction in parents and teachers’ purchasing power, leaving them with no choice but to consider leaving the country” (Shuayb et al., 2021). Teacher and other school personnel sought professional opportunities outside Lebanon and soon left due to the country’s deterioration as well as being underpaid in a country whose national currency is on the brink of total collapse. This, ultimately, led to a brain-drain in quality educators.

Moreover, professional development opportunities for teachers and school personnel, purchasing of books and school resources, as well as sustaining international memberships and affiliations were challenged. Schools in Lebanon have, thus, lost one of their most fundamental modes of growth, evaluation, and development opportunities.

Solutions

Seeking outsourced opportunities was an option as many national and international organizations provided free webinars and workshops for educational development. Participation in these learning opportunities were incentivized by school personnel through recognition and promotional statuses. Furthermore, educational leaders drew on their strengths to conduct workshops for others in a format similar to the ‘Teacher-Train-Teacher’ programs. In this sense, leaders looked inward, to their and others’ talents and professions within the school system, to stay ahead of the curve in the new modality of online learning.

As for the fuel crises, coming to campus was carefully studied, starting with surveys and potential carpooling options leading to finding ways to install fuel reservoirs near the school campuses for easy fuel access or via collaborating with gas stations for special privileges.

School’s Response to the Challenged Health Sector

Initial Response

In response to the extended home-stay as well as absence from schools, the instructional outcomes and learning outcomes were compromised at the expense of providing students with more targeted education. Hence, all subject matters that were deemed secondary, such as arts, physical education, and the like, were eliminated from the academic curricula in order to make time to teach only essential learning outcomes in subject matters related to mathematics, the sciences, and the languages.

Some schools, due to the inability of their team to conduct classes, shut down their operations temporarily in hopes that lockdowns are lifted or permanently, owing their closure to lack of funds and teacher readiness, among other concerns.

Challenges

Nonetheless, when educational leaders opted to “cutting” the curriculum to its half (HRW, 2021), they failed in devising a sustainable solution, especially when no plans to make up the lost half

were provided. ‘Letting go’ of what educational leaders perceived to be the hurdle of the learning—the curriculum—did not reflect a potential willingness to modify the process—the teaching methodologies—rather than the outcome itself.

Solutions

In many schools, the learning outcomes remained but their mode of delivery was accommodated. This goes back with adopting an interdisciplinary approach that augments the learning experiences (Lombardo, 2010). Moreover, the use of online classes, when available, raised an opportunity to experiment with the flipped classrooms.

On a national scale, teachers from public and private schools have offered to prepare lessons and record TV sessions for officially certified classes as part of the remote education strategy (Abdul-Reda Abourjeili & Harb, 2020). Those classes were broadcasted on Télé Liban (Lebanon’s national TV station) and required no access to internet but merely a working TV and satellite. This project illustrated the solidarity among teachers and their eagerness to assist kids. Nonetheless, because there is a dearth of networking and experience exchange among teachers, opportunities to invest in successful practices as a foundation for professional and educational development are squandered (Abdul-Reda Abourjeili & Harb, 2020).

Moreover, the Lebanese Ministry of Education launched the National Distance Learning project for the first time in mid-2020. WhatsApp, Zoom's free edition bundle with 40-minute classes, emails, and various LMS were the main techniques used (UNICEF, 2020; Wazzan, 2020).

School Response to Further Instabilities: Blasts and Assassinations

Initial Response

According to Abdul-Reda Abourjeili and Harb (2020), the Ministry of Education has not released a detailed report on the educational sector's damages as a result of the Beirut Port explosion, nor has it published a work plan to rebuild and restore schools, as well as support principals, teachers, students, and families who are now facing a difficult academic year. The Lebanese government clearly relies on the World Bank, UN, and UNICEF programs, as well as the efforts of local NGOs, to resolve these concerns. The lack of a national training strategy to assist principals and teachers in times of crisis, as well as an open-to-all platform that provides high-quality education, is also notable (Abdul-Reda Abourjeili & Harb, 2020).

Challenges

The toll of these live-threatening explosions and assassinations burdened individuals in Lebanon, particularly children and adolescents who were directly or indirectly impacted by the aftermath. While a number of schools might have implicitly addressed the situation or discussed it informally, the majority did not. Schools relied on school counselors, if present, to address particular individual cases that exhibited major distress. Conducting a schoolwide intervention to attend the psychological and emotional well-being of the students unfortunately did not occur. Therefore, the

'business as usual' approach might not yield positive impacts, especially because many emotional experiences were repressed and/or disregarded.

Solutions

It was essential to acknowledge that the well-being of students is a prerequisite to the academic development and success. Many educational leaders, in Lebanon, took it upon themselves to host child psychologists to address matters related to the Beirut Blast and to the general instability of the country and/or to adopt/adapt an emotional development program that allows students to acknowledge their emotional development (Atkins et al., 2010). Programs, with socio-emotional learning at their core, eliminate undesirable behaviors, such as resorting to physical violence when angry, because it allows the child to identify and understand what they are feeling and channel it in the right direction.

Educational Leaders' Degree of Transformation

Burns (1978) defines a transformative leader as possessing the following,

- (1) *Idealized influence*, as in approaching tasks and followers based on predetermined principles and values
- (2) *Inspirational motivation*, as in establishing meaningful goals that the followers can attain for self-growth and for the institution's growth while motivating and celebrating wins along the process
- (3) *Intellectual stimulation*, as in challenging the status quo through intellectually and innovatively contributing to how problems and solutions and day-to-day operations are addressed
- (4) *Individualized consideration*, as in coaching, mentoring, and providing support to followers with care and consideration toward follower needs

In the Lebanese context, educational leaders have tapped upon the above-mentioned character traits of a transformational leader to navigate through the crises and maintain schooling operations. The table below summarizes how educational leaders in Lebanon been transformative in their response to the crises.

Table 2
A Transformative Endeavor among Educational Leaders in Lebanon

Idealized influence	Acknowledging low salary pay scales yet ensuring that students are still at the core of the learning
Inspirational motivation	Teaming up to provide learning opportunities via national television Drawing on their strengths to provide workshop and training opportunities for other educational leaders
Intellectual stimulation	Avoiding compromising the learning outcomes but reforming teaching methodologies instead

	Experimenting with new modes of teaching and learning online with limited nation-wide support
Individualized consideration	Implementing of socio-emotional learning programs Hosting child psychologists

The examples above are an illustrative representation of how educational leaders have responded to the crises in Lebanon. The evidence provided is a mere representation of the implementation of a transformative leadership approach in Lebanon. However, it provides great promise to the rise of transformative leadership among educational leaders in Lebanon. Thus, it becomes empirical, as a later stage to this article, that further studies validate the degree in transformation that educational leaders had to endure to maintain schooling operations and drive the educational field in Lebanon further.

Moreover, further studies are yet to conclude whether the transformational practices implemented by educational leaders have adequately contributed to meeting students' educational needs. While leaders revealed readiness to face adversity, on multiple occasions, studies that determine to what extent students have met the leveled learning expectations are yet to be conducted.

Conclusion

Educational institutions in Lebanon continue to suffer until this day. Beginning in the 2021-2022 academic year, talk of lockdown resurfaced, given new COVID-19 variants, as well as talk of road closure and strikes due to deteriorating conditions of the citizen. All this came amid a fuel shortage and electricity and electric generator outages. A beacon of hope was left hanging as the May 2022 parliamentary elections approached. Despite this, many Lebanese envisioned that only miracles can return a Lebanon of growth and opportunity back.

The education sector's future necessitates the development of a transformative mindset. In the midst of such dynamic uncertainty in Lebanon, institutions must prioritize their ability to adequately convey the issues they face and the decisions they must make (Khuri, 2021) in order to continue operating. Educational leaders have learned to perceive that 'the only constant is change,' as the Greek philosopher Heraclitus once claimed. They have also come to realize and acknowledge that their goals of enhancing educational experiences remain the same but their paths to achieve that are nonlinear. Educational leaders have adopted the means of non-linearity through embodying transformational leadership practices. While the evidence on these traits' implementations is scarce, and more research needs to be conducted to corroborate and validate the degree of their achievement, it remains true that educational leaders' attempts at holding the fort have resulted in a new, much-needed approach grounded in transformative endeavors within the educational institutions in Lebanon.

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