

**Leadership Development of Managers Working in the  
Ministry of Education and Educational Districts in  
Kuwait**

**A Thesis Submitted for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Reading**

**Institute of Education**

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**May, 2019**

## **Dedication**

Praise be to Allah for His grace and gifts

I dedicate this work to my country, Kuwait, and to those who seek to reform the education system.

## **Declaration**

I confirm that this is my own work and that the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Kafa Alenezi

## **Acknowledgements**

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful.

First, I thank Allah for the kindness, grace, and help that guided me to complete this thesis.

My thanks and sincere appreciation go to my first supervisor, Dr. Chris Turner, who has consistently supported me since the beginning of my PhD studies. His guidance and valuable advice played a major role in my accomplishing this work through the many useful meetings and discussions.

I would also like to express my thanks and gratitude to my second supervisor, Karen Jones, for her insightful thoughts and notes, which helped develop my writing for this thesis.

In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Alan Floyd and Dr. Tony MacFadyen for supervising me previously.

I am grateful to faculty members from the Kuwait University: Fadhl Al-Fadhli and Mohammad Al-Qaryouti from the Business Administration College (Department of Public Management) and Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Muhailbi from the Education College, who assessed the questionnaire used in my study to ensure its validity. I would like also to thank Mr. Walid Al Saied, Managers of Educational Affairs (formerly) for the information provided to me during the research sample selection and pilot study stages.

My thanks and appreciation are extended to all those who assisted me during my research trip, including both the Institute of Education staff at the University of Reading

and my Ph.D. colleagues, who undoubtedly helped me enhance my academic abilities through their scientific discussions.

I am also grateful to my wonderful friends Julia Cross and Gillian Tunley, who provided endless support and encouragement and gave me confidence and strength to make my dream come true.

As always, my greatest love and appreciation go to my family for their patience and encouragement during my studies: my husband and best supporter, Metab; my children Bashayer, Abdullah, and Abdulrahman; and especially my brilliant daughter Mashaël, who is not only a daughter but also an affectionate mother and devoted friend.

Finally, I extend my love to my wonderful grandchildren, who created joy in my life.

To everyone I say thank you and ask Allah to keep and reward you.

## Abstract

The professional development and preparation of new administrative leaders so they can be equipped to work in a rapidly changing environment driven by the competitive consequences of globalisation is certainly a key aim of the government in Kuwait. Thus, this research explored the effectiveness of the current leadership's preparation and on-going development of those responsible for leading the education system in Kuwait.

This research used a qualitative interpretive approach and was conducted in two stages with a sample of 54 managers (30 from the Ministry of Education departments and 24 from six education districts). In the first stage, 48 questionnaires were distributed, with 42 being returned representing a response rate of 87.5%. The second phase included semi-structured interviews conducted with eight managers with different areas of expertise to obtain more in-depth and comprehensive information on the issues that emerged from the analysis of the questionnaires.

The data indicated that no specific formal programmes exist to prepare managers and provide them with appropriate leadership skills. Although professional development activities are available, they are not dedicated to improving leadership capability, but only to developing some managerial and technical skills. These programmes do not specifically target this category of managers; thus, they have not been effective in improving their leadership skills. One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that the majority of participants were unable to demonstrate a clear understanding of *management or leadership* or distinguish between them.

The results also indicate that the most effective method is informal learning. Evidence suggests that the observation of others at work play an important and key role in

leadership development. Consequently, the data collected indicates that attending more formalised professional development courses has little influence on these managers' leadership knowledge and understanding.

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

BERA	British Educational Research Association
CSC	Civil Service Commission
ED	Education District
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
FL	Formal Learning
InFL	Informal Learning
KTS	Kuwait Teachers Society
MoE	Ministry of Education
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAAET	Public Authority for Applied Education and Training
PAS	Performance Appraisal System
PESSK	Public Education Strategy in the State of Kuwait 2005—2025
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPMoE	Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education
PPPS	Programmes Provided by the Private Sector
PS	Private Sector
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency

# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Leadership preparation is a critical issue, and the selection of candidates as leaders within the administrative system in Kuwait needs to be carried out as professionally as possible. Consequently, in-service leadership development programmes for leaders need to be planned systematically to ensure their continued upgrading of knowledge and skills (National Institute of Education [NIE], 2013). In addition, the preparation and construction of educational leadership capabilities are key to educational reforms and are an essential condition for the success of any effort to enhance effectiveness because educational leadership and management are important factors that indirectly influence the quality of an education system.

This study examines the effectiveness of the preparation and development programmes for managers of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and educational districts (EDs) in the Kuwaiti education system. It also attempts to reveal how these managers are prepared, as well as the effectiveness of any activities or training in which they might participate to improve their leadership skills. Furthermore, it explores their previous experience and their ability to perform the leadership role required by their administrative position.

## **1.2 Rationale, Significance, and Outcomes**

### **1.2.1 Rationale**

Leadership is an important and crucial variable that can lead to improved ability and organisational performance (OECD, 2001). Effective educational leadership has a significant effect on improving learning (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004;

Bush & Jackson, 2002). Leithwood et al. (2004) argued that the most important factor is teaching while the second most important factor in terms of impact on student learning is leadership.

Despite significant efforts undertaken by Kuwait to develop its education system and the progress that has been made in different educational areas, there is still concern among those interested in Kuwait's educational affairs, primarily because of the modest results Kuwait has on international tests such as Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) (see Section 2.2.3.1 and Appendix 1).

There may be many reasons for such results, including a lack of administrative stability in the executive supervisory positions in the MoE and educational institutions as well as weaknesses in the abilities and skills of leadership (MOE, 2014). For example, the Advisory Group from the National Institute of Education in Singapore conducted a diagnostic analysis on different aspects of the education system in Kuwait and pointed out that the leadership training programmes were insufficient and the quality of the existing school leadership training programmes was poor (NIE, 2013).

The professional development of educational leaders in Kuwait has become an essential requirement for successful educational reform. Kuwait's education strategy from 2005 to 2025 clearly states the importance of training for educational leadership for many reasons, including the ongoing need for the modernisation and development of education systems in an ever-increasingly globalised world, the lack of qualifications for educational leadership and the need for executive training programmes to keep pace with the current era's requirements (MOE, 2003).

From a personal perspective, I was previously a teacher (with 16 years of experience in intermediate school and subsequently secondary school) and have long held concerns about the education system in my country (Kuwait), despite the efforts of both the government and MoE to improve the situation in recent years. In addition, my experience in school administration (3 years as an assistant principal) has afforded me a greater opportunity to deal with school principals as well as managers working in the MoE and EDs. Therefore, I am able to recognise the importance of educational management to facilitate the educational process, and I understand the significant role played by managers in the MoE and EDs to manage a complex education system.

As a result of my own personal reflections, one of the core drivers of this study is to address the need to improve the number of suitably qualified managers who can efficiently and effectively lead and manage Kuwait's education system. The current situation may stem from inadequate academic and integrated training programmes as well as a lack of experience actually working as a teacher in the education system, learning from experienced managers' observation, and a lack of qualifications to prepare educational managers to work in district offices or the MoE.

### **1.2.2 Significance of the Research**

After studying the appropriate literature related to these areas, the researcher found that only a few studies had investigated issues affecting MoE and ED managers, such as the work of Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008) (training needs) and Alkandari (2013) (strategic plan). However, these studies do not focus on leadership preparation or development, nor do they analyse the skills and experiences that qualify individuals to accept a leadership role. The focus is instead on school administration, despite the importance of

the development of managers of the MoE and EDs because of the significance of their role and influence on school management and the education system in general.

Therefore, the significance of this research is that it is the first study to be conducted with MoE and EDs managers in Kuwait. Furthermore, this research is important for these managers because it seeks to explore the extent of their willingness to manage and lead when effectively carrying out their responsibilities in the education system as well as participate in shaping and implementing educational policy. It also serves to better understand what skills the study participants possess (or not) in order to fulfil the leadership role and identify their training needs to meet functional obligations. Thus, this research is important for planners and designers of training programmes for educational leadership in Kuwait because it will help them determine these programmes' objectives to comply with the needs of participants as well as develop their leadership skills.

This study is expected to be an important addition to the theoretical literature in the preparation and development of educational leadership in Kuwait, especially as, according to Al-Fraih (2014), there is, in general, a lack of studies about leadership in developing countries.

### **1.2.3 Outcomes of the Research**

As a result of the issues outlined thus far, and in order for Kuwait to compete more effectively with developed countries, the researcher believes that a more robust and effective selection procedure along with the effective preparation of educational managers prior to their appointment to their position is essential. It is also important for MoE officials to provide effective and continuing professional development to assist them

in managing and leading the education system. In addition, the managers themselves need to take their own share responsibility for developing their leadership skills.

This research illustrates the differences between preparation programmes (before promotion to new position) and leadership development activities (in-service). The findings show the importance of experience and the role of informal learning methods in improving leadership skills as well as the extent of the participants' need for specialised programmes for educational leadership. The resulting findings are expected to help policymakers, planners, and designers of professional development programmes better understand the importance of the leadership role of MoE and ED managers, which will in turn lead to the formation of a more comprehensive plan to help develop the necessary leadership skills.

### **1.3 Research Aims and Objectives**

This research aims to:

- Explore the effectiveness of the current arrangements for managers working in the MoE and EDs to act in a leadership capacity and to exercise the necessary leadership skills to achieve educational goals, such as developing future generations capable of assuming responsibility in all its forms and aspects, encouraging individuals to initiate and make decisions themselves, and enabling them to plan for the future;
- Understand the leadership development process more clearly for MoE and ED managers; and

- Provide an opportunity for MoE and ED managers to express their views and perceptions about how they are prepared and developed for their leadership roles.
- The objectives of this research are:
- To understand how the MoE and ED managers perceive themselves as managers who exercise a leadership role;
- To identify the effectiveness of professional development for educational managers in relation to their leadership role;
- To understand the experience and leadership skills for managers in the MoE and EDs from their own perspective;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the preparation programmes for educational managers to carry out their role in terms of leading and managing the education system in Kuwait; and
- To identify how the selection process and training of the MoE and ED managers actually works in Kuwait.

#### **1.4 Main Research Question**

This study seeks to answer the following main question:

To what extent are the leadership preparation and ongoing professional development of the MoE and ED managers effective in Kuwait?

This research question can be broken down into the following more specific questions:

**RSQ1:** To what extent do MoE and ED managers perceive themselves as managers who exercise leadership in the education system?

**RSQ2:** To what extent have MoE and ED managers engaged in leadership development activities (whilst in post)?

**RSQ3:** To what extent have past and current experiences been helpful in developing the expertise of MoE and ED managers?

**RSQ4:** How effective has the training been for MoE and ED managers (prior to appointment) for their leadership role?

**RSQ5:** How do MoE and ED managers think their leadership preparation might be improved?

## **1.5 Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the relevant topics, such as globalisation and the education system in Kuwait. The theoretical perspectives and relevant literature about the studied topics are discussed in Chapter 3 (Literature Review). Chapter 4 (Research Design and a Methodology) presents the research design and methodology and explains the methods used to answer the research questions as well as justify the selection of the research design, sample, tools, and data analysis methods. Chapter 5 (Research Findings) presents the results of a pilot study and analyses the qualitative and quantitative data collected during two consecutive phases during the main study. In Chapter 6 (Discussion and Analysis Results), the research findings are discussed and linked to the literature and previous studies. Finally, Chapter 7 (Conclusion) summarises the main findings and provides answers to the research question and sub-questions; it also highlights the original contribution of this study, recommendations, and limitations while providing suggestions for future research.

# **Chapter 2: International Context**

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter highlights issues related to the international context, such as globalisation and the state of Kuwait. Section 2.2 presents a discussion about globalisation and its impact on many aspects, such as global education. Section 2.3 examines the issue of neoliberalism and its role in economic and administrative transformations. Section 2.4 covers new public management (NPM) and its main features and components. Section 2.5 focuses on the state of Kuwait, such as its history, constitution, population, economy, and environment. It also highlights the influence of NPM on Kuwait's management and provides a brief background about the education system in Kuwait.

## **2.2 Globalisation**

Although there is extensive literature about the topic of globalisation, surprisingly, no single convincing theory or even systematic analysis of its basic features has emerged (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999).

### **2.2.1 Definition of Globalisation**

Globalisation refers to the changing nature of the global economy, which is linked to changes in economic growth and interactions across state borders (Bevir, 2009). It is the process of the integration of governance, economy, culture, science, and technology across national borders (Amedzro, 2005). Globalisation is a complex process because it involves rapid social change (modern social life through the speed of capital flows, goods, knowledge, information, beliefs, etc.) across national borders that occurs at the same time across multiple dimensions in economics, politics, communication, and the physical

and cultural environments as well as in all interactions related to transformation (Tomlinson, 2006).

Several Arabic studies on globalisation have viewed the phenomenon as a growing trend, representative of the division of work and the diffusion of technology from its location to various parts of the world, thereby leading to an increase in productivity. However, this has also led to the economic exploitation of the poor, where giant corporations utilise poorer countries with cheap labour to make profits and transfer to them different culture, ignoring the recipient countries' culture, just to achieve profit (Amin, 2009). Globalisation is a move towards integration in the world and the abolition of geographical, temporal, and objective boundaries between states and societies. Different countries have undergone varying degrees of globalisation (Mohammed, 2009).

Globalisation refers to the gradual transformation of economic, social, and cultural policies, legislation, and regulations from both within national borders and across countries. This process occurs through technological development and the ability to easily communicate; as such, it has resulted in the domination of developed countries over developing countries and a disintegration of the barriers and borders between them.

### **2.2.2 Influence of Globalisation on Developing Countries**

Although many countries contribute to globalisation, such as Arab states, by virtue of their strategic location, forcing them to deal with globalisation, the United States has been attempting to spread its own culture and politics. Oil accounts for approximately three quarters of all Arab exports, and many Arab countries import food. Multinational companies' dominance is concentrated in several areas of the Arab world, especially the Arab Gulf region. The companies that embody globalisation mechanisms have become a

direct threat to the authority of the state, reflecting the internal political implications that threaten state sovereignty (Mohammed, 2009).

Globalisation is an inevitable phenomenon. Its supporters from Arab countries emphasise their countries' need to open up to world cultures while preserving Arabic values and behaviours because the strongest politically, economically, and technologically will also be the strongest culturally. By publishing globalised cultures and values, they are affirming Western patterns and habits, which are beginning to dominate the Islamic and Arab world (Alkherashi, 1999).

Arab countries have been forced to develop effective methods to confront globalisation. They have adopted programmes to repair their economic, financial, and administrative status and meet the development and economic integration requirements (Abdel Aziz, Zakaria, & Althan, 2011). The Arab region has a regional subsystem linked to the global market under the policy of openness, which has forced the region to face the pressures of globalisation (Mohammed, 2009). However, the economic potential of the Arab region and its strategic location are more closely related to globalisation than the interests that serve the global system, particularly Western powers, because of its vast energy wealth, which makes the Arab system a globalised one (Idrissi, 2015).

The economy of Kuwait, like most Arab Gulf states in the region, depends on oil to provide employment and welfare for its citizens while ensuring a state of stability and comfort. It relies on expatriate labour in certain professions to meet the needs of its economy, especially since the discovery of oil and the development of the industry. Different factors have prompted Kuwait's merge into globalisation processes, such as humanitarian aid, military support, and the need for better resources and imported

foreign goods because of the lack of produce and local expertise, as well as its citizens' unwillingness to perform some professions, resulting in the need for foreign labour (Kamal, 2013).

### **2.2.3 Globalisation and International Education**

Globalisation has had a great impact on education at many different levels and will continue have significant impacts in the future. World governments understand the essential role of educational institutions, not only in the education and training of skills needed in the global economy, but also in preparing individuals in new communities that rely on information and knowledge (Carnoy, 1999).

Educational decentralisation may be a manifestation of globalisation because it changes the political power of the nation state, where decentralisation can be a product of ideology; the central state bureaucracy is considered an impediment to private sector growth (Carnoy, 1999). Balarin (2014) also argued that one of the effects of this global regime change, which has taken place in all aspects, is the impact on education through processes of globalisation, regionalisation, decentralisation, deregulation, and outsourcing to the private sector of various aspects of educational provision, funding, regulation, and ownership.

Education is the cornerstone of this phase. It will help identify key features to guide future workers and leaders to respond to economic and cultural globalisation challenges. Education plays an important and essential role in dealing with the problematic aspects of globalisation (Magsino, 2008).

According to Carnoy (1999), globalisation influences education in five ways:

- Rising demand for products requires a high level of skill to producers, leading to pressure to increase the average level of education in the labour market and to provide more opportunities for adults to gain further skills.
- Governments of developing countries are under pressure to increase spending on education in order to produce a better educated labour force.
- Information technology is being introduced into education systems gradually. This is partly by attempting to expand the quantity of education at a lower cost through distance learning.
- Globalisation means a shift in the culture of the world as it also has the effect that many countries feel marginalised by the market value of this new culture. This new shift also affects the regulations of the education system.
- Comparisons of the quality of national education systems are growing at the international level by applying global standards tests. These are part of a large effort to strengthen accountability by measuring the production of knowledge and using the results to assess workers in the field of education, such as teachers and managers (Carnoy, 1999).

The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has become the world's first standard to assess the quality, equity, and efficiency of school systems in providing students with these basic skills (OECD, 2014). PISA is a triennial survey to assess the extent to which 15-year-old students nearing the end of compulsory education have gained the basic knowledge and skills necessary for full participation in modern societies. PISA results show what students in the highest-performing and most rapidly improving education systems can do. The findings enable policymakers around the world to

measure the knowledge and skills of students in their own countries in comparison with those in others and learn from policies and practices applied elsewhere (OECD, 2014).

#### **2.2.4 Globalisation's Influence on Education in Kuwait**

In the last two decades, educational policy has seen fluctuations in education systems and their values, resulting in quality education being neglected while a rising focus on quantity has been taking place instead. Therefore, the drafting of the education policy in Kuwait through a national dialogue involving all national forces with academic specialisations has been dictated by the age requirements with all its challenges (Al-Qallaf, Ruwaished, & Khadr, 2006).

Al-Qallaf et al. (2006) identified the general objectives of education, vocational training, and rehabilitation, as stipulated by the government's work programme during the 10<sup>th</sup> legislative term (2003). These general objectives illustrate the extent of the Kuwait government's attention on globalisation through the development education. A few objectives relevant to this study are mentioned below:

- Make a quantum leap in the education curriculum for pre-university stages to ensure the achievement of development goals and a communication culture in the present era.
- Apply institutional reform in the public education sector in line with the requirements of achieving the developmental goals and objectives of the administrative reform in the state as well as the rationalisation of public spending (Al-Qallaf et al., 2006).

The Public Education Strategy in the State of Kuwait 2005–2025 (PESSK) identified three main issues in education, generating great interest. These relate to the era, the status of

Kuwait and its education system, what matters in this context, and how this strategy addresses globalisation issues (see Section 2.5.5.2; MOE, 2003). PESSK also confirms the MoE (2014) report entitled “Education for All.” As an active member of UNESCO, Kuwait has sought to achieve the educational goals for achieving sustainable human development and the stability of an educated society. Through the introduction of e-learning in schools, curriculum development has continued unabated, raising the proportion of spending on education per year from the state budget and encouraging the private sector’s participation and investment in education as well as participation in international competitions held by international institutions (MOE, 2014). Examples include TIMSS, an international assessment of mathematics and science at the fourth and eighth grades that has been conducted every four years since 1995, and PIRLS, an international assessment of reading comprehension at the fourth grade level that has been conducted every five years since 2001 (Mullis & Martin, 2013).

However, despite the MoE’s great efforts, with the support of the government and senior leaders in the state, and the increased spending on the development of education, educational output has caused disappointment for those involved in educational affairs as well as parents. Winokur (2014) confirmed that the TIMSS 1995, 1998, 2003, 2007, and 2011 and the PIRLS 2001, 2006, and 2011 results show that Kuwaiti students performed in one of the lowest percentages compared to most countries.

### **2.3 Neoliberalism**

Neoliberalism is a complex mix of values, ideologies, and practices that affect the economic, political, and cultural aspects of society (Ross & Gibson, 2007). The competitive nature of globalisation is consistent with neoliberalism, which holds that the competitive

forces of the market neoliberalism, where individuals and companies compete with each other, lead to more innovative and efficient practices. In the neoliberal perspective, a key element of globalisation is to remove barriers to international competition (Shields, 2013). These changes have a positive impact because competition creates efficiency, and economic growth stimulates technological innovation, leading to improved lives that—as neoliberals claim—open international companies to individuals (Tooley, 1997).

Public services (such as education and healthcare) were early targets of this neoliberal ideology. Neoliberal management techniques include increased exposure to competition, increased accountability measures, and the implementation of performance targets in management (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Education systems across the world are part of the ideology and policy of neoliberalist capitalism. Neoliberal educational reforms in schools and universities stress the need for opening up the educational services market to for-profit educational management institutions (Ross & Gibson, 2007). In addition, parental choice of a variety of schools or whether to send children to one school or another (markets in education), the privatisation of schools and educational service providers, and the cutting of state subsidies to education and other public services are part of the educational and anti-public welfare strategy of the capitalist class (Hill, 2007).

Since the 1980s, the neoliberal business agenda has become more extreme, with smaller countries and bigger markets attacking the public sector through efforts to reduce public spending through the privatisation of public services and the provision of market incentives (Lorenz, 2012). New public management has emerged in response to the requirements of administrative reforms due to the expansion in the application of the concept of globalisation as well as the principles of neoliberalism, which will be discussed in the next section.

## **2.4 New Public Management (NPM)**

Bureaucracy is a prerequisite for the organisation of the modern state as well as modern economic systems requiring stability and predictability provided by bureaucracy (Stoker, 2006). According to Weber (as cited in Jain, 2004), bureaucratic organisations are characterised by three qualities: a formal hierarchical structure unequivocally centring around power and authority, a textured rationale systematic for the division of labour, and control through a set of general rules that are formal, clear, comprehensive, and stable. Many scientists believe that bureaucracy is not very effective (Gajduschek, 2003). However, traditional public management provides a certain set of solutions to the challenges facing governance in organisations by means of heavy reliance on the Weberian concept of the world (Stoker, 2006), which stresses control from the top to the bottom in a hierarchical monocratic form.

Ideas about NPM have, to a certain extent, appeared in response to the administrative inefficiencies associated with traditional public management (Stoker, 2006). The main reason for the collapse of the traditional management model is that it did not work because of the rapidly changing world, especially in relation to the economy. The emergence of new methods of public management reform not only affects traditional public management, but is also considered to be a paradigm change (Katsamunska, 2012). According to Stoker (2006), NPM is a different solution; its responsibility is to design and implement programmes that achieve their unique goals.

### **2.4.1 Definition of New Public Management (NPM)**

Lapsley (2009) defined NPM as an influential set of management techniques based on the standards and practices of private sector performance. These techniques have been deployed on a large scale by governments seeking to modernise public management and achieve global importance. From the offset, NPM entails changing processes of public management to achieve compatibility with private sector management processes in order to achieve the goals of both the government and non-profit organisations in the public services sector while meeting global market needs through the application of the standards and values of economic globalisation.

Based on this understanding, the NPM definition includes two components. The first is managerialism, which involves introducing private sector management techniques to the public sector, stressing hands-on professional management, clear criteria, and standards performance, and managing by results, value for money, and proximity to the customers. The second is new institutional economics, which refers to introducing incentive structures (such as market competition) in the delivery of public services; it emphasises bureaucracy, increased competition through contracting-out and quasi-markets, and consumer choice (Rhodes, 1996).

### **2.4.2 Main Features and Components of New Public Management (NPM)**

The main components of NPM include hands-on professional management allowing for active, visible, and discretionary control of an organisation by managers free to manage and set clear performance standards, thereby increasing competition and contracts, the partition of units, and the implementation of private sector techniques (Christensen & Lægreid, 2001). According to Dunleavy (1994), in such cases, competitive components try

to remove supplier monopoly to create multiple competing parties, thereby creating potential competition if current suppliers fail to maintain working efficiency.

The main features of NPM include focusing on economic standards and values. The dominance of NPM is linked to strong opinions that economic standards and values have implications for other aspects of the public realm. This entails an emphasis on efficiency, including changes in both the formal organisation of the public sector and the necessary experience of procedures relating to partnership with the private sector (Christensen & Lægreid, 2001). NPM is characterised by its main properties, which include accountability, transparency and the provision of a detailed statement of the costs, and the building of organisations in the form of groups that include director/deputy contractual relations. These properties may also include the fragmenting of planning and transport services from the public sector to the private and voluntary sector as well as a policy of encouraging competition between these sectors and giving more options for service users to change service providers.

Cope, Leishman, and Starie (1997) described five characteristics of NPM. First, it reflects an ideological commitment that stresses the superiority of the market over the state and is often based on simplification—namely, private is good while public is bad. Second, increased competition between the public and private sectors within the public sector is encouraged to increase efficiency (value for money) by making public sector agencies more responsive to the consumer. Third, a centralised policy-making strategy resides in the hands of the core executive branch within the heart of the government; the strategy embraces a close, coherent network of senior ministers and officials. Fourth, NPM involves decentralisation insofar as the delivery of public policy to a large number of agencies, including local authorities, non-government organisations, and private

contractors, whereas managerial and operational actions enjoy a degree of freedom within the policy strategy limits developed by the centre. Finally, fragmentation takes place because of the management divide, thereby encouraging client/contractor as well as purchaser/supplier divisions within the government.

### **2.4.3 Criticisms of NPM**

The civil service has adapted to working with the private sector in order to provide efficiency and greater efficacy of delivery, such as reducing spending. According to this thinking, NPM can generate more prosperity and wealth in reforms associated with the privatisation of the public sector (Marobela, 2008). On the other hand, many NPM strategies have increased the level of complexity of problems tackled, which has negatively affected the solution to social problems, reducing welfare and removing the positive effects advocated by NPM (Dunleavy, 1994).

According to Gordon and Whitty (1997), many governments have recently sought to restructure and improve the controls in the public education domain to reduce educational bureaucracy and establish education systems relying on an autonomous form of school management. These changes have been associated with an increased focus on the choice of parents and competition, which means the establishment of “markets” for educational services. They also confirmed that the privatisation of education means that the private sector provides schooling, thereby making the state a partner in the provision of education or school through sales to the private sector, which in turn raises the problem of political legitimacy in communities in the states providing education. It is difficult to implement compulsory education under this system because parents cannot pay the cost of sending a child to school (Gordon & Whitty, 1997).

Fitz and Beers (2002) argued that public education is becoming a source of profit for commercial and non-profit organisations through key operations (such as outsourcing and partnerships between the public and private sector), which may affect the quality of services, curriculum, and teaching methods in public education. These processes lead to many questions being asked about the efficiency and effectiveness of these policies or processes, such as the extent of their contribution to improve management, the use of resources, the degree of accountability required to organise the learning processes, and the extent to which education should be accepted as a commodity to be bought and sold on the market as well as which social objectives are expected to contribute to education (Balarin, 2014).

## **2.5 Information about the State of Kuwait**

### **2.5.1 Kuwait's History**

Historically, Kuwait is a peaceful nation, strategically situated for trade and maritime transport. Kuwait's rapid growth stems from its use as a station for caravans laden with goods traveling between Arab states as well as convoys carrying Indian goods by Kuwaiti ships. The Kuwaitis earned money from the sea and land transportation trade, and Kuwait emerged as an important trade and economic site in the North Arabian Gulf at a time when international trade was active in the Arabian Gulf. Interest in Kuwait increased in the region and internationally because of its geographical location (Aidarous, 2002).

Aidarous (2002) noted that, in 1899, Kuwait's ruler Mubarak Al-Sabah sought a treaty of protection with the British government in order to protect Kuwait from the threat of the Ottoman Empire. This continued until 1961, when Britain and Kuwait's ruler Abdullah Al-Salem considered the protection treaty to be inconsistent with the full sovereignty of

Kuwait. As a result, it was cancelled, and Kuwait became an independent state. Kuwait began to take a prominent place and play an important role in international forums. The main focus was to enhance political and national awareness among Kuwaitis, which subsequently led to the rise of education, health, public services, and infrastructure (Aidarous, 2002).

### **2.5.2 Kuwait's Characteristics**

Kuwait is located in the north-western region of the Arabian Gulf, bordering the Iraqi Republic to the north and north-west, Saudi Arabia to the south and south-west, and the Arabian Gulf to the east. Covering an area of 17,818 square kilometres, Kuwait has commercial importance as a result of its location in the north-east region of the Arabian Peninsula. Its location in the desert means long, hot, and dry summers whereas winter is short, warm, and sometimes rainy. Kuwait's population as of June 30, 2012, was 3,267,431, with approximately 1,128,381 being Kuwaitis and the rest being foreigners. The most populated areas are concentrated in Kuwait City and its suburbs (Kuwait Government Online—State of Kuwait, n.d.).

### **2.5.3 Kuwait's Economy**

The first oil field discovered in Kuwait was in Burgan in 1938. In 1946, Kuwait started transporting the first shipment of crude oil, flowing smoothly through the pipeline to the tanker. Over the subsequent three decades, there have been extensive developments by the Kuwait Oil Company, where Kuwait nationalised the oil industry—a significant achievement (“Amiri Diwan of the State of Kuwait,” n.d.).

Kuwait's economy is a relatively open economy. The government sector controls most of the petroleum products, the generation of electricity, water desalination, and the food,

wood, and clothing industries. Although Kuwait is located within a region where conditions are not favourable for agricultural activities on a large scale, it is making significant efforts to provide fruit, vegetables, and meat. In addition, Kuwait has played a prominent economic role among the Arab nations and at an international level. In 1961, Kuwait established the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, an institution concerned with the provision and management of financial and technical assistance to developing countries. Although initially limited to the provision of economic aid to Arab countries, in 1974 it extended its activities to include all countries in the developing world ("Amiri Diwan of the State of Kuwait," n.d.).

#### **2.5.4 NPM's Influence on Kuwait's Management**

Widespread corruption among the elites and influential groups further aggravates and deepens existing managerial problems. If governments want to minimise managerial problems in the developing world, they should first accept an overall reform in the political and economic systems (Al-Kazemi & Ali, 2002). Because of the changes and reforms taking place all over the world, it is difficult to keep this strict level of government or administration. Therefore, the change becomes a necessity to meet the requirements imposed by the state and globalisation (Alkandari, 2013). The World Bank is a major player in the reform movement. Kuwait has drawn on its expertise in the fields of economics and education in order to improve its system and develop a knowledge-based economy to encourage entrepreneurship and prepare skilled workers (Winokur, 2014).

In Kuwait, the private sector is small, undeveloped, and multiracial, as it depends heavily on expatriate labour, which is relatively effective and experienced. Kuwaitis are reluctant to work in the private sector and prefer the public sector, which gives them the best

offers (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 1995). The biggest chunk of the workforce elite in the country is employed in the government sector, encouraging frantic bureaucratic growth in reaction to the vast oil wealth in order to keep up with the pace of economic prosperity (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 1995). According to Abdalla and Al-Homoud (1995), several factors contribute to the lack of bureaucratic efficiency in Kuwait, including the Kuwaitisation of administrative functions in the government sector of the local inexperienced staff, government policies that ensure job security for Kuwaitis, and employees being encouraged to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

Al-Musailim (1987) explained that, in 1970, the government of Kuwait adopted the Kuwaitisation policy, which promoted a large number of administrators who were not qualified for higher positions, based exclusively on seniority and personal relationships. This policy consequently hindered the development of the Ministry of Education. Thanks to the state's haste for expansion, Kuwait today is suffering from inflation and bureaucracy.

In terms of managerial problems in Kuwait, like other Arabian Gulf states, where managers face various problems that are general in nature and persistent, these problems stem from the sudden economic prosperity within the existing political system as well as traditional and personalised relationships at work (Al-Kazemi & Ali, 2002). The resultant Kuwaiti bureaucracy, like all Arab bureaucracies, has been criticised for being rigid and sticking to a hierarchy of authority (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 1995).

Al-Kazemi and Ali (2002) confirmed that the main administrative problems in Kuwaiti institutions are due to government policies as well as employees' cultural traditions, customs, and practices. According to Al-Rayes and Al-Fadhli (2004), government

departments suffer greatly from *wasta* (the intervention of influential people to achieve the stakeholders' goals) despite efforts by constitutional provisions and civil service law in Kuwait to address this by introducing the principle of equality and justice as well as preventing employees from dealing with it. Jones (2009) argued that, in many Arab countries, people in authority "have gained their positions due to being members of an elite group, rather than through their own merit, qualifications and experience" (p. 264). Al-Rayes and Al-Fadhli (2004) argued that a large percentage of Kuwaiti citizens use *wasta* to ensure that they receive what they see as legitimate and right for them; they also believe that *wasta* is a social obligation necessary for strengthening relationships and ensuring the satisfaction of relatives and friends. Administrative leadership and staff within various governmental institutions play a key role as mediators to complete transactions in their organisations (Al-Rayes & Al-Fadhli, 2004). Furthermore, many elements affect the behaviour of individuals (managers and staff) in their organisations, such as tribal origins, social and religious issues, and factors related to the government's authority (Ali, 2009).

Despite developing countries facing pressure from institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to privatise the public sector, some governments—including Kuwait—still provide public services such as health, water, electricity, and education to citizens. However, the service is generally poor due to the lack of accountability and responsibility; therefore, the need to improve efficiency is one of the reasons that prompted the government of Kuwait to consider privatisation (Madzikanda & Njoku, 2008).

These same factors have also led to decentralisation, a dramatic increase in development, and a need for centralisation. Central governments may lose control as government authorities feel the need to keep some level of authority (Alkandari, 2013).

## **2.5.5 Education in Kuwait**

### **2.5.5.1 Centralisation of the Education System in Kuwait**

The public education structure in Kuwait has evolved over the last 100 years to include highly centralised management. Today it consists of a minister of education and an undersecretary, who work with many assistant undersecretaries and are responsible for various aspects of the education system. For example, the Assistant Undersecretary of the Public Education sector oversees the EDs to ensure that educational plans are managed correctly. However, the result is a cumbersome system, delays in decision making, and a lack of communication between the minister, undersecretary, and district offices, which are often criticised by politicians, government officials, and stakeholders (Winokur, 2014).

The MoE in Kuwait originally established five EDs (a sixth one was established in 1999) to find a balance between centralisation and decentralisation in educational administration. The MoE remains responsible for planning, supervision, and control over the development of education. In contrast, the EDs (decentralisation processes) implement guidance in schools and supervision and are responsible for evaluating school performance (UNESCO, 2011).

However, despite the transformation of Kuwait's education system from centralised to decentralised through EDs, Winokur (2014) emphasised that, in recent years, the public education structure in Kuwait has evolved into a highly centralised department

overseeing six EDs that ensure the proper management of educational plans. Decentralisation means reducing the control of the higher authorities in certain decisions and the transfer of this responsibility to lower levels of management. As a result, a wider participation of stakeholders can occur in the field of education. Decentralisation leads to increasing the central government's efficiency if it has any difficulty in dealing with issues centrally (Alkandari, 2013).

Hassan (2008) indicated that the degree of implementation of decentralisation in Kuwait was slightly above average in the public education system, but there were many problems in applying this process in educational areas, such as the existence of a clear overlap among specialisms of some departments of the ministry and the school districts. Furthermore, the powers granted to school district leaders and school principals were limited, and there had been negative interference in some of the decisions issued by school districts or schools. As a result, school district leaders and school principals were not fully independent or able to conduct work within their institutions (Hassan, 2008).

#### **2.5.5.2 Education Policy Reform in Kuwait—Public Education Strategy in the State of Kuwait 2005–2025 (PESSK)**

PESSK provides a strategic and general framework that directs the trajectory of the education system to meet the needs of the community; it also focuses on determining the direction to bring about change in the public education system and serves as the basis for education reform and the development of educational institutional structures. This strategy was certified by the Council of Ministers for 2005–2025, thereby making it binding for the MoE and executive government bodies. It is considered the first public education strategy adopted in the history of Kuwait.

PESSK provides a comprehensive strategy which includes a reference frame from which it was launched, the strategic vision, mission and goals, and the general policies of the education system (MOE, 2003). The strategic vision is to be seen as an education system that provides the basis for the preparation of young people to ensure that the objectives and principles of the state are achieved and with the diversity in styles which provides multiple opportunities for individuals and the community to develop their skills, abilities, self-fulfilment and service for the whole community (MOE, 2003). The strategic mission is to create appropriate opportunities to help learners achieve comprehensive and integrated growth spiritually, mentally, socially, psychologically, and physically to the maximum extent of their abilities and potential. This will ensure a balance between achieving for themselves and their service to the community in a manner that meets the requirements of the age and social and economic development, whilst maintaining the community's culture (MOE, 2003).

The strategy has identified the main policy of the public education system, some of which can be summarised as follows: (MOE, 2003):

- Ensure that the community needs of public education, such as workforce preparation and diversifying the learning sources, in order work to respond to them through ongoing development work.
- Encourage the private sector to carry the largest burden possible from investment to provision public education services.
- Benefit from the experience of successful models for the development of public education systems in other countries.
- Benefit from the expertise of international institutions interested in education (e.g., UNESCO and World Bank).

However, like any other project, this strategy has both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, the strategy merely outlines plans for education, leaving the more specific details for those within the educational institution. This makes the strategic plan flexible and helps the implementers determine the best ways to achieve their education goals. Lerner (1999) also argued that such strategy is flexible and oriented towards the whole picture of the organisation to provide a framework to achieve its desired future. Education strategy is also characterised by its validity for different periods of time. It should be noted that the strategy was developed around 2003, but fits with this era despite rapid changes and technological developments in society both globally and regionally. The strategy has emphasised the importance of keeping up with technological developments and provides solutions so that these developments can be available to all. In addition, it emphasises the importance of openness to world cultures and the ability to learn from the experiences of other countries while still preserving the Arab and Islamic identity (MOE, 2003).

The weaknesses in the strategy are that it does not include a comprehensive and specific goal, but merely identifies the strategic mission, which is a duplicate of the overall goal for education. Because the strategy is unquestionably a significant document, it must therefore have a clear and specific goal. Furthermore, PESSK does not include an illustrative interpretive plan for each goal, which may prevent many different interpretations of the same goal. As a result, the responsibilities of educational leaders are increased when developing plans that must be concurrent with the objectives of the strategy as well as with the rapid and continuing changes in the world education systems.

In this study, the educational leadership refers to those who occupy the positions of leadership at the ministry and district levels of education as well as those who take

decisions affecting the education system and participants of educational policy-making. In Kuwait, there are three educational institutions representing the education system. The MoE is considered the centre of decision-making and responsible for drawing up education policy; it includes the most senior leadership. The EDs include the middle leadership and are considered to be a link between the ministry and schools. Finally, schools are where the educational policies are implemented. The next section outlines the administrative levels that constitute the MoE and EDs because the sample was selected from these two organisations.

### **2.5.5.3 Ministry of Education (MoE) and Education Districts (EDs)**

The education system in Kuwait combines the centralisation and decentralisation of the educational management. The MoE represents the centralisation mechanisms through its responsibility of planning, supervising, and controlling the development of education whereas the EDs represent the decentralisation mechanisms through the implementation of processes in their schools and the supervision and assessment of their performance (UNESCO, 2011).

The MoE as an organisation includes three levels of senior leadership: the minister, the undersecretary of ministry, and eight assistant undersecretaries that chair eight sectors in the MoE (see Appendix 2), with each sector followed by a number of administration departments divided as follows (MOE, 2015):

- Public Education Sector: 8 administrations
- Private and Qualitative Education Sector: 2 administrations
- Educational Development and Student Activities Sector: 5 administrations
- Educational Research and Curriculum Sector: 3 administrations

- Educational Constructions and Planning Sector: 5 administrations
- Management and Administrative Development Sector: 3 administrations
- Legal Affairs Sector: 2 administrations
- Financial Sector: 2 administrations

Each administration is affiliated with a number of supervision departments, and each one also includes many administrative sections in the sense that each sector in the MoE is followed by three levels of administrative (see Appendix 3).

According to the job description, managers of administrators in the MoE have a supervisory function. They are responsible for overseeing the development of the annual plan, preparing regulations and standards to regulate the work of the administration, participating in educational policy-making, and following up on their implementation to achieve the education system's goals (MOE, 2015). The manager of each department in the ministry is accountable to the assistant undersecretary for the sector followed by these departments.

However, the EDs include four administration departments, and each department includes a number of supervisors who visit schools to identify their needs and solve any problems they face. That means each ED includes four managerial levels: general managers followed by managers of administration, supervisors, and heads of departments (see Appendix 4). ED managers' functions are considered supervisory; they oversee the development of the annual plan for the administration they head in that district, follow up on the development of the educational process, and work to provide their needs and find solutions to the problems they face in order to achieve the best

results (MOE, 2015). These four managers in each ED are accountable to the general manager of the district.

#### **2.5.5.4 Professional Development of the Ministry of Education Managers**

In Kuwait, three stakeholders provide professional or training development programmes for MoE staff, including the ministry, EDs, and schools: the Development Department of the MoE, Kuwait University, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET).

Through a 1993 ministerial decree concerning organisational development in the education ministry of Kuwait, the Development Administration was given responsibility for the education ministry's training (Al-Khatib & Al-Enezi, 2008). According to (UNESCO, 2011), through the Development Department the MoE has sought to cooperate with various scientific, educational, and training institutions and to benefit from experts providing lectures, workshops, and practical applications as well as development programmes for the MoE trainees. These programmes include improving work performance, meeting requirements of professional development, preparing for management positions, and using information technology. Meanwhile, PAAET has established a centre for vocational evaluation and development to provide training programmes for educational trainees in the field of curricula and teaching methods for their job roles. In addition, the Faculty of Education at Kuwait University has also established graduate programmes for MoE staff (teachers or managers) to complete their higher studies and obtain a higher teaching diploma or master's degree (in disciplines such as educational administration, curricula and teaching methods) (UNESCO, 2011).

Although the training programmes are provided free for teachers and educational managers to encourage MoE staff to improve their skills, trainees may face some difficulties, such as not meeting their training needs. In addition, it has been claimed that training programmes can be characterised by stagnation and a lack of suitability to trainees' needs. Furthermore, they have weak methods for assessment and do not take into account contemporary trends used in the field of leadership training (Mohammed, 2008).

According to Jones (2009), in many Middle Eastern countries, including the Gulf Arab states, there are few opportunities to attend training courses and acquire qualifications locally. Therefore, the MoE sought to send some managers to participate in international conferences and attend various courses to transfer these experiences to the education system in Kuwait, thinking that this would develop managers' (or leaders') skills. However, those sent to professional development programmes in foreign countries (such as America and Britain) are mostly chosen based on seniority instead of merit and may not be prepared for the teaching methods or may face difficulties due to the high level of English required (Jones, 2009).

#### **2.5.5.5 Selection of the Ministry of Education Managers**

In Kuwait, although senior educational leaders understand the importance of preparing managers to become leaders in the future, the process of selecting candidates for managerial posts in the MoE or education districts does not include the condition that candidates have been sufficiently prepared or qualified to be an educational leader. Rather, they set certain criteria (such as years of service or competency assessment) that apply to all candidates for supervisory positions, such as a head of department or a school

principal. In addition, the MoE forms interviews committees to determine who is entitled to be a manager and fill vacant positions according to the results of these interviews.

According to an explanatory memorandum for a proposed law from one member of the Kuwaiti National Assembly about conditions to hold leadership and supervisory positions, state organisations should abide by the provisions of the Kuwaiti constitution in the process of selecting leaders to fill the leadership positions of government bodies. This is due to the spread of *wasta* and favouritism in leaders' selection while depriving other national competencies from taking leadership positions. In addition, candidates for leadership positions have been accepted from other parties, not from the same bodies or organisations where there are many eligible candidates to fill those positions in state ministries. That has led to a deterioration in leadership performance because of the lack of cooperation of staff in those sectors with their leaders, in principal because they came from external organisations (Transparency Center of Information, 2013).

#### **2.5.5.6 Performance Appraisal System (PAS)**

The MoE in Kuwait adopted the employee performance appraisal system (PAS) based on a decision issued by the Civil Service Commission (No. 36) in 2006, which sets out criteria for the evaluation of staff each year by their direct heads. PAS includes four evaluation groups: individual performance, group abilities, personal abilities, and supervisory functions. Each group includes several factors (Kuwait Teachers Association, 2010). In 2017, a fifth group was added to include factors measuring the extent of adherence to the official work term.

Ashkanani (2001) pointed to the inefficiency of the evaluation system in the public sector due to many shortcomings. For example, its objectives are not clear to the vast majority

of staff, where the evaluation process is conducted on non-objective bases and criteria due to a lack of measurement tools. It also does not guarantee fairness among staff, meaning that it does not differentiate between the creative employee (excellent level) and medium or weak performance, and it pays little attention to the future performance development issues because they do not focus on the strengths or weaknesses of an employee's performance to identify training needs. There is also greater emphasis on disciplinary elements and personal relationships than on the technical aspects, which has a direct bearing on the employee's performance. In addition, not discussing the results of performance with staff can negatively affect their relationships with superiors and may prevent them from improving their performance because they do not know their weaknesses (Ashkanani, 2001).

This situation may have resulted in a lack of genuine MoE and ED managers' performance assessments. As a result, there is no appropriate development of performance that helps improve the performance of the organisation or departments they manage. It has also led to a lack of credibility in selecting the right person to assume supervisory and leadership positions (MoE and ED managers) because the selection processes depend on the evaluation of candidate's efficiency and experience in his/her job.

# Chapter 3: Literature Review

## 3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of leadership preparation in the educational ministry and districts to carry out their functions to lead the education system in Kuwait. Accordingly, this chapter reviews literature related to educational leaders' development that emphasises the rationale of this study, such as management, leadership, organisational culture, and professional development. Section 3.2 discusses the key theoretical ideas and related concepts, including an explanation of both contingency theory and social learning theory adopted to determine the theoretical framework. Section 3.3 reviews literature about the concepts, functions, and management levels as well as the management of change. Section 3.4 discusses the definition of leadership and includes the theoretical literature for leadership preparation and selection processes for leaders to hold positions where these are related to leadership development in general. Section 3.5 focuses on the organisation's culture, including decision-making processes, centralised education systems, decentralisation, accountability, performance and both types of power, authority, and influence in educational organisations. Leadership topics, models, and professional development cannot be verified without considering the context in which leadership is exercised because it happens through a group of individuals expected to share the values, customs and objectives that constitute the culture of the organisation. Section 3.6 discusses theoretical literature in professional development as well as adult education. Section 3.7 explains the development of educational leaders and includes trends in leadership development and the strategies used to develop them. In addition, learning through lived

experience is examined as it may have had a greater impact on development than formal learning methods.

Finally, some of the previous studies related to the topic of educational leadership development are presented in this chapter. These are divided into two groups: Western studies such as those conducted in the United Kingdom, and Arab studies such as those conducted in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Most studies have generally focused on schools as educational organisations, and the way they have been applied in the Western context differs somewhat from the educational environment in the Eastern context. Accordingly, although this thesis focuses on the preparation of the MoE and ED managers, in some cases, some of these studies were reviewed because educational leaders are assumed to have been department heads and principals in schools before becoming managers in the ministry or districts. Thus, the development and preparation processes begin during the early stages of their employment as well as the first years of supervision for those who are expected to become leaders in the future. In addition, the studies in this chapter have been adapted to suit the context in Kuwaiti society—in particular, the education system in Kuwait adopts a global educational policy because it deals with the World Bank, and education officials believe in openness to other cultures in this era of globalisation.

### **3.2 Key Theoretical Ideas and Relevant Concepts**

A conceptual framework is considered as an anchor for any research and is indicated as the process of data interpretation and analysis. This study includes many key concepts, such as management, leadership, professional development, and educational leadership development. In addition, two theoretical ideas will be adopted (i.e., contingency theory and social learning theory) because the researcher believes they determine the

theoretical framework appropriate for this research. Before reviewing the theoretical literature of related subjects, the definitions of key concepts as well as the two theories will be presented in detail.

### **3.2.1 Key Concepts**

This section presents the working definitions for various concepts relevant to the discussion that follows.

**Educational Management:** This study adopts Bush's (2011) description of educational management, which only works to achieve the goals of educational institutions set earlier. As management's role is limited to developing and planning steps for its implementation, as well as to monitoring staff performance and finding solutions to the problems faced during the implementation of administrative processes, the emphasis is on the importance of effective and efficient implementation that achieves the desired goal(s) and satisfaction of the management's objectives.

**Leadership:** Leadership involves influencing others' actions in order to achieved the desired ends. Leaders shape others' goals, motivations, and actions. They frequently initiate change to achieve both existing and new goals; they might also seek to preserve what is valuable. As such, leadership requires "as much ingenuity, energy, and skill as starting an innovative programme" (Cuban, 1988, p. xx).

**Organisation culture:** Organisation culture refers to a set of features and characteristics that represent the values, beliefs, ethics, and behaviours which distinguish members of the specific organisation from another; thus, they form an approach of distinct and independent thinking and address different problems (Al-Hajri, 2013).

**Professional development:** Day (1999) defines professional development as follows:

Professional development consists of all-natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 4)

**Leadership development:** Bolam's (2003) definition of leadership development is used in this thesis:

An ongoing process of education, training, learning and support activities; taking place in either external or work-based settings; proactively engaged in by qualified, professional teachers, headteachers and other school leaders; aimed primarily at promoting the learning and development of professionally appropriate knowledge, skills and values; to help school leaders to decide on and implement valued changes in their leadership and management behaviour; so that they can promote high quality education for their students more effectively; thus achieving an agreed balance between individual, school and national needs. (p. 75)

## **3.2.2 Theoretical Ideas**

### **3.2.2.1 Contingency Theory**

Some changes occur in organisations when these are adapted in order to avoid inefficiency in performance. This is done through the adoption of new organisational characteristics to suit new levels of contingencies (Donaldson, 2001). The main concept proposed as a basis for shaping dynamic theory in leadership is situational leadership, which essentially refers to the situational favourableness dimension of the contingency model. It is widely acknowledged that this concept gives considerable understanding and control of the leadership process, which can in turn help develop an effective leadership training programme (Fiedler, 1978).

According to Fiedler (1978), the effectiveness of a group or organisation depends on two factors: the leader's personality and the degree to which the situation gives the leader power and influence. For the former, the relationship-motivated leader's personality is determined through a procedure reflecting the fundamental goals (e.g., support and esteem from others who are important for them, such as co-workers or staff) of an individual when acting in a leadership role. If there is a relationship of respect and appreciation by the staff to their leader, it encourages trust and loyalty among them and for the organisation (Wong-Mingji, 2013). The other major personality type is the task-motivated leader, who obtains satisfaction and self-esteem from the more tangible evidence of his or her competence.

The other main variable of contingency theory is the leader's situational control, where the methods used are based on three elements: leader-member relationships (the leader is supported by group members), task structure (clear-cut, structured, and having

appropriate goals), and position power (e.g., the ability to reward and punish; Fiedler, 1978). Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (1996) explained that, in a situational leadership model, “there is no one best way to influence people. Which leadership style a person should use with individuals or groups depends on the readiness level of the people the leader is attempting to influence” (p. 190).

The main idea of contingency theory is that organisations are complex social systems. Therefore, their application requires an accurate diagnosis of the specific situation (Lorsch, 2013). Contingency theory implies that the effectiveness of leadership is only the result of interaction between two factors: the leader’s personality (relationship-motivated or task-motivated) and the leadership situation, which differs depending on the relationship between the leader and the organisation’s members, task structure, and the power and influence of the leader (Fiedler, 1978). There is a correlation between the pattern of leadership and contingency variables, which is positively linked with the effectiveness of leadership and organisation performance; in contrast, the weakness of this relationship is that it can reduce performance (Wong-Mingji, 2013).

Yet Hersey et al. (1996) asserted that situational leadership is based on an interaction among three factors: task behaviour which a leader teaches his/her members; the relationship behaviour that a leader demonstrates; and the readiness level which members offer (i.e., their assimilation, willingness, and skills) while performing a specific task or aim. According to Carnall and By (2014), in rapidly changing environments, rules, regulations, and work procedures might become outdated and irrelevant. In addition, they may become barriers or excuses that managers use to justify their incorrect decisions. This theory sometimes indicates a great degree of managers’ choice about how

to structure their institutions, with no consequences if the outcomes are unsatisfactory (Carnall & By, 2014).

According to the contingency theory, leadership effectiveness depends on the appropriate match between situational control and how to exercise leadership (Fiedler, 1978) because there are many different models. There is some debate as to whether leaders should have one basic method that is consistent and appropriate for a situation or whether some leaders can change their style flexibly and conduct task- or relationship-oriented behaviours, according to their perceptions and assessments of the situation (Wong-Mingji, 2013). However, some factors may cause a change in the relationship (Fiedler, 1978), including:

- Experience: It is often the case that the first few months in a new job are very challenging, meaning it is difficult to deal with any problems. Therefore, a leader needs to gain help gradually to better understand what is happening and to increase his/her confidence.
- Training: The impact of training is expected to be very similar to that of experience, on the condition that it is relevant and reflects the experiences of others who have succeeded in this post.
- Organisational turbulence: Changes in organisational structure affect a leader's situational control (Fiedler, 1978). The bureaucratic structure may be suitable for a stable and simple environment, but in a complex and changing environment it should be more flexible and innovative. Thus, inflexible procedures produce frustrating conditions and reduce managers' ability to innovate (Carnall & By, 2014).

The development of the organisation's performance through leaders' training and the provision of education for dealing with changes in organisational environmental conditions improves the ability to consistently manage these issues. Applying contingency theory to human resources management processes helps attract, select, and appoint leaders with suitable guidance for their specific roles while conforming to these roles and fulfilling their requirements to the current leadership (Wong-Mingji, 2013).

Therefore, contingency model is the most relevant theory for the purpose of this study and is best applied when performing a data analysis of leadership to understand leaders' performance. Fiedler's (1978) contingency theory helps managers understand the effectiveness of situational leadership, which considers how appropriate a particular leadership style is when organisations encounter changes or unstable conditions.

### **3.2.2.2 Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory is based upon various areas, such as cognitive psychology, behavioural psychology, clinical psychology, and social cognition. It is also concerned with understanding types of learning that depend on the observation of human behaviour rather than on direct intervention, which might sometimes indicate imitation, observational learning, or modelling (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). It emphasises that humans' thoughts and behaviours are influenced by observation and direct experience. It also confirms that people use symbols to communicate and analyse conscious experiences, then put them into action. People not only react to external influences, but also select, organise, and transform motives that affect them (Latham & Saari, 1979).

Social learning effectiveness is based on learners immersing themselves in processes of induction in different methods in order to become full practitioners and gain appreciative

systems. To get hands-on practice with mental and material tools within real contexts, they are employed with successful practitioners from the beginning (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). According to Latham and Saari (1979), learning can be achieved more effectively by informing observers earlier about the consequences of acting out a particular behaviour rather than by waiting until it becomes clear and then managing it. The authors added that, through observational learning, the enhanced influence not only shows what is observed, but also what goes unnoticed. For example, the observer's learning will increase from the model if he/she realises "that the consequence of a model's behaviour is either a valued outcome or the avoidance or removal of a punishing stimulus" (p. 240). Modelling is considered a vital technique for social learning theory and is used as a basis for learning (Latham & Saari, 1979).

The Canadian-American psychologist Bandura, an advocate of social learning theory, explained human behaviour as a mutual interaction among its three areas, cognitions, and environmental events (Roedelein, 2006). Psychological performance is better understood through continued mutual interaction between behaviour and its controlling conditions because, as this theory contends, a person is not driven by inner forces; the person also does not struggle powerlessly with environmental influences (Bandura, 1971). According to Bandura's theory, humans seek to learn to fulfil their needs and desires by observing the consequences of behaviours and events. Such observations drive expectations of what will happen in the future and about the ability of people to act out behaviours and express affections and feelings. They also help people compare these with others and then make value judgments (Roedelein, 2006).

Bandura (1977) emphasised that efficacy expectations indicate a person's confidence in his or her capacity to perform a behaviour, while the outcome expectations indicate a

person's prediction of the consequences of this; however, desired performance may not always be achieved if the person lacks the necessary skills. In other words, if some managers cannot identify their role (i.e., leader or manager), their expected needs may be incorrect (Bandura, 1977). In addition, people can do many activities to ensure that they can succeed, but they might not always carry them out because they have no motive to do so (Bandura, 1977).

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy affects the identification of behaviours. For example, people might be afraid and avoid situations that they believe will override their coping skills. Thus, the greater the perceived self-efficacy, the more effective the effort or time that individuals use to face obstacles and difficult situations. Self-efficacy is influenced by four factors (Bandura, 1977):

- Performance accomplishments, which have the greatest impact on this efficiency because they are based on genuine competence experiences (Bandura, Adams, & Beyer, 1977). In addition, participant modelling helps align behavioural conceptions with appropriate actions and leads to corrective improvements in skills acquisition (Bandura, 1977).
- Vicarious experiences are another source of effectiveness because self-efficacy increases when observing the successes of others (Bandura, Adams, Hardy, & Howells, 1980).
- Verbal persuasion is used to affect human behaviour because it is possible to convince people they are able to deal successfully with past frustrations (Bandura, 1977).
- Emotional arousal is another factor that can affect self-efficacy because high arousal usually weakens performance (Bandura, 1977).

Bandura (1977) stated that conventional learning theories are commonly conceived behaviour as a result of response consequences of direct experience. In fact, practically all phenomena of learning resulting from direct experience can happen on a vicarious basis through the observation of others' behaviours and the resulting consequences for them. "Man's capacity to learn by observation enables him to acquire large, integrated units of behaviour by example without having to build up the patterns gradually by tedious trial and error" (p. 2). The observation of people as models does not mean that individuals will learn from these or will necessarily choose from the many characteristics of the model most suited to them (and to their role) or even that they will fully understand the aspects they have observed (Bandura, 1971). Observation-based learning has a key function in relation to the long-term retention of observed activities (model's behaviour) at different times, and it is recalled (if needed) despite the absence of that model because memory for the person who observes others is important for his/her learning. Furthermore, response patterns are represented in the memory in a symbolic form (Bandura, 1971). Modelling methods help promote self-efficacy and, thus, eliminate fears because they teach effective coping skills by showing proficient ways to deal with serious situations (Bandura, 1977).

### **3.3 Management**

The starting point of the discussion is the working definition of management (see Section 3.2.1). Management helps direct different efforts towards a specific goal, as it is used in various areas and plays an important role in all kind of jobs, where it develops its own independent system (Ashima & Naik, 2010). Leadership and management can be confusing terms despite the differences between them. (Bush, 2003) argued that the term management is similar in meaning to the term administration. The term

management is used more extensively in both British and European countries whereas the term administration is more often used in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Both terms can overlap with the term leadership. Bush (1998) confirmed that management is related to the implementation of operations and technical functions whereas leadership is related to the driving purpose and values of the organisation.

In general, the management's goal is to optimise available resources, whether human or material, to achieve efficiency and effectiveness (Al- Qaryouti, 2006). Efficiency refers to achieving productivity with the least amount of wasted effort or expense (Alkandari, 2013); meanwhile, effectiveness is concerned with the achievement of the desired results (Stevenson, 2006).

### **3.3.1 Functions of Management**

Management is not an activity in itself, but a description of a variety of activities carried out by the members of an organisation who have a role in management (e.g., someone with a formal responsibility to work with one or more people in the organisation or to carry out specialised advisory functions in basic management activities; Cole & Kelly, 2011). Furthermore, management is a function that aims to direct both people and resources to achieve the desired goals and objectives of an institution through planning, organising, directing, and resourcing (such as human, financial, technological, and natural resources; Ashima & Naik, 2010; Cole & Kelly, 2011).

According to Carpenter, Bauer and Erdogan (2010), managers are responsible for operations to get activities completed efficiently with, and through, people as well as achieving the institution's targets through the implementation of basic management

functions. Cole and Kelly (2011, p. 16) summarised the groups of management activities as follows:

- Planning: deciding the objectives or goals of the organisation and preparing how to meet them.
- Organising: determining activities and allocating responsibilities for the achievement of plans; coordinating activities and responsibilities into an appropriate structure.
- Motivating: meeting the social and psychological needs of employees in the fulfilment of organisational goals.
- Controlling: monitoring and evaluating activities, through three steps: developing performance standards, comparing actual performance with these, and taking corrective action when needed (Carpenter et al., 2010).

### **3.3.2 Levels of Management from a Systems Perspective**

Cole and Kelly (2011) concluded that it is important to consider some of the shortcomings of the identified management activities because they focus on the actions (input) instead of the results (output). They also ignore the role elements of a managerial function and do not consider different levels of management functions. Ashima and Naik (2010) argued that management includes a number of different levels in an institution, with each determining a series of orders, the degree of authority, and the status of any administrative position (see managers' role in the education system in Kuwait in Section 2.5.5.3). The principle of linking management tasks and activities to the goals and objectives of educational institutions is still vital (Bush, 2011).

Ashima and Naik (2010) identified three management categories:

- **Top-Level Management:** Senior management is the ultimate source of authority, manages objectives and policies, and fulfils the role of planning and coordinating functions. This level includes a board of directors, chief executive, or administrative director.
- **Middle-Level Management:** Some of these roles work to implement an organisation's plans in accordance with senior management policies and guidelines, develop plans for its subunits, participate in recruitment and training of lower management levels, and interpret and explain policies from senior management to the lowest level. This level includes branch managers (school districts) and department managers at the intermediate level.
- **Lower-Level Management:** This level is also known as the supervisory level because it includes supervisors, heads, and staff in departments whose tasks include guiding employees in daily activities, being responsible for quality work, providing training, ensuring discipline, and motivating staff.

The MoE managers who participated in the current research are classified as top-level management whereas the ED managers are middle-level management (see Section 2.5.5.3).

In general, a management function relates to the manager's role in taking the necessary measures to ensure that members' work-related activities are contributing to the achievement of organisational goals (Carpenter et al., 2010). However, these goals and purposes should be approved by the institution and its community because it may risk becoming "managerialism" (e.g., when managers focus only on external initiatives; Bush, 2011). "Managerialism departs from the wealth of leadership and management experience in its unrealistic act of faith that channelling the agency of others, and

delimiting its boundaries, can and should be both comprehensive and enduring” (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005, pp. 68-69). Thus, the shift in the language of educational institutions for the preference of leadership over management reflects concern about management that focuses on efficiency rather than values (Bush & Glover, 2014). According to Hoyle and Wallace (2005), there is a need to distinguish between leadership and management on the one hand and managerialism on the other. Bush (2011) stressed the importance of effective management, but managerialism without values would be unsuitable and have a destructive impact on an educational organisation. Hoyle and Wallace (2005) argued that effective leadership and management produce pressure to create structures and implement processes to allow teachers and staff to participate as much as possible in their core function of managerialism. Furthermore, managerialism refers to excessive leadership and management beyond support, which becomes an extreme goal in itself and will negatively affect the main goal of education (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005).

Therefore, in the next section, the theoretical literature on leadership will be reviewed in more detail.

### **3.4 Leadership**

The working definition of leadership is presented in Section 3.2.1. Considerable attention is being paid to educational leadership in the 21st century because of the prevailing belief that the quality of leadership has a significant impact on school results (Bush, 2007). Harris and Jones (2017) predicted that, in the next few years, educational administrations will face unprecedented and unpredictable challenges because of the political and economic transformations taking place at the global level, requiring leaders to reshape education systems. They added that this development also requires leaders to assess the

current status of the educational institution while simultaneously making use of available resources that help to revitalise and develop it. This means taking actions such as emphasising vision and values, reshaping important goals, and rearranging priorities (Harris & Jones, 2017) to achieve the desired educational goals. Institutional aims can be achieved through leadership and supervision and provide the skills to initiate structure. In addition, leadership gives clear directions for institution members to help them perform their tasks. The setting of an institution's direction is considered a fundamental task in leadership (Ayub, Manaf, & Hamzah, 2014).

### **3.4.1 The Concept of Leadership**

Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to participate effectively to achieve organisational success, as leadership should be able to deal with the members of the organisation, not just as workers who execute orders (Ayub et al., 2014). According to Yukl (2013), leadership may be facilitated by people who have been formally selected or perhaps by more informal measures, where some decisions and plans are made, by interacting among a group of people who influence each other.

Accordingly, it seems difficult to define a specific term for leadership because it involves multiple factors, relationships, and attitudes that lead to differences in precise identification. Nevertheless, the distinctive characteristic of leadership is the process of influencing others. OECD (2001) concluded that "leadership means a variety of things. Sometimes it refers to the possession of personal properties such as courage, stamina, or charisma. At other times, it means a position which dispenses power, authority, and responsibility" (p. 11).

Starting from the working definition of leadership presented in Section 3.2.1, an alternative definition was presented by Bush and Glover (2003, p. 8), who described leadership as follows:

The process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share it. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision.

Bush (2008) identified three major characteristics of leadership: influence, values and vision. These are the basis for developing a working definition.

#### **3.4.1.1 Leadership as Influence**

Leadership definitions vary according to several factors, such as who exercises the influence and purpose of the influence process, how it is done and its results, and where these differences reflect profound issues about the identification of leadership processes and leaders (Yukl, 2013). The notion of influence does not provide or explain what aims or procedures are to be followed; therefore, it is neutral (Bush & Glover, 2014). Furthermore, influence aims to achieve particular results or purposes and does not depend on the official authority of positional leaders such as managers (Bush & Middlewood, 2013).

Bush (2008) argued that influence includes several key elements:

- Influence instead of authority, where influence can be exercised by any person at a school or college, while authority is linked with official positions such as school director.
- Intentional process means those seeking to influence are doing so in order to achieve certain purposes.
- Influence practised by groups or individuals; this idea emphasises the concept of distributed leadership.

Leadership does not usually occur unless people are influenced by what is ethical and useful to the institution and to themselves, as some leadership concepts emphasise the importance of the emotional aspects of influence more than the cognitive elements (Yukl, 2013).

#### **3.4.1.2 Leadership as Exemplifying Values**

Leaders are expected to establish clear personal and professional values from the start (Bush & Glover, 2014), as leadership is often based on these values (Bush & Middlewood, 2013). Therefore, values are strongly associated with leadership (Bush, 2003, 2008, 2011; Bush & Glover, 2003; Bush & Glover, 2014; NCSL, 2007) and are considered a moral compass and the basis for the work of leaders (NCSL, 2007). Leadership qualities are affected by personal values, self-awareness, and the emotional ability and morals of leaders (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993), which means that leaders are adopting the values (Bush, 2011).

According to Bruno and Lay (2008), values affect the way goals are defined and the appropriate methods chosen to achieve them. Through the development of organisational strategies, structures, and processes, as well as the use of appropriate

leadership methods, the individual decides according to the values system that he/she adopts (Bruno & Lay, 2008). As leaders influence others, the values they adopt will also affect the behaviour of those who deal with them.

Haydon (2007) confirmed that, because values are considered as concepts, when they are agreed upon within a society or organisation, it means that there is a consensus on a set of values (i.e., rules are formed within that community in accordance with its standards). This consensus in that community does not mean accepting or justifying these norms (Haydon, 2007), if people do not agree or conform with these prevailing or accepted values. Furthermore, it does not mean that anyone who belongs to this institution espouses the same qualities or values; it is just an evaluation of practice in a particular institution, where the culture of that institution is linked to the attitudes, practices, and values that prevail (Haydon, 2007). Through the experience managers gain as a result of successful professional practice, they form their own values and beliefs which can be integrated into the organisation's culture (Bush, 2006).

### **3.4.1.3 Leadership as Establishing an Agreed Vision**

Vision has been regarded as an essential component of effective leadership for more than 20 years (Bush, 2008; 2011). However, it is still not fully understood because it is a more complex concept and is ethical because of its normative nature (Ndalamba, Caldwell, & Anderson, 2018). According to Zaccaro and Banks (2001), leaders at the top of an organisation seek to develop a broad, long-term and sometimes ambiguous vision, but this can be translated by senior managers into more specific strategic plans that are then published in the organisation, followed by a process of trying to convince all organisational components to adopt and implement the proposed plans. These are the

basis for structural changes in organisational processes, while vision helps activate these changes in organisational culture (Zaccaro & Banks, 2001).

Changes within an organisation often lead to the re-evaluation of its values, vision, and mission (Calder, 2006). According to Zaccaro and Banks (2001), the vision provides an ideal picture of what an organisation should be later on, based on the perceptions of the leader about the future of this organisation rather than the current situation. Ndalamba et al. (2018) argue that vision provides clarity, enhances meaning, and helps explain the contextual link between the components of the organisation while also uniting participants. Zaccaro and Banks (2001) emphasised that effective leaders form attitudes, values, and behaviours linked to vision with high expectations and great organisational goals, engaging in unconventional behaviour and expressing confidence in employees while also encouraging, training, and empowering them. They added that leaders should understand how organisational structures evolve in the context of the vision they have created and develop the strategies required to implement it. Calder (2006) added that education is built on a positive vision for the future because vision is a description of how the organisation sees future possibilities for students and the community. Accordingly, leadership is a process of developing a clear and specific vision for educational institutions and then influencing, motivating, and enabling others to participate effectively to achieve this vision by guiding the philosophy, structures, and activities of an organisation appropriate with continuous changes in education systems.

### **2.8.5 Leadership Selection**

The process of identifying and selecting effective leaders is one of the most important factors for an organisation's success. As leadership selection affects the performance of

an organisation and all its employees, when selecting leaders, it is necessary to determine who will be more effective in leading and influencing others (Carnes, Houghton, & Ellison, 2015). (Bush, 2008b) argued that most countries (e.g., Singapore) seem to believe in the importance of pre-service preparation for ambitious managers, where many of them can have these opportunities. In other countries (e.g., Denmark), there is little focus on leadership learning. Organisations in these countries use the selection processes to prepare people of high quality who are well suited to positions they will occupy and will carry out their required tasks efficiently while maintaining enthusiasm and commitment (Conger & Riggio, 2012).

Bush (2008b) argued for using two different ways to select candidates: via a centralised system or a decentralised one.

- Centralised systems: Selection criteria are formed through the MoE or related bodies. Although the degree of decentralisation is different, the selection processes are done through national or local governments rather than by schools, meaning that the process of selecting school principals is bureaucratic (Bush, 2008b).
- Decentralised systems: The initiative is usually made by the leadership candidate, and competition is open to those aspiring to be appointed to such positions after they are advertised. A list of applicants is prepared, including initial criteria such as qualifications of candidates, their experience, and work standards; the selection process also includes interviews with candidates, during which time they are asked to demonstrate supplementary activities such as teaching or performing some administrative tasks (Bush, 2008b).

Bush and Middlewood (2013) highlighted the many issues that negatively affect the selection process. These include:

- The candidate being judged according to intuition rather than facts;
- Decisions being taken in a sudden or rapid manner;
- Focusing and insisting on the stereotype of a good candidate;
- Comparing the candidate with other applicants or with former incumbents rather than agreed criteria; and
- Evidence of gender bias (Bush & Middlewood, 2013).

However, the most interesting and supportive part of the selection process is the process of interviewing candidates, although this process is perhaps the most susceptible to bias for several reasons (Bush & Middlewood, 2013), including:

- The decision being made consciously or unconsciously during the first five minutes of the interview;
- The judgment of interview committee members being influenced by appearance, gender or speech;
- If interviews are held for more than one candidate on the same day, they may not all receive the same focus from the committee; and
- The assessment perhaps not being fair for the candidate who follows a weak one.

Therefore, there should be a system to apply an effective process to selection. According to Conger and Riggio (2012), this will provide information on candidates to be selected and trained. There are two criteria for measuring the success of any selection system: system outputs, such as individual performance of those chosen, and the nature of the selection system, including whether it is fair and clear to candidates and whether it

functions efficiently and remains relevant and applicable over time (Conger & Riggio, 2012).

The next section will deal with another key concept in this thesis, which is organisational culture.

### **3.5 Organisational Culture**

The working definition of organisational culture can be found in Section 3.2.1. According to Rosete (2006), culture includes a set of perceptions shared by members of a social unit. It plays a significant role in supporting social cohesion and the mitigation of concern, especially for people who recently joined the organisational group. It facilitates many organisational processes, such as control and co-ordination, while also being a source of motivation for staff within an organisation (Flint, 2000). Glisson (2015, p. 246) described the complexity associated with organisational culture as follows:

Many writers emphasize that organizational culture is a layered construct consisting of deeply held assumptions and values which translate into normative expectations and behaviour. However, several studies suggest organizational culture is transmitted more through behavioural norms and expectations than through internalized values or assumptions which may or may not be expressed or even known to the organization's members.

Each profession has a set of values and beliefs aimed at achieving certain goals, and these are shaped by what people consider to be essential to suit the prevailing political and societal views (Hammersley-fletcher, 2015). Accordingly, there is a presumption that all people have the same values and beliefs and there is one way that they are supposed to speak or act. However, within the complex organisational culture, people may behave

differently because they do not have the same feelings, values, and assumptions as others.

Bell and Kent (2010) argued that subcultures are also part of the organisational dynamics that determine the culture format; they stand out as a strong culture and are able to exercise great social pressure to encourage harmony between these subcultures.

Organisational culture also consists of employees' values and beliefs, which are formed or may mutate to fit the manager's or officials' organisational values. Over time, these become the dominant culture in any organisation.

The MoE and ED managers are part of the educational leadership who contribute to the formation of institutional culture through the values they believe in within the work environment (Shamsuddin, 2006). If managers are interested in and care about others, the organisational culture is shaped with the same values, while the managers who do not have time for others may encourage tacit behaviours and attitudes of selfishness for the members of organisation (Stolp, 1994). Bass (1999) argued that top-level managers' behaviours therefore become a model for the organisation's culture. As a result, the organisational culture gives them a wider perspective to understand problems and different relationships among staff by strengthening their understanding of its culture, which means they will be able to demonstrate good values and beliefs to achieve a stable educational environment (Stolp, 1994).

Although leaders are able to influence culture within their organisations, this process is complex, and the leader's ability to change and transform these cultures may be limited (Bell & Kent, 2010). According to Reezigt and Creemers (2005), the culture is affected by the stakeholders who have a significant impact on the culture of the institution. From the

Western perspective, various government edicts and regulations, as well as constant changes in policy, can result in a new sense of professional roles, which may in turn mean the loss of some previous values and virtues (Hammersley-fletcher, 2015).

Al-Hajri (2013) argued that, from the Eastern perspective, if organisational culture is able to affect employees' thinking and actions, the need to use authority or formal work procedures to guide functional behaviour diminishes due to staff's commitment and affiliation to their organisation as well as their belief in its culture, of which they have become a part. However, perhaps this is not related to reality or to what actually happens in organisations, because staff are not always committed to their organisations, which need their affiliation. The organisation includes different cultures and therefore various values and beliefs, which result in varying degrees of commitment to the organisations.

### **3.5.1 Centralisation and Decentralisation**

#### **3.5.1.1 Centralisation**

Alkandari (2013) defined centralisation as "the centralised control of a government" (p. 19), which means that organisations receive directions from a central authority and apply the decisions of the government. The centralisation concept is related to the power represented by the central administration through different social, cultural, and political aspects (Alkandari, 2013). The centralised authority means that the government focuses on the decision-making process for most issues and leaves the implementation of already decided-upon routine operations to lower levels in the institution. Thus, higher levels of authority control the decision-making processes while lower levels are not involved in those processes (Lauglo, 1995).

In a small country, the districts can be better linked to the central government, which means decentralisation is not relevant (Alkandari, 2013). However, central governments and local authorities are moving towards stimulating decision-making by schools, either through the local management of schools or the establishment of relatively autonomous reform schools, leading to the authorities' interest in applying decentralisation in education systems (Maslowski, Scheerens, & Luyten, 2007). According to Lauglo (1995), several factors can pave the way for decentralisation, including the complexity of the education system, the lack of homogeneity amongst those willing to be educated, the increase in the number of educational institutions, and the financial challenges from central government. It also gives more power and responsibility to educational institutions. Whilst most governments in densely populated countries find it difficult to maintain a certain level of control over their countries (such as Britain and America), central control is easier in small countries such as Kuwait (Alkandari, 2013).

### **3.5.1.2 Transition to Decentralisation**

In the past two decades, most Western countries have moved towards the decentralisation of decision-making in schools. This global phenomenon has influenced developing and developed countries (Maslowski et al., 2007), leading large entities such as governments and smaller entities such as educational institutions to consider decentralisation and centralisation when preparing plans and programmes (Alkandari, 2013). In all likelihood, a link exists between the changing power base and concept of decentralisation (L. Anderson, 2005). A centralisation system does not allow for participation, whereas decentralisation accepts a broad participation of stakeholders, as may happen in education. Therefore, decentralisation may reduce the level of higher authorities' control on certain decisions (e.g., internal regulatory decisions), transferring

this responsibility to lower management levels (Alkandari, 2013). However, that does not mean that decentralisation means shifting power to a subunit (e.g., schools; Anderson, 2005).

Given the various elements of decentralisation outlined thus far, the working definition of it used in this thesis is as follows: a process of converting some of the decision-making operations and tasks from senior management to different organisational levels, such as from the MoE to EDs and from EDs to schools. This is intended to facilitate work and the achievement of goals, considering the lack of overlap and duplication in the distribution of tasks as well as the need to control systems and accountability to ensure effective and efficient performance at all levels of education.

Maslowski et al. (2007) argued that it is difficult to measure the benefits of educational decentralisation and school or educational districts' autonomy because the decentralisation of decision-making to those institutions does not happen in isolation. Furthermore, the effects that can be attributed to decentralisation policies are difficult to decode; therefore, it can also be difficult to assess to what extent these results are attributable to decentralisation or if they can be credited to other policy measures (Maslowski et al., 2007).

### **3.5.2 Decision-Making**

The decision-making processes and the way in which they are undertaken are at the heart of the leadership of an organisation (Coleman & Glover, 2010). The key responsibilities of formal leaders are to make decisions related to strategic and operational objectives and plans as well as to allocate resources (Yukl, 2013).

Coleman and Glover (2010) concluded that rules and agreements about decision-making exist in bureaucratic, formal administrative systems, and collegial methods; therefore, decision-making processes will be relatively transparent because institution members or stakeholders know where the authority is. However, if, for example, there are individuals who have power struggles, this will make it difficult to understand and follow the decision-making process (Coleman & Glover, 2010). Yukl (2013) asserted that managers may make many less important daily decisions to solve some problems, with few people likely to be affected by the decision. However, managers will ideally have appropriate technical knowledge and possess multiple skills, such as the ability to make systematic analyses in a quick and decisive way (Yukl, 2013).

Managers with previous experience try to classify problems, whether they are new or familiar, so that they can apply their past experiences to solve them; however, if the original problem was not determined precisely, it could result in poor decisions about how to deal with it (Yukl, 2013). According to Wildy, Forster, Loudon and Wallace (2004), managers find it difficult to make decisions due to a number of factors, including accountability by educational authorities, collaborative decision-making while maintaining their own perceptions, and wasting time of participants in decision-making. Yukl (2013) asserted that, when there are important and complex problems that do not have good solutions, if there are parties with conflicting interests or if power is distributed across multiple parties, the decision-making process is likely to take a long time. Coleman and Glover (2010) argued that it is necessary for managers to assess the outcomes of decisions and withdraw from them if necessary. They need to be confident and have the ability and skills to explain this decision when necessary; in other words,

managers have the moral responsibility for any decision-making (Coleman & Glover, 2010) in their school or organisation.

### **3.5.3 Accountability**

Accountability is the responsibility of carrying out activities in a specific way to achieve certain results (Thurlow, 2009). Organisations and stakeholders use assessments to check the accountability of all personnel involved in the formulation and implementation of goals and plans, comparing them against what has been achieved (Alkandari, 2013). A practical accountability system should include desired goals (improved performance), ways to measure progress towards the goal (indicators of performance), and standards for measurement (Thurlow, 2009).

Thurlow (2009) defined accountability as being required to give an account of events or behaviour in a school or college to those who may have a legitimate right to know. The initial motivation for increased accountability is to improve the whole system or part of it. It may become a substitute for trust, and it can reduce institutional autonomy because reporting obligations requires shaping or modification to meet external expectations (Trow, 1996).

Accountability includes the commitment to report to others, explaining and justifying answers to some questions, such as how resources are used or what the impact is; it can take diverse forms in various societies in relation to different actions (Trow, 1996). Leveille (2005) pointed out three key elements for accountability: performance, transparency, and the evidence culture, which means organising an institution to be able to monitor or observe evidence routinely at all levels when planning work. "One of the central aspects of accountability relates to establishing which individuals and groups have

that legitimacy” (Bush, 1994, p. 310). Therefore, the working definition of accountability used in this study is that it is a managerial process accompanying the commissioning process for an individual or group in conducting activities, within the framework of rules and regulations, to achieve desirable goals. It involves measuring the achievement of these targets.

According to Bush and Middlewood (2013), accountability is related to issues of integrity, honesty, and self-denial, which means it includes a moral dimension. Accountability can prevent the arbitrary use of power, but it can also help maintain or improve institutional performance standards, and the accountability processes may be used as a regulatory tool (Trow, 1996).

#### **3.5.4 Performance**

Many governments now have a growing interest in the performance of all aspects of their education systems due to the increasing competition among countries to achieve strong positions in the global market as well as their increased spending for the development of education (Anderson, 2005). However, Hanushek (1989) questioned whether increased spending to improve education systems results in better performance. This has led widely to more claims to achieve the highest levels of scrutiny in the quality of education, thereby generating the need for information about the school’s performance through the implementation of systems of accountability (Anderson, 2005).

Performance is linked to the extent to which objectives are achieved in the institution; however, in some cases, performance is used to express the effectiveness levels achieved by the organisation (Mzhodh, 2001). In these circumstances, managers should seek to review an individual’s performance and evaluate strengths and areas that need further

development for the employee to be more effective in the future (Ashkanani, 2001). Hutton (2018) concluded that “personal abilities are also important for leadership performance” (p. 250), such as inspiring others or building commitment.

Ashkanani (2001) mentioned that performance appraisal programmes may be used for many reasons, such as identifying training needs, providing information for manpower and succession planning, and providing a helpful tool to make decisions.

### **3.5.5 Exercise of Power in Education System**

Power exists in the formal structure of the organisation and depends on the history and traditions of an institution or on external values accorded to the organisation’s activities (Evans & Gold, 1998). Authority means the right and power of an individual to use resources efficiently, make decisions, and issue instructions (within the organisation) to achieve organisational goals (Ashima & Naik, 2010). Power refers to influence and authority, but there is a difference between these two terms. Authority is used when the power is legitimate and dependent on official support (Handy, 1993) whereas influence is the power based on respect for personal achievement and persuasion (Jarvis, 2012). It is possible that a person has power through his/her influence, such as through authority (Handy, 1993).

Different forms of power apply directly to managers. Jarvis (2012) argued that “authority based on force will lead to influence based on fear which is coercive power, —authority based on respect for personal achievement will lead to influence based on persuasion which is referent power” (p. 486). The position power is named legitimate power or legal because it comes from the person’s role or position in an organisation; in other words, the power resides in the position, not the person (Jarvis, 2012). The types or sources of

power that a manager may have include socio-emotional, personal/charismatic, educational (which is relevant to learning and learning processes), and knowledge like curricula, systems, and organisational structures (Busher, Hammersley-Fletcher, & Turner, 2007).

Ashima and Naik (2010) argued that authority should be applied in managerial positions because it helps achieve efficiency, manage fears and concerns, and avoid wasting time and money while also preventing duplication or overlapping efforts. However, it is not only used to legitimise top-down control because it can be represented in different ways through various organisational positions, and its meanings can be interpreted and redesigned (Woods, 2016).

Woods (2016) identified five forms of authority, each with sub forms, that could be taken to managers in any organisation:

- Rational authority is based on a hierarchical order of rules, rights, and organisational objectives—that is, a rational legal authority, a clear set of job descriptions, and well-defined job roles.
- Communal authority focuses on the impact of close social relationships, including charisma, tradition, respect, and belonging, which leads to the acceptance of sources of guidance and advice such as values and traditions of community, other group members, or the managers.
- Exchange refers to governance through rational agreement and cooperative relationships among organisation members, where power arises from acceptance of norms, values, and rules of exchange.

- Democratic legitimisation creates a kind of dialogue, participation, approval, and agreed-upon rights which give decisions and procedures legitimacy, meaning they can be used in multiple forms through, for example, consultation or voting processes. Woods and Woods (2013) argued that this model of authority is the central practice of democracy and that it gives an opportunity for individuals to engage in processes based on respect, critical dialogue, and independent thinking, while also granting a sense of belonging to a community or organisation.
- Interior authority this model of authority represents the emergent force that has the effect of establishing or implanting power in a person by reshaping his/her identity. Members of an organisation can also be offered or allowed different individual configurations of authority to form relationships and interactions with others (Woods, 2016). Thus, the type of authority possessed by the individual determines the level of his/her influence, which in turn determines the type of power he/she exercises over others (Jarvis, 2012).

Authority can be delegated. To illustrate the point, Lyons (2016) argued that, before embarking on the process of the delegation of authority, the manager seeks to ensure that the employee (to whom the task will be delegated) understands the task, accountability, and outcomes. However, accountability remains the responsibility of the person with the highest level of authority because the delegation of authority does not serve as a mandate for accountability (Ashima & Naik, 2010).

### **3.6 Professional Development**

Developing leaders in education requires clearly defining their responsibilities, providing access to appropriate professional development throughout their careers, and

acknowledging their pivotal role in improving school and student performance (Schleicher, 2012). Furthermore, educational institutions should develop strategic plans to prepare and improve quality school management in order to attract and retain current and future leaders (Shields & Cassada, 2016). An OECD (2008) report underscored the importance of this aspect and called for the improved recruitment and training of leaders. In addition, in the context of the educational reform agenda being applied, there are always government policy initiatives that should be implemented (Earley, 2013).

Earley et al. (2011) confirmed that the problems experienced by newly appointed managers are very similar, such as time management, financial planning, and efforts to deal with budgets and ineffective staff. They argued that dealing with staff remains a challenge faced by new and experienced managers in all contexts and cultures. Therefore, they need to acquire many qualities and skills to be successful in the performance of their tasks, including the ability to adapt to rapid changes in education systems as well as perseverance and emotional intelligence (Earley et al., 2011).

Due to the importance of the professional development of leadership, Section 3.6.2 explains the professional development from a general perspective while Section 3.6.3 examines issues related to it, such as adult learning. Section 3.7 explores leadership development.

### **3.6.1 Definition of Professional Development**

The working definition of professional development can be found in Section 3.2.1. It is a process in which learning is encouraged; where managers working in educational institutions (MoE or EDs) use appropriate knowledge, skills, and values; and where the

appropriateness of an idea should itself be based on involved and public value judgements around needs and best clients' interests (Bolam, 2000).

Evans (2011) argued that the promotion of individuals' professional competence is a necessary element in professional development. This can be achieved in many ways, such as through formal or informal learning, where training is provided through external expertise in the form of formal courses, workshops, or training programmes, or within educational institutions where teachers and managers work and through training, mentoring, and involvement in good practices (OECD, 2009). Fraser, Kennedy, Reid and McKinney (2007) distinguished between professional learning and professional development. They explained that professional learning depends on the representation of processes that lead to specific changes in the knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, or professional actions, whether these processes are intuitive, deliberate, individual, or social. Meanwhile, professional development refers to broader changes that can occur over a longer period of time, leading to qualitative shifts in aspects of teachers' or managers' professionalism (Fraser et al., 2007). In some instances, they engage with professional training only to maintain professional registration and employment purposes; although this is inappropriate, they should be allowed to independently design their own training methods ((Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

In a school context, professional development could be designed to raise standards and improve teaching and learning. Furthermore, the essence of professional development for teachers and managers should include many approaches to learning and practice in the context of public professional values and accountability (Bolam, 2000). Mitchell (2013) defined professional development as a process by which an individual obtains knowledge and skills and promotes attitudes and capacities to improve practice, which

need to consider how and under what conditions they learn. Development is the process of learning, gaining skills, and refining an employee's capabilities to perform his or her tasks in the most effective fashion.

To illustrate further, professional development refers to many insolvent sets of planned processes and activities (such as courses, lectures, seminars, and meetings), with a specific target to measure the extent of achievement at the end of this activity (which means developing systems of measurement). Deliberate means targeting a certain category (career level or specialisation), which is then directed towards achieving the goal (raising the level of performance), with operations or activities repeated before and in-service at specific periods of time (or perhaps as needed). It is necessary to link theory with actual practice (provided by those who have experience, knowledge, and ability of training in the same field) in order to have a clear and measurable effect on managers' performance.

### **3.6.2 Adult Learning**

Professional development is the training and education before or during the working life, which therefore means applying adult learning methods. There are two forms of adult learning: formal and informal learning activities. Zepeda (2012) argued that adults are practical people and they have previous knowledge and experience gleaned throughout their lives. Therefore, professional development can be promoted by understanding how adults learn. According to Wood and Thompson (1980), in-service training might be used to address particular weaknesses evident in professional practices.

Over the last three decades, many theories have been posited to explain how adults learn (Zepeda, 2012). Merriam (2001) confirmed that no one theory can illustrate how adult

learning processes are conducted, but andragogy and self-direction learning are key issues in this. “Andragogy is the art and science of helping adults learn” (Conlan, Grabowski, & Smith, 2010, p. 115). Professional development may be regarded as a kind of continuous adult learning that happens while in post or during professional learning processes, such as seminars or training (Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson, 2014). It often includes components of adult learning theories, such as practical learning, experiential learning, and self-directed learning (Conlan et al., 2010). Zepeda et al. (2014) and Merriam (2001) identified five characteristics of adult learning: self-directed, learner-driven, focus on the problem, appropriate orientation, and goal-oriented. However, Zemke and Zemke (1995) defined only three main areas of adult education: motivation for learning, curriculum, and classroom design (i.e., creating a classroom learning environment suitable for adults).

Several essential factors should be considered when preparing adult development programmes. Weindling (2003) stated that professional development programmes should adopt theories of learning and be understandable and clear for the mentors and participants involved. Furthermore, Wood and Thompson (1980) listed a number of ideal features for effective in-service training relating to adult learning (these can be applied to managers):

- Managers accept the learning process if it is linked to goals and objectives of work in-service and are considered to be of direct benefit to work.
- They will learn and use what they learn when they realise it is relevant to their personal and professional needs.
- Learners need to know the results of their efforts and get feedback about their progress and achieve goals.

- When managers learn a new skill, technique, or concept, this may promote a positive or negative view of the self.
- Any new learning experience acquired by learners is adding to their previous experience from a range of experiences, knowledge, skills, and self-direction.
- Managers want their learning to be an asset, which means participating in the choice of targets, content, activities, and evaluation education while in service.

Showing respect and taking into consideration the needs of adult learners help them grow professionally and personally while helping the school (or entity responsible for the teachers' and managers' development) to approach and understand their community (Zepeda, 2012). Therefore, it is important to connect in-service work objectives with professional development programmes by taking into account personal needs and interests at work. In addition, managers need feedback to enhance the quality of their learning. They should not only receive information, but also learn in an appropriate way so they can retrieve and use knowledge when needed while ensuring that programmes can help achieve their goals.

### **3.7 Leadership Development**

The working definition of leadership development is included in Section 3.2.1. Shields and Cassada (2016, p. 534) explained that "it is important to consider who is being promoted to key leadership roles such as principal, the schools in which leaders enter their first principalships, and how prepared they are to stay in that role." The same is true for managers. These factors are critical in the process of hiring leaders (Shields & Cassada, 2016). Earley (2013) confirmed that training and development programmes should provide the best knowledge to managers and help them realise the challenges that they

will be facing, with the assurance that no amount of preparation or experience—either through formal training or experience as a deputy—can provide a sufficient induction to leadership tasks in such an arduous and complex profession. The everyday experience school leaders gain by working in a good school with a team of senior leaders will be useful in their own preparation for headship.

Professional development occurs through daily participation in practice that results in the accumulation of experience as well as intellectual development (Mitchell, 2013). According to Hunzicker (2011), in order for professional development to be effective, managers should be involved in “learning activities that are supportive, job-embedded, instructionally focused, collaborative, and ongoing” (p. 177). However, organising these learning activities in a practical way is very difficult and challenging. Hunzicker (2011) asserted that efforts are increasingly being made to help teachers or school principals (managers) learn through daily routines because workshops are ineffective in their development or practice improvement. Moreover, Attard (2017) argued they rely heavily on courses, seminars, and workshops, which are called “traditional professional development opportunities” (p. 40), to improve and change their professional practices. However, such efforts may not meet their training needs or have an effective impact on their skills development.

### **3.7.1 Trends in Leadership Development**

Most common leadership preparation programmes work to develop a number of skills and qualities among participants and introduce them to the range of their responsibilities, including regulatory ones such as information about the most important procedures and the ability to adapt (Earley, 2013). Therefore, considering the changing roles of school

principal and managers, leadership development programmes have also been affected. Consequently, they are to be designed to meet the changing needs of participants and are also linked with the evolution of leadership phases (Weindling, 2003). According to Hamilton, Forde and McMahon (2018), there are concerns that early stage leadership development programmes have been designed and developed to a large extent for the development of technical skills whereas leadership training for senior roles require more complex development activities. In addition, they argued that each career phase includes three levels of leadership: ambitious, newly appointed, and experienced. Therefore, increased skills, advanced understanding, and confidence of practitioners should be taken into account, and a more precise and strategic approach might be developed that is appropriate for all leadership levels (Hamilton et al., 2018).

Weindling (2003) identified a number of clear trends in leadership development, including the following:

- Needs analysis is an important part of leadership development.
- There are more providers and funding bodies than ever before.
- There is a growing use of experiential learning, reflection, and development within schools by groups' and communities' practice.
- An increased interest has emerged in the role of networks and learning communities.
- Increased attention focuses on using guidance and training.

Slater, Garduno and Mentz (2018) confirmed that formal development programmes for both developed and developing countries should be expanded and should not be standardized in all countries (because of the different contexts and cultures from one

country to another). For example, various activities could be designed in many forms, and the time required to prepare them might vary depending on a country's resources. Therefore, there is growing interest in the development of leadership through a variety of professional development strategies, such as reflection, learning theories, and mentoring. Such efforts include many different activities, ranging from short courses and awareness development through workshops to academic programmes such as postgraduate studies (see Section 3.7.2 for further discussion; Hamilton et al., 2018).

### **3.7.2 Strategies for Leadership Development**

Earley and Weindling (2004) presented strategies designed to help leaders in education deal with the problems and challenges likely to be encountered:

- Mentoring and coaching
- Reflection (self-reflection in/on action)
- Problem-based learning and case studies
- Professional learning communities
- Self-directed learning
- Working as part of a team

Although all these activities are likely used in western countries, such as England, they may not be widely applied in the training of educational leaders in Kuwait. Each of these will be reviewed separately next as models for professional development applicable to managers.

### **3.7.2.1 Mentoring and coaching**

Hobson (2003) and Earley and Weindling (2004) argued that the terms mentoring and coaching have different meanings. Mentoring is generally used to refer to the process by which the experienced individual seeks to help someone less experienced. Coaching is used to refer to forms of assistance more specific to the individual's job and skills. According to Tolhurst (2010), in mentoring, counselling can be provided and knowledge transferred from mentor to trainee, while coaching involves implementing actions to achieve specific goals. Forde, McMahon, Gronn and Martin (2013) confirmed that experience is used in mentoring processes in leadership development programmes, but that coaching aims to focus on developing job-related skills and tasks. Accordingly, mentoring seeks to develop knowledge and understanding of the whole person and is a more broadly-based concept that includes cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and moral needs. In contrast, coaching focuses on skills development (e.g., using technology to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom).

According to (Earley and Weindling (2004), mentoring is considered to be a more popular and useful method of support for education managers in Western countries. There are many mentoring approaches (e.g., advising and counselling, role modelling), but the most common is for leaders with experience to work one-on-one with a new leader for a period of least a year (Earley & Weindling, 2004). It is important to note that mentoring is considered to be a significant part of leadership development in many countries (Aas & Vavik, 2015). Meanwhile, according to Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007), mentoring is a unique relationship between two parties formed through personal exchanges and interactional patterns, involving the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, and skills. The specific tasks characterising mentoring vary and can be classified as psychological or

emotional (such as friendship and support) and professional (such as information, task, and coaching). It is also an asymmetrical relationship (because it is a relationship between two parties, where one is more experienced than the other), although it has been acknowledged that the mentor can also benefit from the relationship. Furthermore, mentoring is a process of change whose effect may increase over time (Eby et al., 2007). Hobson and Sharp (2005) identified two types of mentors: an informal type, such as colleagues who provide advice, opinions, or support, and a formal type, where there is an appointment of a specific person to perform this work within the context of a clear mentoring plan.

Coaching is a performance-oriented function based on previous aims whereas mentoring is concerned with individual growth (Duncan & Stock, 2010). It is also a collaboration between the trainer and the trainee, while group coaching is formation of a learning community that consists of leaders representing many cultures and educational contexts (Flückiger, Aas, Nicolaidou, Johnson, & Lovett, 2017). Furthermore, a target-oriented group-coaching process that involves existing and aspiring education leaders may have a profound and positive impact on the development of the identity of newly appointed leaders (Aas & Vavik, 2015).

There are individual and organisational benefits of coaching operations. According to Flückiger et al. (2017), the benefits for individuals are increased levels of personal confidence and efficiency; meanwhile, the benefits for the organisation are increased staff capacity to respond to new roles and tasks and improvements in the organisation's practices. However, despite many benefits from coaching, it may also be seen as a potentially challenging task.

Hobson (2003) explained that mentoring and coaching methods may be affected by a variety of factors, such as experience and expertise as well as the personal characteristics of mentors and trainees. A good match between the experienced leader (mentor) on the one hand and the personality and needs of the new leader on the other hand is considered very important. There is increased attention on how to form a good and appropriate working relationship between them as well as the selection process of mentors and the preparation of mentors and trainees (novice managers), as it is considered a necessary form of professional development for leaders of both parties (Earley et al., 2011). Research conducted among headteachers in 2011 found that not all leaders have the ability to provide training and mentoring for new leaders, which underscores the need for mentors at different times and for various purposes (Earley, 2013).

### **3.7.2.2 Reflection (Self-reflection in/on action)**

The term reflection refers to the deliberate, purposeful thinking beyond knowledge and/or the procedures in which teachers (managers, in this context) engage in order to develop their professional practice (Sellars, 2017). In addition, “reflective practitioners are those who use experiences as opportunities to consider both their philosophy and their practice” (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005, p. 214). According to Miller (2005), it is becoming increasingly popular as a means of working with groups in different institutions.

Regularly engaging in reflective practice with an appropriate partner or with a small group of peers is probably considered to be a successful approach (Sellars, 2017), is because it is seen as a way practitioners can develop a higher level of self-awareness about the nature

and effect of their performance level as well as an awareness offering opportunities for growth and professional development (Okech, 2008). As Sellars (2017) explained, managers' genuine participation in reflection helps them identify personal strengths and improve their professional competence. However, "some levels of reflection are more complex than others" (Sellars, 2017, p. 8). Educational processes based on reflective practice lead to the nature of learning being explored through observation and subsequent interpretation (Belvis, Pineda, Armengol, & Moreno, 2013). Schön (1983) argued that "competent practitioners usually know more than they can say. This is because they exhibit a kind of knowing-in-practice, most of which is tacit" (p. viii). Furthermore, according to Okech (2008), the interactions of practitioners often become meaningful and raise their awareness of the impact reflective practices have on professional development, whether they are consultants, supervisors, or co-workers.

Reflective practice is a process that can help people think about their experiences of themselves and with others in the workplace in order to build insights and awareness so that they have increased options about potential future action (Miller, 2005). Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond (2005) argued that reflective practice is not only an evaluation of their performance if those under evaluation are managers, but it also includes the process of the thinking behind it and the consideration about what is learned from the process. In other words, those who practice reflection seek to compare the quality of their performance with their experience and understanding ideas about leadership and management, as this leads to self-knowledge, which is an essential and fundamental issue for the professional development of practitioners (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005).

Schön (1983) divided reflection into two types: reflection occurring during the event or activity and being dealt with immediately (i.e., reflection in action) and reflection occurring after the event ends (i.e., reflection on action), which builds on past experiences and leads to the development of practice (it seems to be a process of evaluating and giving feedback to deal with situations or events that have occurred and ended). “When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories or established theory and technique but constructs a new theory of a unique case” (p. 68). In general, according to Okech (2008), it is a professional development process that might be highly effective in achieving behavioural change and is aimed at promoting awareness of practitioners’ thoughts and actions. In order to re-understand and deepen managers’ awareness of their role, it is necessary to use what happens in each activity or experience, as this actual lived experience is the basis for learning through reflective practice (Belvis et al., 2013). According to Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond (2005), individuals need to learn how to be effective practitioners of reflection, not just how to think effectively, because it is more than just the process of thinking.

### **3.7.2.3 Professional Learning Communities**

Some leadership programmes work as a group of participants who meet regularly during a period of time. There are many benefits to working as a group rather than as individuals (Earley & Weindling, 2004). “These professional communities are not ‘chat groups’; they use structured protocols to look at their own work and at student work, and they push participants to improve practice” (Moher, 1998, p. 41). Moher (1998) confirmed that any successful groups should have the following characteristics:

- The size of the group should be from 6 to 15.
- The presence of a facilitator is important for setting the agenda and coordinating the members of the group, where participants meet together to build knowledge by looking at their work.
- The group should use organised protocols to present work and listen for giving and getting reactions and information.
- In meetings, participants should try to learn how to go deeper into their understanding and how to become more descriptive and less discretionary.

Although Moher focused on the school context, these ideas could be adopted for the development of managers. For example, they could be applied in Kuwait to develop a better understanding of their leadership role. However, they would need to be prepared effectively with proper consideration of time and the coordination of participants with different levels of experience (from the education field). Furthermore, participants' input on a proposed agenda would help meet their development needs and achieve the objective of this activity.

#### **3.7.2.4 Self-directed Learning**

According to Garrison (1992), knowledge is formed as a result of learners building up new ideas, perspectives, and values in their present cognitive structures, with justification for the resulting understandings. Teaching is not a process of transferring ready knowledge, but rather is a negotiation for meaning. Knowledge can be gained by accepting guidance and support from others where the responsibility is shared, despite the fact that understanding new information and integrating it into knowledge structures is expected to be the learner's task (Garrison, 1992). The concept of self-directed learning involves a

great deal of autonomy by the learner to determine what is useful for learning and how to deal with the learning process, regardless of any contextual factors or competencies (Garrison, 1997).

However, self-directed learning is also a widespread method of learning that occurs as part of adults' everyday life (Merriam, 2001). There are complex reasons for this, but one of the important causes is the desire to determine what and how to learn, which is in keeping with the need of the majority of adults to continue learning as they become older. These human features are rooted in self-directed learning (Garrison, 1997). However, according to (Merriam, 2001), self-directed learning goals differ, especially when based on a humanitarian philosophy that assumes that it is aimed at developing the learner's ability to do so. She added that it also assumes a critical reflection of the learner and that this critical thinking is the process of understanding the cultural factors and biography of the needs and interests of the individual—that is, the “promotion of emancipatory learning and social action” (p. 9).

According to Garrison (1997), most attention is given to the self-management of learning processes. Therefore, emphasis is placed on external control processes rather than internal cognitive and learning processes. However, it could involve both internal and external activities. “Externally, control may be shared, while internally self-directedness in terms of constructing meaning is absolute” (Garrison, 1992, p. 141). Learning can be categorised according to the learner and the extent of self-direction and may be influenced by many personal qualities and variables, such as educational level, creativity, and learning style (Merriam, 2001). Furthermore, the context in which learning takes place needs to be considered because it affects the level of learner autonomy allowed in this context as well as how resources and strategies are utilised. In addition, the context

can be a driving force for learning (Song & Hill, 2007). Thus, while dependent learners need more introductory materials, lectures, training, and feedback, the self-directed learner can take part in independent projects, discussions, and discovery learning (Merriam, 2001).

### **3.7.2.5 Working as Part of a Team**

At present, teamwork is a dominant means of doing work because there are many interdependent tasks (Barczak, Lassk, & Mulki, 2010). Work teams in any organisation consist of a group of individuals who work and rely on one another to make progress on tasks, objectives and results (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Given the importance of the teams and their role in accomplishing tasks, the idea of group effectiveness has been identified, which indicates the common beliefs of its members regarding their ability to perform tasks successfully as a key factor affecting the performance of the team (Park, Kim, & Gully, 2017). Senior management teams usually have larger knowledge frameworks that help them to develop strategic plans or find different options and decision-making processes (Li, 2014). Li added that experience, knowledge, and different backgrounds of senior management teams provide more information and knowledge flexibility to overcome challenges.

According to Love and Dustin (2014), in teams, members are expected to meet the aspirations of the group and ignore their wishes; therefore, professional communities place great importance on organisation and teamwork. Furthermore, despite the team members sharing different cultures, they are able to operate in an integrated manner without spoiling the balance and harmony of agreement between the group. Relationships and interactions within the team can enhance learning, adapt performance,

lead to innovation, and provide a common vision (Bornay-barrachina & Herrero, 2018) because the team environment acts as a set of stimuli that can be interpreted and understood; this interaction and exchange with others in the group influences the formation of this environment (Aalbers, Dolfsma, & Koppius, 2014). In addition, a supportive environment promotes behaviour that seeks change and helps encourage and implement new ideas (Love & Dustin, 2014). Zhou and George (2001) emphasised that team members play an important role in understanding innovation and learning through continuous feedback between them.

According to Li (2014), the heterogeneity of team members in terms of their diverse backgrounds, jobs, and experiences may lead to many more different self-perspectives than the team's overall goals; however, this can help create different strategic options for content, objectives, and development processes. Levasseur (2011) also identified some factors that help develop team performance, such as recognising the importance of teamwork, developing a common vision, using the research cycle to guide data collection, engaging in decision-making, and managing conflict when it arises. These factors help develop the skills of the team members, making them part of the professional development methods in which managers participate to accomplish tasks or projects while gaining leadership skills, such as developing vision or building relationships with others and refining decision-making processes.

However, despite the advantages of teamwork, there are some difficulties that may arise during work, such as personal clashes and conflicts due to different styles or methods in work. Indeed, sometimes it might be difficult to determine where the problem occurred and who was responsible.

### **3.7.3 Leadership Development Programmes**

Section 3.7.2 demonstrated that there are many strategies and methods for developing managers' leadership skills. However, all leadership development programmes overlap with each other to varying degrees, where single programmes cannot be applied or used in isolation without interfering with at least one programme. All these programmes are useful and provide support for educational managers whether they are new leaders or have experience, especially when considering the work environment when preparing and implementing them (e.g., technologies, time, and personal qualities of mentors or trainees). Additionally, they meet the needs of trainees (such as managers or leaders pre- or post-appointment; Al-Khatib & Al-Enezi, 2008; NIE, 2013) to achieve the aims of the professional development.

Yet Crow (2004) highlighted the reservations about using veteran managers for leadership preparation, asserting that the use of older experienced professionals to provide professional development programmes is ineffective as they do not promote creativity and innovation. He proposed using theory and research together as a way of improving the leadership development programmes provided by experienced managers (Crow, 2004). When programmes are provided in an integrated manner by both the university faculty, who are better informed and conduct research in their role as lecturers, and district leadership, who have practical experience (see Chapter 2), participants become more able to connect theory to practice (Sanzo, Myran, & Clayton, 2011). Many developmental activities (such as conferences or seminars) have been implemented as prominent activities, but were ultimately not considered to be very useful (Earley, 2013) or have a significant impact on trainees (e.g., managers). It is possible these programmes

did not meet attendees' needs did not apply to what they learned in the workplace to benefit from these activities.

Sufficient evidence demonstrates that the impact of training is generally low (Kupritz, 2002). For example, only about 10% of training translates to functional performance (Cheng & Ho, 2001; Kupritz, 2002). Santos and Stuart (2003) argued that the main reason for the low transfer of training is the lack of time due to working environments and fast-paced contexts; thus, managers usually quickly return to old patterns and habits. As a result, most managers may return to their previous working methods after they end training and are less likely than other staff to apply what they learned from training at work (Santos & Stuart, 2003).

In addition, Gilpin-Jackson and Bushe (2007) asserted that situations surrounding possible implementation in the work environment may affect the efficiency of the process of benefiting from training. They added that training is effective if it is carried out in such a way as to make it applicable to the workplace and if trainees actually attempt to apply the training they have received in their work environment (Gilpin-Jackson & Bushe, 2007). According to Cheng and Ho (2001), when trainees apply what they have acquired in the context of a job-related training, both trainees and the institution can benefit.

It is important to recognise the importance of culture and context in shaping education, leadership, and the preparation and development of leaderships in each country because there is major diversity in the number and nature of leadership development programmes in each country, which in turn reflects the prevailing pattern of choosing what is appropriate to enhance the quality of education (Bush, 2013).

### **3.7.4 Learning through Lived Experience**

The importance of informal methods' contribution to the learning about leadership has generally been accepted, and there is also a recognition of the importance of the learning processes through involvement in various activities with different leaders; these can often come with a lack of focus on formal interventions, although both methods are useful in leadership development (Kempster, 2006). McCall (2004) emphasised that experience is the main source of leadership learning, not training programmes. Furthermore, Robinson and Wick (1992) argued that more than 70% of leadership development occurs through informal experiences during work while only about 10% of leader development occurs due to training and other formal programmes. They concluded that "experience is the best teacher" (p. 63). DeRue and Wellman (2009) argued that "there is a growing belief among scholars and practitioners alike that on-the-job work experience is the most effective way to develop individual leadership skills" (p. 859).

Learning is considered to be a critique of implicit assumptions in many traditional theories because it requires acquiring objective knowledge. The best ways of learning are achieved through educational or training courses (Handley, Clark, Fincham, & Sturdy, 2007) whereas leadership is learned through activities and events in the context of lived experience (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). Learning considers learning and knowledge as operations and is an integral part of daily practice in the family and workplace or even in other social components; therefore, learning and knowledge cannot be isolated from daily practice or even separated and then taught as a discrete activity (Handley et al., 2007). As McCall (2004) confirmed, individuals' on-the-job experiences have a greater and better impact on leadership learning than formal training programmes because their role

is relatively modest. He added that “the main source of leadership learning, to the extent [of] learning leadership, is experience” (p. 127).

The different levels of leadership may lie in implicit influences that individuals do not immediately recognise through their lived experience (Kempster, 2006). Although experience plays an important role in leadership learning, not all experiences are equally important or have the same impact (McCall, 2004). Learning is more complex and involves more than just acquiring elements of organisational knowledge. It is very deeply connected and well established in daily activities and experience as well (Gherardi, Nicolini, & Odella, 1998). Furthermore, leadership development is not just about an experience, person, or context; it includes all three elements to support and enable the development of leaders through experience (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). All people participate in and contribute to a world that includes their working environment, which is considered a social and cultural organisation constantly being formed and changed through the cognitive and practical activities of individuals belonging to it. Thus, these activities are continuous through a cultural and social network (Gherardi et al., 1998).

Interestingly, to support leadership learning through experience, emphasis must be placed on individual learner differences (for leaders) as well as cognitive variables because they affect the processes of learning from experience (McCall, 2010). Leadership skills are also developed through observation, which in turn is conducted through living experience, where observational learning plays an important role in the development of leadership (Kempster & Parry, 2014). Several key aspects influence how leadership is learnt, such as situated learning, identity development, observational learning, and structure–agency interaction (Kempster, 2006). These factors will be explained in more detail in the following subsections.

### **3.7.4.1 Situated Learning**

Learning occurs primarily during early development for individuals, where they proceed “through schooling, instruction and training. People usually receive their (professional) training at the end of their educational careers” (Gherardi et al., 1998, p. 273-274). Learning often means the ability to participate in new activities, perform new tasks and functions, and master new concepts or meanings, which are part of broader systems that arise from and include relationships that develop within societies, where interpersonal relationships are a key part (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Situated learning may provide a more centralised view of the learning process, especially in collaboration with observational learning, identity development, and structure–agency interaction (Kempster, 2006). A learning model proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) suggested that learning is a social activity that results from the involvement of individuals in everyday life. Learning to become a leader means that there is agreement or legislation between the community and that individual (Kempster, 2006).

Situated learning theory is an alternative to traditional cognitive theories, which focuses on relational and structural aspects of learning in addition to the processes of identity construction (Handley et al., 2007). According to Lave and Wenger (1991), “the person is defined by as well as defines these relations. Learning thus implies becoming a different person with respect to the possibilities enabled by these systems of relations” (p. 53). If this aspect of learning is ignored, it means the fact that learning involves building new identities is also ignored (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

### **3.7.4.2 Identity Development**

Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012) argued that the development of identity is an integral part of a leader's development because this facilitates critical leadership behaviours and improves leadership which will develop identity, personal skills, and decision-making. They added that, in organisations, there is a need for interpersonal skills to provide motivation and guidance to build a vision as well as interaction with other leaders, where the development of identity provides a leader with an understanding of his/her words and actions and how others perceive him/her. The formation of self-identity (of managers) "is part of an interactive process by which people engage with others to construct social systems and structures" (Busher et al., 2007, p. 3).

In his empirical research, Kempster (2006) demonstrated that a manager's identity is important to understand leadership development processes, particularly when it is interrelated with the influence of particular individuals (who influence leadership and management learning, such as senior managers). In fact, belonging and identification through participation may lead to the development of leadership as part of a manager's overall personal identity (Kempster, 2006).

The change and development of identity goes through several stages, beginning with observation and ending with an evaluation process according to personal considerations of what is acceptable or rejected by that person and others. Ibarra (1999) stressed that, during the transition from one level of employment to another, individuals attempt to form temporary and incomplete identities through three tasks to adapt their personality to the new role required by a new position, where a complete and consistent professional identity is developed. These tasks defined by Ibarra (1999) are as follows:

- Observation: the role models, attitudes, work strategies, and approach to dealing with others used by those whose own desired role identities are observed.
- Experience: where the temporary identity (which may have been formed initially from the observation) is experimented by imitating behaviour of good role models.
- Evaluation: the effectiveness of the personality acquired and the formation of identity are evaluated through others' reactions as well as internal assessments to compare what they want to become and what they think.

Socialisation can facilitate this transition or the development of identity in the workplace because the efforts of such socialisation can be found in formal programmes within an organisation or may also be an informal process (Day et al., 2012). According to Kempster (2006), the leadership learning cycle includes four stages to learning through lived experience: leadership experience, implicit reflection, knowledge, and participation (see Appendix 5). Leadership learning arises from the interrelationship with the organisational situation, which provides the path of learning through roles enabling managers to communicate with prominent senior managers who form their identity (Kempster, 2006). Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, and Gardner (1994) confirmed that, regardless of how identity evolves, organisational socialisation is often the main way in which newcomers adjust to new jobs or roles within the organisation. Busher et al. (2007) argued that collective identity associated with work is expressed through the culture that members form as a result of their interactions, where some are more influential in constructing this identity than others. Thus, it is considered as a means to help members of society create their own meaning of the objectives of that community.

DeRue and Ashford (2010) explained that “leadership development and the construction of a leadership identity are about the construction of a relationship” (p. 629). Identity changes may occur through social interactions that include comments or guidance from important factors such as role models in the field of employment, which means that identity is forged and modified because work becomes more complex and drives a change of professional identity to match professional development (Day et al., 2012).

Kempster (2006) stressed that growth through challenging situations in the context of senior leadership seems to enhance managers’ personal identification with their role and identity in a leadership. Moreover, there is a strong correlation among leadership development processes, identity development, and personal development (Day et al., 2012). The process of becoming a leader may occur sooner for some than for others; for example, those who invest in self-identity appear more substantial and complementary to other causal factors that influence leadership learning, such as senior managers and the role of legislation as a leader (Kempster, 2006).

However, many individuals may not consider themselves to have the qualities of a leader or be in a leader-like position, although in the social contexts in which they work, they may be collectively viewed as leaders. Such collective support may come from top-level managers or the wider social context; thus, they initiate the process of building a leadership identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). The formation of the identity of any person, whether a leader or teacher, is affected by the position among others, or the place he/she chooses for him-/herself within the boundaries of the community to which he/she belongs (Busher et al., 2007). Identity development theories focus on self-awareness, which is often described as crucial to effective leadership development, because it helps

change the identity of the leader or aspects of the environment to be a better leader (Day et al., 2012).

### **3.7.4.3 Observational Learning**

Observational learning is considered to be a process interrelated with situated learning and salience, as the functional paths within institutions offer diversity of senior managers (Robinson & Wick, 1992). Kempster and Parry (2014) provided a model for observational learning to explain the continuous dynamics to the learning process that represent a temporal perspective; in other words, what is observed will change over time. For example, parents or teachers may have a significant impact on the pre-employment stages. However, during different stages of a career, the observed learning becomes more contextualised to the situation of leadership, such as the focus on the immediate director or principal (Kempster & Parry, 2014).

Observation is influenced by whether the observer (who is a novice manager) is keen to observe certain aspects of senior managers. For instance, if the observer has limited access or stimulus, the impact of significant others will conversely be limited or there may be no impact, because observing them with motivational stimulus might achieve the concept of relational proximity (i.e., close observation; Kempster & Parry, 2014). In addition, managers' responsibilities gradually increase through different job stages, leading to improved leadership and more focus on the people observing (Robinson & Wick, 1992). Kempster and Parry (2014) argued that observing prominent people over long distances, such as national or international leaders through the media, may have an impact before embarking on a professional career, while close relational proximity with a direct manager, for example, may lead to greater impact during different job stages. In

other words, observational learning from ordinary people in certain stages of a job can have a greater and better effect than learning from prominent leadership models. The impact of key people, such as senior managers, is considered extremely significant to all managers in their lived experience of leadership learning (Kempster, 2006).

Bandura (2001) concluded that observational learning is subject to the following four subfunctions:

- “Attentional processes determine what is selectively observed in the profusion of modelling influences and what information is extracted from ongoing models’ events” (p. 272). That is, many factors influence the exploration and interpretation of what is modelled through observational learning, such as cognitive skills, preconceived notions, value preferences for the observer, and functional value of the model activities. Moreover, other factors, such as structural arrangements for human interactions, largely determine the kind of models to which people have access.
- Another subfunction related to the process of cognitive representations is retention, as an active process for transforming and restructuring information transmitted by events along the lines of rules and concepts for memory representation.
- This subfunction relates to the process of behavioural production by translating symbolic concepts into appropriate courses of action through the process of matching concepts, which guide those of building and implementing patterns of behaviour that are then compared against conceptual models of appropriateness.
- Behaviour derived from observational learning is influenced by three main sorts of stimuli: self-produced, direct, and indirect. Bandura (2001) added that individuals

are more likely to show exemplary behaviour if it produces valuable results than if it has no rewarding effects.

The reactions generated by individuals according to their self-approving and self-censuring regulate the activities or skills they have learned from observational learning. They implement activities that give them self-satisfaction while rejecting those they personally deprecate (Bandura, 2001).

Learning from experience is to some extent limited by two concepts: structure, which deals with individuals' roles within organisations, and agency, which means being able to exercise control over what actually happens in the workplace within the organisation. These ideas are discussed next.

#### **3.7.4.4 Structure and Agency**

Kempster (2006) argued that the processes of identity development as well as situated and observed learning are influenced in various contexts through historical precedents of relationships between structure and agency. Interaction between structure and agency is usually based on the influence of senior managers through observational learning processes, which can explain how the meaning, practice, and identity of leadership change over time (Kempster, 2006).

Biesta and Tedder (2007) commented that the role of structure is to achieve agency, which depends on the interaction among agentic orientations, resources, and broader contextual and structural factors. A greater understanding of the potential impact of leadership learning may be derived from an estimate of structure–agency interaction in specific contexts because, if the manager is more powerful, this leads to the greater influence of these structures (Kempster, 2006).

Biesta and Tedder (2007) affirmed that agency is realised through the active participation of individuals within their contextual aspects of action; this participation is characterised by certain configurations, such as routines, purpose, and judgement. They proposed that learning occurs through a certain configuration of the manager's orientations and what their impact on one's life can be. Therefore, learning plays an important role in achieving agency. As far as the implications of learning and pedagogy, individuals' learning requirements differ from their needs in the place where they work (Wheelahan, 2007). Education is a particularly useful topic for understanding the interaction between structure and agency through the consideration of multiple and complex structures, multiple stakeholders, and the continuing need for improvement (Rigby, Woulfin, & März, 2016).

Agency requires self-direction and self-efficacy as well as opportunities to practise autonomy and create a particular context (Ecclestone, 2007). Through this perspective, Ecclestone argued that the manager's understanding in different contexts and times demand focus on the dynamic interaction between different previous influences and experiences shared with the present and orientations towards the future. Thus, it is clear that agency is rooted in past achievements, transactions, and working patterns in the sense that desires are derived from their participation and experience in the natural, practical, and social worlds, which will format the participation of individuals in education. However, agency is not a thing or property owned by individuals, but actions in different contexts (Ecclestone, 2007). According to Biesta and Tedder (2007), agency can be considered as the ability to control and give direction to one's work life.

Wheelahan (2007) emphasised that pedagogy should consider the experiences of individuals in life, how these experiences shaped and influenced them, their wishes and

aspirations, and how these experiences helped develop their sense of identity and agency. The individual's identity, actions, and hopes require an understanding of how these experiences are adapted through social relationships of privilege and deprivation (Wheelahan, 2007).

### **3.8 Review of Relevant Studies in the Field of Leadership Development**

This section will provide a review of five separate research studies that examined the issue of leadership development in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan (as an example for the Arab states), where the focus will be on showing the relevance of these to the subject of this research.

#### **3.8.1 NIE (2013)**

Commissioned by Kuwait's Ministry of Education, the Advisory Group from the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Singapore conducted a diagnostic analysis on different aspects of the education system over a 6-month period from 7 January to 7 July 2013. The most significant results about school leadership, which are relevant to the current research, were as follows:

- 45.7% of MoE employees consider that the preparation programmes for school leaders are not sufficient
- 65.2% consider the current leadership skills of principals to be weak
- 88.1% consider the leadership training programmes to be insufficient
- 83.3% consider the quality of the existing school leadership training programmes to be low

Possible reasons for these findings are the lack of awareness of the importance of the development of educational leadership, the lack of a comprehensive training and development plan for managers, and no clear criteria for selecting candidates for manager positions where leadership has special features that managers need to have, not to mention the lack of requirement for the candidate to attend leadership development courses. In addition, the managers themselves might not try to develop their leadership skills, perhaps because they do not believe in their importance or they already have expertise (which certainly had an impact on their leadership skills), yet formal learning activities also play an important role.

Furthermore, 21 variables that affect the education system were organised in order of importance from the viewpoint of MoE officials. Effectiveness of pre-principalship preparation programmes was ranked first (88.1), effectiveness of in-service professional development programmes for leaders was second (87.2), quality of the pre-principalship preparation programme was third (83.3), quality of in-service professional development programmes for leaders was sixth (77.5), and current leadership skills of leaders was twelfth (65.2).

### **3.8.2 Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008)**

This study aimed to examine and identify the training needs of educational leaders in Kuwait (managers, observers, and heads of departments in the MoE and EDs) in five areas, including leadership administrative processes; policies, strategies, legislation, and targets; monitoring and evaluation; organisation and management development; and leadership models. All of these areas have significant needs, such as educational policies (areas of policies, strategies, legislation and targets), administrative regulations (areas of

organisation and management development), and managerial decision-making (areas of administrative leadership processes).

There were differences in the perspectives of the study's sample regarding the training needs for educational leaders in the Ministry of Education in Kuwait, including variables such as qualifications, experience, and location of workplace (Ministry of Education and school district). The findings showed that ED leaders have a higher level of training requirements which are fundamentally different from those of leaders in the MoE. The researchers attributed this result in part to ED leaders being far from the responsibility centre in the MoE, which may negatively impact their abilities as leaders. Perhaps also the MoE leaders' functions are purely focused on leadership, while supervisory functions dominate in EDs.

### **3.8.3 Al-Duaij (1994)**

Al-Duaij examined leadership functions that evaluated the management of school districts in Kuwait from the perspective of technical supervisors (in specific subjects) and school managers in primary, intermediate, and secondary levels in public education. The most significant result was the relatively poor performance in some functions, such as the use of appropriate leadership styles, decision-making capacity, and the ability to provide training programmes for staff.

### **3.8.4 Mohammed (2008)**

Mohammed assessed leadership training programmes and how goals are achieved from the perspective of leaders and deputy school principals at all levels of public education in the Al-Ahsaa area in Saudi Arabia. She argued that training programmes often use group discussion, problem-solving, seminars and workshops, seminars between trainers and

trainees, and the style of co-operative education. The study identified both strengths and weaknesses of the training programmes. The strengths included improved trainees' performance in planning skills in school administration, the exchange of management experiences, and how to address problems and regulate conduct of educational administrative processes in the workplace. The weaknesses included development and training programmes not being able to achieve development of the managerial decision-making process as well as the application of modern trends in educational supervision and the development of educational evaluation skills. These programmes also did not consider the needs of trainees when determining the content of training programmes; furthermore, there was no assessment of the impact of the training programmes upon the participants.

Criticisms of Mohammad's work indicate that she was focused on management activities, not leadership.

### **3.8.5 Amro and Awawda (2016)**

Amro and Awawda examined the effectiveness of the training programmes provided to the educational leaders in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Jordan from their point of view during service and clarified how to develop these programmes in the future. The sample was the entire study population, which includes all educational supervisors who attended the supervision sessions, all managers who attended school administration courses, and all teachers who attended courses related to their specialisms. The results showed great effectiveness in the training programmes of educational leaders in UNRWA in Jordan during service.

Thus, despite the recognition of the importance of educational leadership development as well as the MoE's attention on the development of leadership skills, developing countries, such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have to some extent failed in providing support and assistance for those who participated in leadership development programmes.

# **Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology**

## **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used to address the research questions of the present study. Section 4.2. presents the rationale for the research methodology chosen—namely, ontological and epistemological perspectives, research paradigms, and methodological perspectives, which include qualitative research and case study. Section 4.3 examines the justification for the use of the chosen research methods (questionnaire and semi-structured interview). Section 4.4 discusses the research sample and explains its composition and nature. Section 4.5 covers the methods of data collection, including the pilot studies for both the questionnaire and interview, and the first and second phases of gathering the data. Section 4.6 presents the issues of the data analysis methods used to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data. Section 4.7 discusses the reliability and validity data to improve the research quality. Section 4.8 focuses on ethics issues, and Section 4.9 concludes the chapter.

## **4.2 Rationale for the Research Methodology Chosen**

### **4.2.1 Ontological Perspectives**

Many views represent different ways to explain the social world, including implicit and explicit assumptions (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018), and are based on four underlying concepts of the social world: ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology (Burrell & Morgan, 1993). Pring (2015) argued that the social world is comprised of social actors' intentions and meanings, where each person is within a subjective world of meaning through which he or she can interpret the social world.

According to Thomas (2013), the social world is “constructed by each of us in a different way. It’s not simply ‘out there’; it is different for each of us, with words and events carrying different meanings in every case” (p. 108). The key concern of the social world is not just with the intellectual or knowledge area, but also with social and subjective aspects people identify and define for others. So the focus is on how individuals perceive their social world (El-Aswad, 2014).

Accordingly, the working definition of social world in this study is different from one person to other according to each individual’s perceptions and judgement as well as his/her interpretation of events. This interpretation is based on the previous experiences and knowledge that have been built in the mind of that person. Thus, the social world is the result of humans’ interpretations according to their own knowledge.

Ontology discusses what people’s perceptions are about the nature of reality and whether this actually really exists (objective reality) or is a fact established in the minds of people (subjective reality; Flowers, 2009); it revolves around “enquiry into the ultimate nature of being, or what there really is” (Wegerif, 2008, p. 347). Ontology (reality) can be interpreted as being objective, rational, as well as external and independent from the observer; therefore, it needs to be discovered (Burton, Brundrett, & Jones, 2008). As a result, people have a number of inherent ontological assumptions that affect how they recognise reality as well as whether that existence is the result of one set of things and not another (Flowers, 2009). These assumptions of an ontological nature are highly relevant to the very core of the issue under investigation in this study. However, sociologists have also identified many basic ontological questions (Burrell & Morgan, 1993), such as:

whether the “reality” to be investigated is external to the individual—imposing itself on individual consciousness from without—or the product of individual consciousness; whether “reality” is of an objective nature, or the product of individual cognition; [and] whether “reality” is a given “out there” in the world, or the product of one’s mind. (p. 1)

There is a contrast between the two perspectives in ontological assumptions. First, the objective reality of physical things, the public world of outer reality, and the quantitative methods are based on a scientific model (Pring, 2015). Second, the subjective reality of “meanings” refers to the private world of inner thoughts and qualitative methods based on a kind of phenomenon exposure (Pring, 2015). The alternative perspective of social reality is subjective, with its emphasis upon the significance of individuals’ subjective experience in the creation of the social world. Furthermore, it seeks to understand and interpret the different issues and utilises various methods (Burrell & Morgan, 1993). This explores and interprets the experiences, skills, and knowledge built through interactions with others, as evident in the question “how do you deal with a principal who is not doing their job properly?” According to Burrell and Morgan (1993), the main concern for this perspective is to attempt to understand the manner in which the individual creates, interprets, and changes the world around him/her. This view tends to focus on the explanation and understanding of what is unique and particular to the individual instead of what is comprehensive or general.

However, the current study seeks to understand the leadership development process more clearly for MoE and ED managers and identify the skills and abilities MoE and ED administrators demand (a subjective response), how they use what they know in the performance of their functions, and how they develop their own leadership skills and

performance in the educational institution. MoE and ED administrators deal with reality, structures, and individuals and require specific abilities, skills, and knowledge that enable them to do their job and are often gained through experience or education which leads to changes in behaviour and performance. Therefore, they and their knowledge are not just names for physical structures; rather, they are humans (objective) who can interact with this reality in a constantly changing environment (subjective), where individuals differ in their interactions with others according to their previously acquired awareness, knowledge, and expertise. This, in turn, constitutes their identity. According to Northfield (2011), “each individual constructs his or her own version of reality but is influenced in determining this construction by the culture and context within which he or she resides” (p. 36). This leads to other questions about how to measure this reality and how to form knowledge of this reality, which in turn leads to the consideration of epistemology (Flowers, 2009).

#### **4.2.2 Epistemological Perspectives**

Epistemology is about the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the known (Northfield, 2011). The assumptions of an epistemological nature relate to the basis of knowledge as well as about how one can understand the world and transfer knowledge among humans. Furthermore, these assumptions include ideas such as what types of knowledge can be obtained and how they can be separated from what is true to what is seen as false. This divide assumes a certain epistemological stance (Blaikie, 2007; Burrell & Morgan, 1993).

These assumptions can be based on two perceptions of what knowledge is. First, if it can identify knowledge as being factual, real, and possible to provide in concrete form, it can

be defined as positivism (Burrell & Morgan, 1993). Second, knowledge may be seen as soft, more subjective and spiritual, or transcendental in nature, based on the experience, natural vision, and personal basis; such knowledge is considered anti-positivist. This perception considers the social world as fundamentally relativistic and unable to be understood only from the perspective of individuals involved in the activities that will be verified (Burrell & Morgan, 1993).

People obtain, accumulate, and store different types of knowledge in their minds and then use this knowledge when dealing or interacting with the social reality in which they live. Eraut (1994) argued that people store knowledge in their minds (or probably exclude it from memory completely). He divided knowledge into the following six categories:

- Knowledge of people can be obtained by others unwittingly as a by-product of meetings or dealings that have other purposes, such as directly facing the person interested or encounters with other parties that may provide indirect information about that person.
- Situational knowledge is related to how people interpret or understand the situations in which they find themselves.
- Knowledge of educational practice is considered as the knowledge and ability to reference possible policies and practices.
- Conceptual knowledge involves many concepts, theories, and ideas stored in the conscious mind and then used in various situations.
- Process knowledge is the knowledge of how to do things, which is often known as “know-how” (p. 81).
- Control knowledge means controlling one’s own behaviour rather than others’.

Eraut's (1994) categories of knowledge are considered to be divided knowledge, where each part has a function or role in the formation of human personality (subjective). For example, knowledge of people can be obtained by others. However, there are differences in the way this knowledge is accumulated in the memory and indeed how it is combined with previous experience and with the situational knowledge and/or conceptual knowledge they have, where complement each other. Thus, a person's character is formed and changed according to how that person interacts with the attitudes and experiences of other individuals. Furthermore, human beings use knowledge in combinations of categories almost simultaneously.

Eraut (1994) mentioned some types of knowledge that differ in their content according to the field or profession practiced by a person. This may refer to conceptual knowledge, which is made up of different concepts (e.g., medical, educational, sports), as well as knowledge of educational practices, which is necessary for those who work in education. Therefore, this knowledge can be considered as a skill and reference for educational issues. Those who have significant experience in a specific job often possess many of the concepts acquired through interaction with the social world as well as in professional training. Individuals receive information consciously, then arrange and construct this information in their mind with previous experiences. This new knowledge is added to the previous, which may modify existing knowledge and, in turn, increase process knowledge, which might enable them to perform tasks in an appropriate way.

The current study investigates the leadership skills required of MoE and ED administrators and how these skills can be developed through training and development programmes that increase individuals' knowledge. Different types of knowledge are necessary to exercise effective leadership for educational leadership because they deal with various

levels of people, such as school principals, parents, and teachers (knowledge of people). Moreover, they need to be aware of how to act in different positions (situational knowledge), be a reference to the policies and practices acquired by experience and learning (knowledge of educational practice), acquire concepts of education to help them to understand and analyse policies and educational issues (conceptual knowledge), apply them in practice through know-how and knowledge (process knowledge), and control self-behaviour (control knowledge).

Based on the above, the researcher believes that knowledge is objective or subjective, depending on how knowledge is acquired—namely, through people’s perceptions, experience, and the abilities they possess. In theory, this might mean that the person has tangible structures or former units of knowledge (objective/positivism) and, accordingly, he/she can construct new knowledge in a personal way (subjective/ anti-positivist), which in turn may be affected through interactions with others. Thus, epistemological questions which might relate with this study are: How can this knowledge be acquired? How can MoE and ED administrators build their knowledge? How can they be sure their knowledge is genuine?

#### **4.2.3 Research Paradigms: Positive and Interpretive Approaches**

Positivist approaches start with a theory, but in interpretive approaches, theory is generated or developed inductively or derives a particular meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Cohen et al. (2018), naturalistic, qualitative, and interpretive approaches are alternatives to positivist approaches. These approaches possess particular features, as summarised and further clarified next:

- Events are in constant change over time, and are affected according to the context in which they occur (Cohen et al., 2018) because people acquire new skills which change their views and how they deal with different situations.
- “Events and individuals are unique and largely non-generalizable” (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 20)—that is, events are located in different contexts and are interpreted according to previous experiences and concepts.
- There must be accuracy and fidelity in the issues that are being studied (Cohen et al., 2018); they should be studied in nature and, in a sense, interpreted according to the context in which they are found or appeared.
- There are many interpretations of the same event or situation (Cohen et al., 2018) because individuals interpret the attitudes and events based on their past experiences and current expectations, which in turn leads to diverse interpretations for different people in the same position. Thus, “reality is multi-layered and complex” (p. 21) because it varies depending on participants’ views.
- Many events cannot be reduced to simplistic explanations (Cohen et al., 2018) because they do not arise from nothing. Although there are multiple aspects that affect events, such as the profile of the participants or the environment and context in which this event occurred, there may not be a simple explanation comprehensive of all aspects.
- Researchers should examine situations from the perspective of the participants, not from their perspective (Cohen et al., 2018). A researcher seeks to explain an issue and interprets meanings according to the participants’ experiences and performance; as such, the examination of situations must be from the perspective of participants, not the researcher.

However, some criticism of the interpretative approach has emerged (e.g., Bernstein, 1974; Mead, 1934; Rex, 1974), principally because it has been claimed that it includes only participants' activities, experiences, and expectations. As a result, it has limitations in judging issues and positions because of its focus on participants' experiences (Cohen et al., 2018). This criticism might be accepted because, regardless of participants' experience, their attitudes will unquestionably vary due to their different backgrounds and experiences. This is likely to lead to uncertainty about their judgement, not to mention the potential unreliability of the interpretation of the researcher, who is also of course affected by personal experiences and backgrounds.

Therefore, a qualitative rather than a mixed approach will be used in the current study, despite two tools being used for data collection: a questionnaire (quantitative) and an interview (qualitative). Further explanation of these tools is provided later in this chapter. The data collected from the questionnaire will be interpreted and analysed as qualitative rather than quantitative data (e.g., as a percentage) because the objective of using the questionnaire is to explore certain issues related to the subject of study while preparing relevant interview questions.

#### **4.2.4 Methodological Perspectives**

##### **4.2.4.1 Qualitative Research**

Through a qualitative approach, the researcher seeks to understand the cultures, individuals, and issues rather than analyse the relationships between variables or examine the relationship between cause and effect. She also intends to question cases in their natural environment, which are usually interpreted in context (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Researchers who apply a qualitative approach often rely mainly on

constructivist perspectives to make claims about knowledge (i.e., they believe there are multiple meanings of individual experiences and that meanings are socially constructed) or participatory perspectives—or both (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

However, there are many concerns about qualitative research. For example, Higgs and Cherry (2009) argued that “diversity of qualitative research approaches is a weakness and there is a lack of credibility in the quite different claims the various approaches make as to what counts as knowledge or as ‘good’ or even ethical research” (p. 8). A qualitative approach in practice may consist of many approaches, such as naturalistic inquiry, interpretive inquiry, and phenomenology; these might reflect a desire in the researcher to use a name that is more conceptual or theoretical. Despite being somewhat vague, such an approach is broad and inclusive enough to cover a variety of groups of research practices that scholars have developed (Preissle, 2006) and is still regarded as a powerful and credible tool because it discovers and understands meanings and experiences of the human world in different ways (Higgs & Cherry, 2009).

The current study adopts a qualitative approach because it allows a better understanding of the meaning and interpretation of events and issues in the context in which they occur (i.e., identifies, explains, and understands the expertise and skills of educational administrators). The information and data will be gathered from the practical and professional reality of these administrators; this could be through an interpretive approach in qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of what is occurring.

#### **4.2.4.2 Case Study**

This research applies a multi-site case study approach because this often follows the interpretative approach of research by seeing the situation from the perspective of the

participants (Cohen et al., 2018). As such, it guarantees the exploration of an issue through a variety of perspectives while allowing for many different aspects to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Hitchcock and Hughes (2008) argued that a case study approach has many features that can be advantageous. For example, it is concerned with a rich and lively description of issues relevant to the case, concentrates on individuals or groups of people trying to understand their perceptions of issues, and highlights certain events relevant to the case. According to Merriam (2014), the case study approach is considered to be a way of exploring complex social units consisting of many variables of possibility and importance in understanding and interpreting the issues under study.

Case studies are shaped through temporal, geographical, organisational, institutional, and other contexts and can be defined by the individuals and groups concerned or by the participants' roles and functions to create a border around the issue to become a case study (Hitchcock & Hughes, 2008). In addition, they can include the research of a case or issue in its real-life context and typically use various types of data (Robson, 2002). According to Dyer (1995), these can be descriptive, detailed, subjective, and objective data. Merriam (2014) explained that "a case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40).

Accordingly, a multisite case study was applied in this research to explore the experiences of managers (group of individuals) in the MoE and EDs (geographically, multiple sites) and to explore the effectiveness of the professional development of these managers (the case concerned) to help them exercise their leadership role and carry out their functions in Kuwait's education system. The researcher sought to obtain a rich description and profound interpretations of the issue under study to help the exploration of the issue

within its context through the use of different data sources. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), researchers can collect and integrate quantitative survey data with other data from qualitative research sources, such as interviews, to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the issues under investigation.

Having reviewed all the possible approaches to research using an interpretive, qualitative approach, it would seem that a multisite case study approach is the most appropriate for the current study. The next section discusses these possibilities in terms of particular research methods.

### **4.3 Research Methods**

Having examined the background approaches, the discussion will now focus on the use of mixed methods (section 4.3.1), and Section 4.3.2 presents the issues of the data collection instruments, such as the questionnaires and interviews which were used in this research.

#### **4.3.1 Use of Mixed Methods**

The traditional mixed methods approach is a method whereby two types of data are used: quantitative, which is collected from questionnaires, in order to test out hypotheses through a statistical analysis of the data; and qualitative data, which is obtained through interviews to complement quantitative data (it is one from many ways for collecting qualitative data), In order to provide more detailed findings to help answer the research questions. That is, the interviews results complement the survey data. Therefore, it is evident that this approach focuses on gathering and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in one study (Leavy, 2017). It can provide a better understanding of the responses to research questions than any single approach can (Cohen et al., 2018).

In contrast, embedded mixed methods are used if one set of data (quantitative or qualitative) is inadequate and does not answer different study questions. Therefore, qualitative data is embedded in quantitative research design, or quantitative data is embedded in qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2018) - as is the case in this study - in order to obtain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of issues related to the development of leadership skills of the research sample (managers). According to Fetters and Freshwater (2015), embedded quantitative and qualitative data provides the researcher with more information than what each type of data can provide separately.

Therefore, despite the use of surveys and interviews to collect data, traditional mixed methods have not been applied in this study, because the purpose of the questionnaire was to gather preliminary information on issues related to the topic of the study. In addition, no statistical tests were performed on the quantitative data collected.

Conversely, the embedded mixed methods approach was used, where interviews were the main tool for collecting qualitative data, and quantitative data was embedded (using the questionnaire). Qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interviews to obtain more details and a broader understanding of the processes of preparing and developing leadership skills from the study sample's perspective.

Cohen et al., (2018) stated that there are reasons for mixing data types. For example, qualitative data can be used to validate the quantitative data and to understand the opinions of the participants involved in the research, and also the context which it is in. Therefore, the approach of this study is mainly a qualitative one, and as a result, the researcher has collected data using two different methods to provide an in-depth picture of the leadership development of these managers.

## **4.3.2 Data Collection Instruments**

### **4.3.2.1 Questionnaire**

In the interpretative paradigm, qualitative methods are considered as the main features for investigation. However, these methods are not linked only with those paradigms (Foss & Ellefsen, 2002). Therefore, researchers can gain descriptive, inferential, and explanatory information from survey methods where data can be collected by using surveys that aim to describe the nature of existing conditions in a specific time period, develop standards to compare current conditions, or identify relationships between certain events (Cohen et al., 2018). In survey studies, researchers ask participants many questions about their opinions, but these are commonly only about factual issues. Furthermore, surveys have different methods of gathering data, such as conducting interviews or distributing questionnaires to a particular group (Bailey, 2008). Whilst this has the advantage of being capable of collecting standardized information by using the same questions and tools with each participant (Cohen et al., 2018), “surveys may vary in their levels of complexity from those that provide simple frequency counts to those that present relational analysis” (p. 205) as well as perhaps being different in terms of scope (Cohen et al., 2018).

Many types of question forms can be used in questionnaires. This study includes types such as closed questions and open-ended questions. For closed questions, the questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents “strongly agree”, 2 represents “agree”, 3 represents “undecided”, 4 represents “agree”, and 5 represents “strongly disagree”. A Likert scale provides a set of responses built into a rating scale as an answer to a given question (Cohen et al., 2018). This type of question is

easier and faster to answer and does not need to be written. Furthermore, the questions can be designed and presented clearly and directly while enabling comparisons to be drawn between the groups in the sample (Oppenheim, 1992). According to Cohen et al. (2018), closed questions enable participants to answer according to what they want while being particularly appropriate for an investigation of complex issues that cannot rely on simple answers.

Open-ended questions are appropriate when the researcher needs to collect data from a small number of respondents or for those parts of the scope of the questionnaire which may require a personal or honest comment from the participants (Cohen et al., 2018). Open-ended questions can also be used if possible answer categories are not known or if the researcher wishes to see what the participants' opinion is before deciding on appropriate answer categories (Bailey, 2008). They also allow for participants to answer in their own way while avoiding the restricting of responses by preparing options beforehand (Cohen et al., 2018). These types of questions are preferable for complex issues which the researcher cannot summarise into smaller categories; they also allow participants to answer adequately and clarify their answers (Bailey, 2008). They leave freedom for the participants to respond and, therefore, may include valuable information the researcher had not previously considered or included the topic or area of consideration in the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2018; Muijs, 2011). Ultimately, the researcher puts the responsibility for data into the hands of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018).

However, open-ended questions may be more difficult to analyse and deal with than closed questions as "the answers will first need to be coded and quantified using some form of content analysis" (Muijs, 2011, p. 46). Furthermore, they may be more time-

consuming for respondents, which may, in turn, lead to participants giving incomplete, uninteresting, and irrelevant answers (Muijs, 2011). Therefore, the researcher has tried to identify a certain number of questions that lead to achieving a stated purpose (i.e., collect basic information) while helping the researcher identify important items for the semi-structured interview questions.

The questionnaire was designed in several stages. First, the literature related to the topic of professional development (e.g Mitchell, 2013) and how to prepare educational leaders was reviewed (e.g Bush & Middlewood, 2013 & Bush & Glover, 2004) in order to devise questions which were relevant to managers who work in education districts and different sections of the MoE. This was to gain a deeper understanding of important areas of study, and then devise accurate explanations of some of the themes. Second, the researcher tried to make sure that the survey questions related strongly to the research sub questions. During this step, the researcher also attempted to predict possible answers to these questions to ensure that they would explore the relevant issues and provide data which answered the main research question (and therefore achieve the goal of the study). Thirdly, these questions were reviewed and revised to ensure that each category in the survey was correct and that there were no duplicates included. Finally, the questions were designed as either open or closed, depending on the type of information required and the best and easiest way for the participants to provide the required data.

#### **4.3.2.2 Interviews**

Interviews in qualitative research essentially mean a discussion between two individuals in which the interviewer asks questions and the interviewee responds (Cohen et al., 2018; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Furthermore, they are a targeted form of data collection

which provides information to answer the specified research questions directly and are used to investigate and follow up (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). It is an important method when the researcher wishes to conduct an in-depth investigation into participants' experiences. Moreover, it is ideal when the researcher seeks to follow up on the initial responses to gain additional information that could help further clarify or shed light on a specific issue (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013) while allowing more depth in the interpretation of information (Cohen et al., 2018).

However, qualitative interviews also have some weaknesses. These include being prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer (Bell, 2014; Cohen et al., 2018) as well as wasting time (Bell, 2014; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). In addition, their success depends on the cooperation of the interviewee, his/her sincerity, and the quality of questions in the interview (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

Many types of interviews can be used as research tools, including structured interviews, where the content and procedures are organised in advance; unstructured interviews, which use an open situation with greater flexibility and freedom (Cohen et al., 2018); and semi-structured interviews, which were used in the current research because they allow for questions to be formulated in a more flexible way, creating "a mix of more or less structured questions" (Merriam, 2014, p. 90). As the researcher sought to obtain specific information from the participants, these questions were shaped in a more structured interview. However, during the interview, a number of different issues or aspects of the topic emerged and needed to be explored. As a result, in this part, the researcher did not select or order the questions in advance to ensure access to new ideas and discussion of information in greater depth (Merriam, 2014).

A great advantage of the semi-structured interviews is that they help researchers determine how best to use the available time to focus more on interaction (Bryman, 2012). They are also considered as a good strategy when the researcher has only one opportunity to interview participants, particularly if they are preoccupied in their tasks (Merriam, 2014), which is unfortunately sometimes a feature of the work of the MoE and ED managers. However, a weakness of this approach is that it sometimes does not provide the opportunity for the interviewees to present their own unique perspective (Bryman, 2012). To address this weakness, the interviewer prepared open-ended questions, which Bryman (2012) explained help interviewees express their perspectives through discussion.

Based on considerations discussed in the previous sections, this study used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to collect information for interpreting the issues and exploring leadership skills, experiences, and knowledge of educational managers in MoE and ED in order to identify how they build this knowledge in their context.

#### **4.4 Research Sample**

The sample is considered purposive because the researcher sought to select a sample of experienced personnel expected to hold senior positions (e.g., undersecretary or assistant undersecretary of ministry). According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), “purposeful sampling means [the] careful selection of members of the community who are likely to provide the best information” (p. 314). Generally, in qualitative research, purposive sampling occurs when researchers select cases to be included in the sample, based on their appreciation of the particular characteristics required in their research. As a result,

they can build a sample meeting their specific needs without representing the general population (Cohen et al., 2018). Purposeful selection is the strategy used to choose particular settings, persons, or activities to obtain information appropriate to the research questions and goals that cannot be obtained in other ways (Maxwell, 2012).

The researcher chose a sample to complete a survey. From the responses, a number of managers were chosen to be interviewed in greater depth about the preparation for their role as leaders of the MoE and EDs. The chosen managers were those involved in the formation of educational policy guiding the public education strategy implementation and could thus indicate whether the vision and goals of the MoE are being achieved.

The survey sample included 30 managers in the MoE who work in 8 sectors (see Section 2.5.5.3); each manager's job varied according to the sector to which he/she belongs. For example, the Public Education Sector includes eight administration departments: religious education, coordination, and six of the EDs (Al-Asmaa, Hawalli, Al-Farwaniya, Al-Jahra, Al-Ahmadi, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer). There were 24 managers in those EDs, and each district included four administrations—educational, administrative, activities, and engineering (each chaired by one manager). In short, the research sample in the first stage included 54 MoE and ED managers. Thus, the sample size was appropriate for enabling the research to be carried out.

For the interview sample, managers who agreed to participate in the interviews were selected from those who completed the questionnaire (they were asked in the last part of the questionnaire if they agreed to participate). Ultimately, 15 managers accepted this invitation. The researcher studied the open answers carefully and then selected eight

managers to ensure a purposive sample, and where the focus was on those who tried to raise important issues, and could fully answer all of the open questions.

From the original fifteen, eight participants were selected to ensure there was a good representation of different experience and roles within the study sample. This included those who had experience as a teacher or administrator before reaching their current position, and in turn meant that there was good diversity amongst the study sample. Managers and acting managers (because there were vacancies in these positions), and managers from the ministry's departments and educational districts were also selected. In addition, the researcher tried to include managers from departments with different disciplines (e.g. educational, administrative or engineering). Participants were also selected from both genders; three females (the only ones who agreed to the interview) and five males.

The rationale for sampling from managers of administration in the MoE was to better understand the effectiveness of preparing them to exercise their leadership role, especially when leaders have an influential role in the formation and development of strategic plans and education policies. These individuals are considered future candidates for the post of assistant undersecretary for any of the eight sectors in the MoE through their nomination and approval by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and Council of Ministers. Thus, they are expected to exercise leadership in this sensitive and important position in the MoE based on the experience gained while fulfilling their role as managers of administration in the MoE as well as from professional development and training courses. Such courses should help refine these experiences and develop them for the benefit of the educational process.

ED managers were also sampled because they were closer to the educational field due to their role in managing the supervisors who deal directly with school administration. These managers play an influential role in educational practice in schools and follow up on the implementation of educational policies and public education strategy in the real field of learning directly. Consequently, they can measure their success in achieving educational goals and the transfer of the real and clear picture to the senior leaders in the MoE about the reality of the problems facing the educational process in schools (see Section 2.5.5.3).

Furthermore, these managers are potential candidates for a position as a general manager of an ED or manager of subsidiary administration to the MoE; therefore, they need to meet the required conditions of CSC resolution No. 25/2006 (CSC, 2006), such as number of years of experience and conducting assessments within the last two years as manager of one of the district administrations. Upgrading to a general manager in one of the administrations in the MoE means increased responsibilities and tasks; individuals must prepare for such requirements so that they can achieve the education system's goals through the implementation of PESSK 2005–2025.

This research adopted an interpretive approach to study the identified issues, explore and interpret the managers' experiences and skills from their perspective, and investigate the effectiveness of their preparation for their educational leadership role, which they obtained through training and professional development and from their previous professional experience. Thus, the researcher assumed that the selection of the sample from the MoE and ED managers enriched this study based on the experience they obtained during their work as heads of departments and supervisors, managers of administrators in ED, and ultimately general managers of ED or managers of administration in the MoE.

## **4.5 Data Collection**

The researcher collected data from the original study population (i.e., MoE and ED managers) in two phases. In the first, a questionnaire was used (quantitative method; see Section 4.5.2); in the second, a semi-structured interview was used (qualitative method; see Section 4.5.3). However, before beginning the first phase, pilot studies were conducted to assess whether the tools to be used could provide the data to answer the main research question as well as to improve their validity.

### **4.5.1 Pilot Studies**

The results of the pilot studies will be presented for the questionnaires and interview questions. The questions were modified according to the three participants' comments in the pilot study of the survey questions. Interview questions were also adjusted according to the preliminary survey results. The first pilot study of the interview questions was then applied and followed by the second. Further details will be provided in the following two sections.

#### **4.5.1.1 Pilot Study of Questionnaires**

The pilot study was conducted by distributing the questionnaires to four participants from the original study sample. These were managers in different educational districts, three of whom were department managers in different educational districts while the fourth was a general manager of one educational district (two males and two females). The goal of the pilot study was to ensure that questions were clear and credible and to determine the time required to complete the questionnaire. After the pilot study was completed, the researcher noticed that one participant's responses included two unclear answers (Q23 and Q24). The questions were therefore redrafted (in the Arabic version only) and

returned to the same participant for completion (see Appendix 6 for the final version of the survey questions). Finally, the response time (which was estimated to be between 25 and 35 minutes) took an average of 30 minutes; the researcher considered this to be an appropriate period of time for responding to the questionnaire.

The purpose of these procedures was to identify the extent to which the questionnaire represented the research aims and to identify the weaknesses of the questionnaire in terms of the clarity of questions. They also aimed to obtain proposals for improving the questionnaire items. As a result, the participants' feedback was considered and appropriate modifications made.

#### **4.5.1.2 Pilot Study of Interview Questions**

This pilot study was carried out in two phases, with the first applied to only two managers. The second was applied to a third manager from the pilot study sample.

For the first phase, appointments were made to interview two managers, with the questions being sent by e-mail several days before the interview date so that they could review them prior to the meeting. A prompt card (see Appendix 7) was attached to the e-mail and included an explanation of some of the vocabulary or terms used in the interview questions (see appendix 8) so that they would be clear to the participants. The interviews were then transcribed from the recording (see appendix 13), and the questions revisited based on the respondents' answers and observations of the questions as well as the calculation of the time taken. The number of questions was reduced, and some were modified. They were then sent to the supervisors to help verify their credibility and suitability for the study.

The second pilot study was applied to a third participant to ensure that the revised questions were clear. It was ascertained that the questions were appropriate for the interview time (45–60 minutes, depending on the interviewer’s interaction and explanation). In addition, there was no repetition of the questions, and the purposes of the study were achieved. The interview questions to be used in the interviews were then finalised (see Appendix 9 for the final version of the Interview questions).

#### **4.5.2 First Phase: Questionnaire (Quantitative)**

The main purpose of using the questionnaire as a tool for data collection in this qualitative study was to collect basic information and public perceptions for the seven items surveyed to help the researcher develop semi-structured interview questions, which were the main tool for collecting the study data. The information was used to answer the main question of the study by obtaining explanations and a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation through respondents’ perceptions. The questionnaire included closed questions, which require specific answers to specific statements, and open-ended questions that give respondents the freedom of expression. These answers revealed new issues related to the research topic. They also provided an explanation and interpretation of some of the issues, which may be the most important issues from the perspective of the respondents and not the researcher. Indeed, according to Cohen et al. (2018), the space provided for open-ended answers is an opportunity for participants to highlight an issue or topic.

The questionnaires were distributed by hand for the sample during the official work period in the MoE and EDs (i.e., from December 2016 to January 2017). The questionnaires were distributed in two stages. First, the researcher started the

distribution for the general managers in 6 EDs and also for the department managers inside EDs (Department of Educational Affairs, Department of Administration, Department of Activities, and Engineering Department) during their official work hours. The questionnaire distribution process took about one week due to the different locations of each ED and the absence of some managers (one of the obstacles faced, as discussed in section 7.5). In some cases, the researcher had to arrange direct personal interviews with certain managers before they received the questionnaires to explain the purpose of the study and respond to their enquiries, even though the researcher had submitted an information sheet for each member beforehand (see Appendix 10).

Second, the questionnaire was distributed to department managers in the MoE, which took another week due to some departments being in different locations from the MoE headquarters (before moving to the new ministry building in December 2018). Some managers were not available in their departments due to out-of-office tasks or because they had been assigned to other departments that had no assigned managers (sometimes the manager was assigned to two departments at the same time). In addition, some departments in the MoE and EDs are administrated by a deputy manager, although their job description was only “supervisor”, as the manager position was vacant, meaning they were “acting managers” (for detailed numbers and percentages, see Chapter 5).

The researcher prepared a list for the departments, including the contact information for each one, and determined a collection date for each manager, as per their individual circumstances.

The data collection process from the MoE and EDs took about one month (there was an overlap period between the questionnaire distribution and data collection processes). In

some cases, the researcher distributed the questionnaire in certain departments while collecting data from other departments where questionnaires had been distributed some days previously. In addition, in some cases, the researcher had to review the same department back and forth several times to urge them to complete their questionnaire so the data could be collected. Table 4.1 shows the numbers and ratios of the questionnaires distributed, collected, and rejected as well as the vacant manager positions in both the MoE and EDs.

Table 4.1

*Numbers and Percentages of Questionnaires Distributed, Collected, and Rejected*

Sample	Vacant Positions		<u>Questionnaires</u>					
	Distributed	Returned	Rejected	Returned		Returned		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
54	6	11.10	48	88.9	6	12.5	42	87.5

#### 4.5.3 Second Phase: Semi-Structured Interviews (Qualitative)

This phase aimed to get a deeper understanding and interpretation of the experiences of managers in the MoE and the EDs through semi-structured interviews. After compiling the questionnaire responses, the researcher examined the frequency and percentages of the main themes as well as quickly scanning the answers to open-ended questions to explore the most important issues raised by respondents. The interview questions were subsequently revised and modified accordingly.

A list of eight managers (the interview sample) was prepared along with the names of their administrations and telephone numbers so that interviews could be scheduled according to the circumstances of each participant. The interview questions were also sent with a prompt card listing some of the terms used in the interview questions (see appendices 7& 9) to each manager by e-mail several days before the interview so the participants could read them in advance and prepare answers, if they wished.

At the beginning of each interview, the objective was clarified to each manager, and permission was requested to record the dialogue. Participants were also asked to sign the approval letter. The information paper was presented, including the purpose of the study and interview, and participants were informed of the right to withdraw at any time. The confidentiality of the information was also emphasised, and it was explained that no reference to their identity would be made in any way.

This stage took two weeks: four interviews per week and one interview per day.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis**

The process in qualitative research is primarily an inductive process (Merriam, 2014; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013) that moves from small units of information to reveal the whole picture that emerges from the data (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). An inductive analysis is a process of coding the data collected without trying to fit the information into a coding frame that already exists or the previous assumptions of the researcher's analysis.

A qualitative data analysis involves the organisation, interpretation, and explanation of the data; therefore, it tends to be more detailed and richer in information (Cohen et al., 2018) and is gathered via different research instruments. As the majority of this study's

data was text-based (through the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as the answers to the interview questions), the study adopted the method of organising the data for analysis through the research questions. According to Cohen et al. (2018), this is a very useful method of organising data because, in addition to collecting all the data related to the issues, it also helps maintain the consistency of the topic (information).

Cohen et al. (2018) argued that the researcher needs to bring together data related to the questionnaires and interviews to provide answers to the researcher's sub-questions, which in turn provide answers to the main research question. The data included two types: numerical data (quantitative) collected from the closed questions of the questionnaires and qualitative data collected from participants' answers to open-ended questions on the questionnaires or during interviews. Cohen et al. (2018) argued that the presentation of numerical data for specific issues in the research, followed by qualitative data (or qualitative followed by numerical), facilitates the identification of patterns, relationships, and comparisons between the data types for easier exploration.

Information technology has a great capacity for organising massive amounts of data and facilitating their analysis (Merriam, 2014). Therefore, the researcher used Microsoft Excel to calculate the percentages of repetition of responses for quantitative data and NVivo 11 from the CAQDAS package to organise the qualitative data. Walsh (2003) explained that NVivo organises raw data, such as interview responses and observations, and enables the researcher to link the data to databases created by the researcher when making codes and analytical notes; The researcher can also rework ideas as the project progresses.

In qualitative research, data analysis can be very systematic. It can be considered as an interpretive process; therefore, it may be less accurate than a numerical data analysis but is more reflexive as an important attribute when qualitative data is analysed (Cohen et al., 2018).

This study adopted two approaches for analysing the data because it included both qualitative and quantitative data. The first method was numerical analysis to analyse quantitative data, showing the percentage of answers according to theme. According to Cohen et al. (2018), the enumeration process is the categorisation of groups of frequencies or codes, which are then counted as units of analysis, terminology and words, or ideas; this process in turn enables phenomena or cases to be recorded and also facilitates the steps of the statistical analysis and its application to qualitative data.

The researcher deliberately divided the questionnaire into many themes informed by the literature review, including the impact of any training in preparation for the role of educational manager, engagement in leadership development activities, and the experiences of leading and managing. This approach facilitated the data analysis process, thereby giving a comprehensive picture of the issue under investigation by maintaining a text correlation for each theme.

The second approach involved organising the data through the main research and sub-questions. In this approach, all relevant data from different data streams (interviews and questionnaires) were collected to provide a collective answer to the research questions while maintaining the consistency of the material. This approach also enabled the exploration of patterns, relationships, and comparisons across data types in a convenient and clear manner (Cohen et al., 2018).

Furthermore, for the qualitative data analysis, several steps were taken, such as transcription (see appendix 14), bracketing and condensing data, a review of the interview, to get an overall impression, the delineation of units of general meaning or those relevant to the research question, removal of redundancies, integration, selection of themes of the relevant units, and contextualisation of themes (Hycner, 1985).

Therefore, questionnaire and interview data (including observations, comments, and non-verbal expressions) were analysed in their context after separate coding according to each theme (see appendix 16), thereby ensuring the integrity and coherence of the data. Following this, all texts were examined in a comprehensive manner in order to answer the main research question.

#### **4.7 Validity and Reliability (Credibility and Trustworthiness)**

Savin-Baden and Major (2013) defined validity as “ensuring that the experiment is designed effectively to measure the subject variables” (p. 473). They defined reliability as “ensuring that the experiment can repeatedly measure these variables accurately” (p. 473). According to Merriam (2014), in qualitative research, it is important to understand the views of the participants related to the issue being investigated to reveal the complexity of human behaviour in its context and provide a comprehensive explanation of what is happening. Merriam added that, if human beings are the main tool of data collection and analysis in qualitative research, the researcher can access interpretations of reality by observing and interviewing participants directly. According to Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2014), validity is a distinct strength of qualitative research.

Although reliability and validity are generally dealt with independently in quantitative research, it is not necessary to apply these methods in qualitative research; terminology

such as credibility and trustworthiness can be used instead (Golofshani, 2003). Researchers can use many strategies to increase the credibility of their findings. Perhaps the most well-known and best strategy to support credibility (validity) in studies is triangulation (Merriam, 2014).

Triangulation is the use of two or more data collection methods (Cohen et al., 2018). That means using multiple sources of data and comparing and examining the data collected, such as through questionnaires or interviews or by conducting follow-up interviews with the same people (Merriam, 2014). Therefore, a triangulation approach was adopted in the current study by examining and comparing the data obtained from interviews with a group of managers in the MoE and EDs. As each participant had a different experience and perspective from which to judge the issue in a different context for the other participants, this information included different viewpoints that enriched this study.

Furthermore, the researcher sought to ascertain the credibility and trustworthiness of each instrument separately. First, questionnaires were distributed to three Kuwait University faculty members—two from the Business Administration College (Department of Public Management) and one from the Education College—to ensure the questionnaire's validity. This procedure encouraged suggestions for improving the quality of the questionnaire. It was also piloted (see Section 4.5.1.1) by four managers who answered the survey questions, where it was ascertained that all questions were precise and clear and the questionnaire is valid. Bell (2014) mentioned that a pilot study is an approach testing how long it takes respondents to answer a questionnaire while ensuring that all questions and instructions are clear and helping the researcher recognise any items which do not give usable data. To ensure that participants understood the purpose

of this study, the researcher enclosed an information paper with the questionnaire that clarified the study topic and aims.

Second, the researcher improved the credibility of interview questions by conducting a pilot study (see Section 4.5.1.2) with three volunteers from the questionnaire sample. According to Cohen et al. (2018), the most practical way to achieve greater interview validity is to reduce the amount of bias as much as possible. Possible sources of bias include the interview properties, the characteristics of the participants, and the questions' substantive content. Thus, the researcher tried to avoid biases and gave the participants the opportunity to express their views.

Trustworthiness was confirmed by taking the interview data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking if the information was plausible (Merriam, 2014). In addition, data obtained from the questionnaire were compared with data obtained from the interviews, particularly when the questionnaire themes were the same as the interview questions. Trustworthiness was also confirmed and improved by gathered detailed field notes, such as using a high quality tape (or digital format; e.g., MP3 recorder) for recording and then transcribing the recording while ensuring the inclusion of any trivial issues that may arise, such as pauses and overlaps (Creswell, 2013).

As human beings were the main method for gathering and analysing data in the qualitative research, the interpretations of reality were gained directly through their responses to interview questions. Therefore, the researcher should be able to glean a closer and more accurate understanding of the reality than might be the case if just using instruments to collect data from the participants (Merriam, 2014).

## **4.8 Ethical Considerations**

According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), “ethics are the moral principles that govern behaviour” (p. 319). Furthermore, the British Educational Research Association (BERA) concluded that researchers in education must apply their research within an ethic of respect for any persons who participate in the studies they are undertaking (BERA, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher in this study sought to apply the procedures outlined by the policies at the University of Reading regarding the ethical requirements of research. This involved completing the approved Ethics form which explains the research processes to be followed, and the Risk Assessment Form for Research Activities (see appendices 20 & 21). Information Management and Policy Services tests were also reviewed such as the Data Protection Act 1998 and Information Security Training.

Cohen et al. (2018) argued that social research requires the consent of individuals participating in investigations and of others in the institutions providing the research facilities. Therefore, the researcher also prepared two forms of consent to be submitted to the participants, whether in the questionnaires or interviews, in order to obtain the written consent of the participant (see appendices 11 & 12). The information sheet includes the title, purpose of the study, and the procedures followed to save data and maintain confidentiality and assurances about the anonymity of each participant. This was particularly important because the demographic data section in the questionnaire was also used as background information of the interviewees.

In addition, the researcher prepared a first draft of the questionnaire, as well as semi-structured interview questions, through reading theoretical literature in the educational leadership preparation field. This helped to reflect on the research questions themselves,

and in turn try to answer them to determine the data which needed to be collected. These drafts were then presented to the study's supervisors and revised based on their comments (more details in section 4.3.2). The ethical models and data collection tools were then submitted to the ethics committee of the Reading University to obtain the necessary approvals to conduct the study.

Before the pilot study, the questionnaire and interview questions were translated from English into Arabic as it is the mother tongue of the sample in Kuwait. To ensure the accuracy of the translation into Arabic, it was presented to a specialist in English and Arabic languages. The feedback gained from this preparation stage were taken into account to ensure that the Arabic translation was an accurate translation of the questionnaire and interview questions in English. Following this, the researcher then sought to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire (see section 4.7). For example, the questionnaire was piloted (section 4.5.1.1) and adjustments were made, based on the participants' comments.

The researcher obtained approval from the Department of Research within the MoE in Kuwait — the relevant authority that grants permission to researchers in education. All the pages of the questionnaire were stamped, and permits were issued wherever necessary. For example, each district manager issued a permit to the managers under their administration to participate in this study. This depended whether the participant was filling out the questionnaire or being interviewed.

After obtaining the necessary permits, the data was collected through the questionnaire in the first phase (see section 4.5.2). The answers were then read, with particular attention being given to the open questions, in order to explore important issues from

the point of view of the managers. Then, after taking on board the suggested amendments of the supervisors on the preliminary results of the questionnaire, the interview questions were further refined and developed, and then finally piloted (see section 4.5.1.2) before the actual interviews were initiated (second phase - see section 4.5.3).

In addition, before conducting each phase of data collection, the researcher asked the participants to sign the consent form to indicate that they had officially agreed to participate in this research, with an emphasis on their right to participate or not.

The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) confirmed that participants must be informed that they have the right to withdraw from the research without any reason and at any time. The participants' right to confidentiality and anonymity was ensured by using pseudonyms when referring to them in all research stages. In addition, all research records were stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer. All related files will be destroyed after the research journey is completed.

After completing all of these processes and collecting the data through the study tools, the qualitative data in the questionnaire and interviews had to be translated into English. With regard to the interviews, the transcriptions also had to take into account any mumbling or pauses. The written notes taken by the researcher for each participant were also included as part of the overall data collection.

The final translations were then presented to a specialist to be validated for inclusion in the NVivo 11 program from the CAQDAS package to organize the qualitative data (Section 4.6). In addition, all quotes used in Chapter 5 were presented to a colleague at Reading

University (fluent in both languages) to ensure that the English translation is in full conformity with the statements of the participants in Arabic – this is called inter-rater reliability – and was done to increase the credibility and assurance of research ethics and honesty in data transfer and use.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined and discussed the research design and methodology as well as the actual steps and processes that the researcher followed to collect the data to achieve the aims of the study. The researcher conducted a purposeful sample of the MoE and ED managers using research tools (questionnaire and semi-structured interview) commensurate with a multiple-site case study in qualitative research. This chapter also reviewed some of the different techniques that the researcher used to increase the validity and reliability of the questionnaire and interview questions as well as how the data were handled and analysed through triangulation after being collected and transcribed.

# Chapter 5: Research Findings

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study collected through the use of the research instruments in order to answer the main study question—namely, to what extent is the preparation and ongoing professional development of education ministry and district managers effective in Kuwait? The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of leadership preparation in the educational ministry and districts to carry out their functions in leading Kuwait's education system.

The data are presented in four sections. Section 5.2 contains the analysis of the questionnaire data through five subsections: demographic data from the questionnaire sample, managers' self-perceptions, engagement in different types of professional development, the importance of previous and relevant experience, and leadership development. Section 5.3 includes the analysis of interview data in five subsections: demographic data from the interview sample, managers' self-perceptions, engagement in different types of professional development, the importance of previous and relevant experience, and leadership development. Finally, Section 5.4 summarises the survey and interview data.

Participants' ages were all 40 years and over because they did not occupy this position until obtaining many years of experience in different stages of their careers. These stages vary according to the type of their initial professions (i.e., teachers or administrative officers; see Section 4.4).

## **5.2 Results from Phase One: Questionnaire Findings**

Data were entered and analysed through the Excel statistical programme to find frequencies and percentages for the closed questions. Answers to the open-ended questions were also collected and classified into four categories to facilitate the analysis:

- Positive responses that expressed participants' satisfaction with these programmes;
- Neutral responses which may be considered positive but with the participant adding comments to express his/her desire to develop weaknesses in these programmes;
- Negative responses that expressed participants' dissatisfaction with these preparation programmes; and
- Unable to respond, including phrases that indicated the participants did not know about the existence of such courses or knew, but did not attend.

When a direct quote of a written comment from the survey is used, the respondent is identified by a number in brackets (ranging between 1 and 42). Full details of each respondent who participated in the survey are included in Appendix 15.

### **5.2.1 Demographic Data from the Questionnaire Sample**

All 42 managers involved in the study were affiliated with the MoE, although some of them were located outside the MoE in six different EDs (in addition to other departments), according to the geographical distribution of schools throughout Kuwait. These EDs each have a general manager (see Appendix 4) and four departments, each of which has a manager who was also included in the study sample (see Sections 2.5.5.3 and 4.5).

As Table 5.1 shows, 47.6% (N = 20) of managers worked in the administration of the MoE while 52.4% (N = 22) were managers in the six districts, representing the highest percentage. Although the study sample includes only managers of the departments in the MoE and the EDs, one third of them were acting managers during the study period (see Section 4.5.3). The majority of the sample were male; only one third of managers in the sample were female.

Table 5.1

*Characteristics of the Research Sample*

Variables	Type	N	%
Job	Manager	33	78.6
	Acting manager	9	21.4
Workplace	Education Ministry	20	47.6
	Education District	22	52.4
Gender	Male	28	66.7
	Female	14	33.3

Table 5.2 shows that the experience of all managers since the beginning of their employment covered more than 15 years. In addition, more than half of the respondents had no experience as a teacher and, therefore, did not have experience in teaching processes, curricula, or student issues. In other words, they did not have previous experience related to how things are done in schools, what challenges a student or teacher might face, or school management issues and how to deal with them.

Table 5.2

Years of Experience	None		1–4 years		5–9 years		10–14 years		More than 15 years		Total		Missing data	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Years of experience since appointment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	42	100	42	100	0	0
Years spent as a teacher	23	54.8	4	9.5	7	16.7	3	7.1	4	9.5	41	97.6	1	2.4
Years spent as an administrator	5	11.9	0	0	3	7.1	1	2.4	33	78.6	42	100	0	0
Years of experience since appointment to the supervisory position	N/A	N/A	0	0	4	9.5	13	31.0	20	47.6	37	88.1	5	11.9
Years of experience in the current post	N/A	N/A	28	66.7	5	11.9	4	9.5	5	11.9	42	100	0	0

*Amount of Time Spent as a Manager and Teacher or Administrator*

As most of the sample did not have any teaching experience, all of their experience was in administrative work. Thus, most managers had plenty of administration experience as well as considerable supervisor experience, and some of them started in the school as headteacher. The majority of the respondents had only 1–4 years of experience in their current position. This may be due to the early retirement of a large group of MoE employees—a decision taken by a former Minister of Education to force all those who had served more than 35 years as of the beginning of September 2015 to retire.

Table 5.3 shows that, in terms of the training courses attended during pre-appointment to the manager position to prepare themselves for an educational leader role, the highest ratio was equal for the 1–4 and 5–9 categories. These were followed by those who had answered that they had not attended any training programmes to prepare for their job. Furthermore, more than one third of the respondents had attended 1–4 professional development and training courses over the last 5 years. A small number of managers did not attend any courses to develop their leadership skills in the 5 years after they were appointed, despite the importance of professional development to develop their skills. Did this mean that they did not believe in the importance of professional development? How did they develop the skills staff in the same department required if they did not develop their own leadership skills?

Table 5.3

*Preparation, Job Training, and Professional Development*

Statement	Number of Training Courses											Missing data		
	None		1–4		5–9		10–14		More than 15		Total		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Number of training courses attended pre-appointment as a manager in preparation for educational leadership role	9	21.4	10	23.8	10	23.8	6	14.3	2	4.8	37	88.1	5	11.9
Number of professional development and training courses attended over the last five years	4	9.5	15	35.7	10	23.8	3	7.1	5	11.9	37	88.1	5	11.9

## **5.2.2 Managers' Self-Perceptions**

Managers' perceptions of themselves as leaders are influenced by four factors: their understanding of the term management and leadership, their understanding of the skills leaders must possess, their ability to work with others, and the challenges they face.

### **5.2.2.1 Managers' Conceptual Understanding of Management and Leadership**

After classifying the responses into three categories (see Appendix 17) to determine the extent of participants' knowledge of the meaning of management and leadership, participants showed "good understanding" of management, which achieved the highest response rate, whereas approximately two thirds of respondents believed that management was the exploitation of available resources or that its functions or tasks were applied to achieve management objectives (see Table 5.4). In addition, fewer than half of the respondents were able to determine the meaning of leadership as the process of influencing others through motivation, encouragement, and motivation.

The proportion of responses showing "some understanding," where respondents could not distinguish between management and leadership, was less than one tenth when defining the management term. For example, one respondent mentioned that management means "leading and influencing others to achieve goals". In addition, almost one fifth of participants could not distinguish between the two terms when defining leadership. Furthermore, several participants repeated the same answer when defining both management and leadership. Examples of these responses include "directing all individual and collective efforts by using the available tools to achieve the desired objectives" and "is an active and administrative supervision". The number of participants

Table 5.4

*Meaning of Management and Leadership*

Terms	Good understanding		Some understanding		No understanding		Total		Missing data	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Management	26	61.9	3	7.1	12	28.6	41	97.6	1	2.4
Leadership	18	42.9	9	21.4	14	33.3	41	97.6	1	2.4

able to accurately define management was greater than the number able to define leadership.

Participants' responses indicate that almost one third of them were unable to define management clearly. For example, one respondent stated that "management is an art"; another considered it to be "a general term that represents many aspects". In addition, more than one third of managers showed no understanding of the meaning of leadership, using general terms such as human relations, cooperation, or a process of issuing orders.

Table 5.4 showed that one group had a good understanding of both management and leadership, but another group did not know the difference between the two terms. The latter group was confused and mentioned vague terms that did not really mean anything obvious (e.g., art, science).

The inability of most managers to provide a clear definition of both terms may lead to questions about their ability to determine the training needs of leaders or the professional development programmes required to develop their skills. Therefore, the researcher sought to clarify the difference between these two terms for participants during the second phase of data collection (interviews) so that their answers were more reliable (interview findings are discussed further in Chapter 6).

Table 5.5

*Leadership Skills that Respondents Believe They Have*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q2	I have the skills and abilities to be able to lead my department.	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	9	21.4	30	71.4	40	95.2	2	4.8
Q5	I have the skills to deal with the different personalities of the employees of the administration.	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	13	31.0	27	64.3	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q7	The leadership role requires special skills.	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	9	21.4	32	76.2	42	100	0	0
Q12	My experience and skills enable me to achieve the educational goals.	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	17	40.5	22	52.4	40	95.2	2	4.8

### **5.2.2.2 Skills Required to be an Effective Leader**

Table 5.5 shows whether respondents have the necessary leadership skills from their point of view. The data in this table show that most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had the leadership skills to succeed in leading staff. It is interesting to note that the statement about a leadership role requiring special skills drew the strongest support from the managers themselves. This perhaps shows their awareness and need for these skills to be able to succeed in their role as leaders.

### **5.2.2.3 Working with Other People and Leadership Skills Learned from Them**

The data presented in Table 5.6 represent the respondents' views concerning their work with others. Most managers either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements shown in this table, thereby indicating positive outcomes from working with other people. Experience gained from working with previous managers was perceived by most managers in a very positive way. This was reinforced by statement Q41, with which most managers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Interestingly, only about one tenth of respondents reported that they did not learn any skills from their former managers, and the same proportion noted that their former managers did not help them carry out their current role. This may be due to the type of relationship between these respondents and their former managers. If the relationship was negative and uncomfortable, it would certainly affect the former manager's ability to educate and train the employee as well as the employee's ability to learn and gain skills from that manager (for further details on the second phase, see Section 5.3.3.3).

Table 5.6

*Managers' Perceptions of the Value of Previous Leadership Experiences and Working as a Team*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q39	My relationship with my previous managers developed my knowledge as a leader.	0	0	3	7.1	0	0	20	47.6	18	42.9	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q40	I learned some leadership skills from my former managers.	0	0	5	11.9	0	0	21	50.0	16	38.1	42	100	0	0
Q41	My experience in dealing with my former managers has not helped me in my current role as a leader.	13	31.0	23	54.8	1	2.4	4	9.5	0	0	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q42	Learning from the experience of others develops leadership skills.	1	2.4	2	4.8	0	0	21	50.0	18	42.9	42	100	0	0
Q43	Discussing work problems with colleagues develops my knowledge as a leader	0	0	1	2.4	0	0	19	45.2	21	50.0	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q44	Dealing with team members enriches my experience as a leader.	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	35.7	26	61.9	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q45	I share information and knowledge with my staff to develop work.	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	40.5	25	59.5	42	100	0	0

Table 5.7 shows the most important leadership skills learned from others. The majority of respondents believed that the most important leadership skills they learned through their interactions with others were decision-making and problem-solving skills. These skills are the main tasks of any manager or leader; they are obliged to make decisions to accomplish tasks and to find solutions to any problems that arise. Moreover, these are skills that can be developed further by working with and dealing with others.

“Sharing a vision” and “influencing others” were selected as important by nearly a quarter of respondents, suggesting that they considered these skills to be some of the most important they had learned from others. However, this relatively low percentage may be due to the fact that former managers believe that following up on the implementation of policies was their responsibility; therefore, they did not involve any others in it. Furthermore, the ability to influence can be considered a personal skill or quality that should be possessed by managers and then developed through others.

Table 5.7

*Important Leadership Skills Learned from Others*

Specific Leadership Skills	N	% of sample
Decision making	29	69.0
Problem solving	27	64.3
Sharing a vision of how to implement current educational policy	10	23.8
Influencing others	10	23.8
Leading a team of colleagues	9	21.4
Number of respondents	41	97.6
Missing data	1	2.4
Total	42	100

Table 5.8

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q6	I sometimes experience real challenges and difficulties as an educational manager.	2	4.8	5	11.9	1	2.4	18	42.9	15	35.7	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q11	I need help to understand and deal with the different personalities of the team members.	6	14.3	12	28.6	3	7.1	15	35.7	6	14.3	42	100	0	0

*Difficulties and Challenges Faced by Managers as Leaders*

#### **5.2.2.4 Difficulties and Challenges Faced in the Role of Managers**

Table 5.8 shows that the majority of participants faced difficulties in their role as managers. In addition, half of them needed help to understand and deal with team members' various personalities. This may indicate that they needed to learn some leadership skills to meet those challenges (for further details, see Chapter 6).

#### **5.2.3 Engagement in Different Types of Professional Development**

This section covers the formal programmes and activities of professional development that managers have received during their careers since they were appointed to a supervisory position. It also includes their views on the effectiveness of these programmes in developing their leadership skills and whether the programmes were provided by the Ministry of Education or the private sector. In addition, this section reviews their perceptions about informal professional development programmes that have played a role in developing their skills from their point of view (see Section 5.3.3 for more details).

##### **5.2.3.1 Different Development Activities**

In response to statement Q21 (see Table 5.9), more than half of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that the programmes were designed in accordance with a prior assessment of their needs. However, nearly a quarter of the sample disagreed (or strongly disagreed). Furthermore, the same percentage did not know whether the programme was designed for that or not. In addition, all of the respondents except one strongly agreed (or agreed) that professional development in service is necessary for the development of educational leaders. Therefore, the managers had sought to develop their skills by participating in many activities.

Table 5.9

*Respondents' Views about In-Service Training Programmes to Develop Leadership Skills*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q21	The training programmes for educational leaders were designed based upon a prior assessment of their actual needs.	3	7.1	7	16.7	10	23.8	18	42.9	4	9.5	42	100	0	0
Q24	Professional development (in service) is necessary for educational leaders	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	7	16.7	33	78.6	41	97.6	1	2.4

The survey results summarised in Table 5.10 show that the most important of these activities is “membership in a work party”. The majority of participants agreed with this, as it helped them develop their leadership skills—probably due to the fact that most managers participated on teams according to their experience, which is considered additional work. Although this activity may sometimes occur at the same time as official work, managers often receive a financial reward for participation, not to mention the experiences gained through their participation on these teams (through the exchange of ideas and information among members). They therefore considered it to be one of the most important activities that helped them.

“Self-study” was also a popular activity among three quarters of the participants, indicating that the majority of participants depended on themselves to develop their skills. This may be because of their constant preoccupation with their tasks, which prevented them from committing to training courses; therefore, they may have chosen to develop their skills according to their own circumstances and time commitments.

Approximately three fifths of managers considered “training courses or workshops” and “seminar or presentation” as the best activities for developing their skills. Such activities were often organised by the MoE (sometimes managers sought to attend private sector courses on their personal initiative) and were free and during official work hours, which meant that participants’ rest time with their families or for personal matters was protected. The sessions were also used to exchange views and discussions between the attendees; therefore, the majority of the managers considered these programmes to be helpful in the development of their leadership skills.

Table 5.10

*Activities that Developed Managers' Professional Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills*

Activity	N	% of the sample
Membership in a work party	33	78.6
Self-directed study	31	73.8
Training courses or workshops	25	59.5
Seminar or presentation related to your role as leader	24	57.1
Personal reflection	23	54.8
Collaborative learning	23	54.8
Receiving on-the-job coaching, tutoring, or mentoring	17	40.5
Job shadowing	17	40.5
Using distance-learning materials	11	26.2
Action research	9	21.4
Number of respondents	40	95.2
Missing data	2	4.8
Total	42	100

More than half of the participants considered “personal reflection” and “collaborative learning” to be the most important activities, perhaps because these two activities did not need to be arranged and deducted from work hours. “Personal reflection” can occur during work time, perhaps in the form of discussions with experienced colleagues, the revision of a previously set plan, or the re-evaluation of achievements and goals achieved. “Collaborative learning” can also occur during departmental meetings and other more

informal settings, such as lunchtime discussions; this kind of learning enables managers to discuss problems or issues with others, without restrictions or functional obligations because the discussion take place outside of work time.

Fewer than half of the participants thought that “receiving on-the-job coaching” and “job shadowing” helped them develop their abilities. This result may be due to the unpopularity of these activities among managers because they were not applied correctly. They only received on-the-job coaching, tutoring, or mentoring during work hours from the manager or senior officer to employees (these employees later became managers). In other words, their learning depended on the relationship between them and their former managers as well as on the abilities and skills of the managers to develop employees.

Nearly a quarter of managers thought that “using distance-learning materials” and “action research” influenced their professional development. This is probably due to the fact that most participants did not know how to use distance-learning materials because half had more than 15 years of experience and nearly one third of them had 10–14 years (see Table 5.2). Thus, more than three quarters of the sample had been in a supervisory position for more than 10 years, not to mention the years of experience before the supervisory post. During this time, they may not have become familiar with using technology in their work, which might have led them not to have preferred to use distance learning. In addition, managers may be preoccupied with various tasks that keep them from doing studies or action research, which can take a lot of time and effort.

Yet managers’ responses changed when they identified the most effective programmes (see Table 5.11). Approximately half of the sample considered “self-directed study” to be the most effective in the development of their leadership skills. Some considered it a

convenient way to get knowledge; others believed that technological developments helped managers organise and determine the appropriate time to spend on learning. Furthermore, the participants could choose an interesting subject to develop their leadership skills. One participant wrote, "it is self-reliant and helped me learn a lot of skills" (1); another comments, "this approach depends on self-effort that corresponds to our own abilities, so it is an easy and attractive method for us, as we are searching for means and programmes to achieve a better level of development" (17).

Some of the respondents considered using social media and relying on it to develop themselves encouraged their autonomous learning; thus, they concluded that it was the best way to develop their skills and knowledge: "developing my practical performance and leadership, not only as an administrator in work, is based primarily on the different 'social media', and relying on readings in how to develop myself and my performance" (25).

Nearly a quarter of respondents considered "membership in a work party" to be the most effective for developing their leadership skills because this activity allowed them to exchange experiences and ideas with others during meetings. Furthermore, some of them believed that participation in this activity at the international level enriched their skills through the opportunities to interact with leaders of different nationalities. Participants noted that it "helps to collaborate, form opinions and reach goals after gathering the ideas of all team members to achieve what is needed" (7) and "the person gains from others' experience through thinking, participation in and preparation for future meetings, [and] planning and programming work time, and becomes keen to accomplish the tasks to the fullest extent" (26).

Table 5.11

*Activities that Helped Managers Develop Professional Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills (including the two most important activities in Table 5.10)*

Activities	N	% of the sample
Self-directed study	20	47.6
Membership in a work party	10	23.8
Training courses or workshops	9	21.4
Personal reflection	7	16.7
Job shadowing	5	11.9
Collaborative learning	4	9.5
Using distance-learning materials	2	4.8
Seminar or presentation related to your role as a leader	2	4.8
Receiving on-the-job coaching, tutoring, or mentoring	1	2.4
Action research	0	0
Number of respondents	36	85.7
Missing data	6	14.3
Total	42	100

*Note.* Participants chose two activities each.

However, more than one fifth of the sample thought that “training courses or workshops” were most effective; some considered these activities to an opportunity to discuss the issues at hand whereas others considered them more effective because they met their needs in both theoretical and practical ways. Some considered these activities to be an opportunity to benefit from the experiences of others: “it was a great chance to acquire new skills and information for discussion and deliberation” (3), and “I learnt a lot through dealing with people who had different experiences and were able to perform their role” (30).

Most respondents did not consider “personal reflection” to be an effective activity, and only a minority of them believed that they had developed their skills effectively because it helped them gain a deep understanding of attitudes. As they explained, it “deepens my understanding and consciousness of attitudes and facts more comprehensively” (19), and “it gives an opportunity to re-evaluate achievements and targets achieved, revise the objectives and identify shortcomings” (21).

Although “job shadowing” is an effective form of job training for managers, it obtained a relatively low percentage considering the importance of this activity. Few respondents mentioned that this activity developed skills and knowledge according to their potential. For example, one participant noted that “the managers who I was accompanied by and worked under their leadership had the greatest impact in developing my capacity” (13); another states, “it assesses the trainee’s weaknesses in job requirements and builds new knowledge with experience related to work skills” (37).

Perhaps because they had no time to practise this activity due to their busy workloads or had not been given an opportunity to work with another manager. Had they been given such an opportunity to experience it, they may have felt that it was an effective and practical activity for learning and developing leadership skills. In addition, working with those who had more experience or responsibility might have prevented them from performing freely and comfortably. This may be due to the mechanism of its application which is not commensurate with the Kuwaiti context, as this activity requires observing an experienced person to identify some skills required for the role, causing embarrassment or distress for those who are monitored for many hours or days.

In addition, the majority of respondents did not consider “using distance-learning materials” to be an effective activity, perhaps because they had not used it or had not

attended training programmes based on distance learning. Yet remarkably, one respondent mentioned the reason for using this activity was not because of its effectiveness in the development of skills, but because she had not been nominated to attend any training session by the MoE to develop her leadership skills. As a result, she sought to use this activity (i.e., technology), which was available to everyone: “Although I had not been nominated for any courses continuously, the self-learning and distance learning resources contributed to develop my thoughts and reading about the latest methods of leadership and successful management” (40). This answer confirms what Table 5.3 indicated—namely, that a small number did not attend professional development programmes during the last 5 years. Furthermore, a significant minority of respondents did not attend any educational leadership preparation programmes before being appointed to supervisory positions. In other words, ministry officials did not require candidates for supervisory positions to attend any training programmes, so many resorted to developing their skills through their own personal efforts, which may not have been according a systematic plan because of their lack of experience in this area.

Finally, “action research” did not receive any responses, indicating that participants did not consider this activity effective for developing their leadership skills, despite its importance in revealing strengths and weaknesses in the way a leader works with teams or management groups they lead and through which they can assess their performance and development. Perhaps this result stemmed from the fact that this activity needs effort and time, which many managers simply do not have because of their constant preoccupation with other tasks. Therefore, the majority preferred to participate in easier activities and develop their skills with less time and effort.

## **5.2.3.2 Effectiveness of Professional Development Programmes**

### **5.2.3.2.1 Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education (PPMoE)**

Table 5.12 shows that more than three quarters of participants agreed or strongly agreed that PPMoE were available to develop their skills. In addition, nearly two thirds of them agreed or strongly agreed that these programmes met managers' needs to develop their leadership skills. Their subsequent responses to statement Q27, which is the opposite of statement Q26, reinforced this result. Interestingly, approximately one third of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that these activities did not meet their training needs (statement Q27), suggesting that they did not benefit from professional development programmes for leaders. The MoE spends money and effort on these programmes, but there is an imbalance in the development of almost a quarter of these managers, which may in turn negatively affect the performance of their tasks and lead to consequent repercussions in the educational process.

To present participants' views about professional development programmes provided by the MoE to improve educational leaders' skills, the responses were divided into four categories (see Section 5.3) and will be displayed as follows:

- **Positive responses:** Respondents expressed their satisfaction with the PPMoE. Some believed they helped develop their leadership skills and raised their level of performance. For example, the commented that "successful courses which help educational leaders to develop their skills" (17) and "these programmes have increased my skills and changed my way of managing groups and employees and developing strategic and operational plans" (28).

- Neutral responses: In these responses, the participants mentioned that the courses are excellent or good, but that they have shortcomings in some aspects, such as not applying to educational reality or needing to be developed to deal with changes in the educational field. Two comments in particular demonstrate these neutral responses: “The programmes offered at that time were appropriate, but need to be developed with different leaderships, and development of managerial [and] educational skills with rapid technological development” (26), and “it is not bad but it is distorted by its non-conformity with reality and its lack of connection with what is happening at the level of performance of departments and work” (34). One participant felt that these courses were limited to only strategic planning courses provided by the ministry: “Effective strategic planning courses are provided but they are limited, where the leader must use that information in actual reality and the practical application of his/her job by reading in-depth topics on how to develop strategic plans” (19). Strategic planning is an important skill that must be mastered by the leaders, but there are other aspects and skills that must also be provided by the MoE to develop the skills of educational leaders. Nevertheless, according to the participants, such efforts were limited, which suggests that they had a limited impact on the development of planning skills because the courses did not apply to actual reality. As a result, participants were forced to do extra research and reading to prepare strategic plans.
- Negative responses: These express participants’ dissatisfaction with the level of the PPMoE. For example, participants noted that the programmes “do not reach our level of ambition, and the courses must be more intensive and continuous” (7) and described them as “random programmes without a real need for them and do

not aim to develop skills” (11). The respondents called for these programmes to be intensified and continuously monitored and evaluated. Some also stated that these programmes were not linked to educational processes, even though they were provided by the MoE, which is of course supposed to design programmes according to the needs of educational leaders. This may be due to the fact that there were programmes offered by the MoE, but designed and implemented by the private sector (according to participant 32), that were more about general leadership skills and not sufficiently focused on educational leadership. “The courses offered by the Ministry of Education come mainly from private companies contracted by the MoE” (32).

- Unable to respond: Examples of such comments include “I do not know” (1) and “I did not participate in professional development programmes when I was appointed to a leading position” (42).

The responsibility of developing their leadership skills should be borne by participants, not just by the MoE. They had reached this position and had years of experience, which at least in theory should make them realise how important professional development programmes are in developing skills and achieving goals. Therefore, it is important that they seek to develop their skills and leadership abilities.

#### **5.2.3.2.2 Programmes Provided by the Private Sector (PPPS)**

Half of the sample indicated that there were programmes offered by the private sector (PS) to help managers develop their leadership skills; however, more than one third of participants did not know about these programmes. In contrast, more than one third of the respondents also agreed that these activities met their needs as educational leaders, while more than one third did not know if they met them. Furthermore, fewer than half

of them agreed that PPPS developed their leadership skills effectively, whereas another one third did not agree (see Table 5.12).

As Table 5.12 indicates, although some managers sought to develop their skills through the private sector, perhaps because of their dissatisfaction with the PPMoE, some of them did not know about the existence of such programmes or they did not try to find out about them. They may have lacked interest in such programmes due to them being seen as ineffective or perhaps because they did not wish to develop their skills; they might have been unable to identify their actual training needs. The effectiveness of these programmes will be discussed in more detail in the presentation of the interview data (see Chapter 6).

Participants' views about the private sector's professional development programmes to improve the skills of educational leaders are presented below in four sections:

- Positive responses: Phrases such as excellent, very good, and suitable were repeated to evaluate professional development programmes provided by the private sector, but at different levels. Some participants saw the PPPS as successful, strong, distinctive, and comprehensive: "They are presented comprehensively and distinctly and offer a range of executive workshops" (27), and "I find that, in my view, they were successful and achieved the goal and have been developed to serve educational leaders" (34). In other words, the private sector offered successful and strong professional development programmes that helped develop leadership skills from the respondents' point of view.

Table 5.12

*Effectiveness of Professional Development Programmes Provided by MoE and PS*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q25	The Ministry of Education provides professional development programmes to improve educational leadership skills.	1	2.4	5	11.9	3	7.1	23	54.8	9	21.4	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q26	The Ministry of Education's professional development programmes of educational leadership have met my needs as an educational leader (in service).	1	2.4	10	23.8	3	7.1	23	54.8	4	9.5	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q27	The Ministry of Education's professional development programmes of educational leadership do not develop my leadership skills effectively.	6	14.3	14	33.3	7	16.7	10	23.8	3	7.1	40	95.2	2	4.8
Q28	The private sector provides professional development programmes to improve educational leadership skills.	1	2.4	5	11.9	14	33.3	16	38.1	5	11.9	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q29	The private sector's professional development programmes of educational leadership have met my needs as an educational leader (in service).	2	4.8	7	16.7	15	35.7	15	35.7	2	4.8	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q30	The private sector's professional development programmes of educational leadership do not develop my leadership skills effectively.	5	11.9	14	33.3	13	31.0	8	19.0	1	2.4	41	97.6	1	2.4

- Neutral responses: although some respondents were satisfied with these programmes, there were some shortcomings. Respondents explained that these programmes were “very good but not excellent, because [they are] not linked with work and performance of trainees, however, it is much better than the MoE programmes” (2); another participant noted the programmes were “good, but [do] not fit with the government reality or its functions and procedures. Effective leadership in practical performance must be achieved in government institutions” (25).
- Negative responses: Respondents indicated that these programmes were insufficient or did not meet their training needs; they also noted that they were not applicable in the government sector, which means they are intended to serve the private sector. Examples of these phrases include “very few, and coordination with the private sector must be done in process of identifying the leader’s needs” (3), and “it has no practical effect” (38). Two respondents confirmed that these programmes did not focus on the training needs of leaders. Participant 38 mentioned that they had no practical effect; he could not transfer and apply what was learned to the education field in order to benefit from these programmes.
- Unable to respond: Participant 32 said, “I have nothing to do with the private sector. Another said, “I do not know about it” (42). These comments indicate that these respondents did not attend any professional development programmes in the private sector and, therefore, may not have known about these programmes or did not seek to attend them.

### 5.2.3.3 Informal Learning Activities

Table 5.13 shows that the most important informal learning method that was effective in developing leadership skills from a manager's perspective was "personal experience". This finding is logical because personal experience is a mixture of different skills and information acquired by individuals during their lives. Thus, experience had a greater and more influential role in participants' efforts to learn leadership skills from the respondents' perspective.

However, less than one fifth of the sample thought that "discussions with colleagues" and "reading books and studies" were more important activities. This is consistent with the results discussed in Section 5.2.3.1 (see Table 5.11), which showed that "self-directed study", "membership in a work party", and "training courses or workshops", respectively, were the top three activities respondents considered to be more effective in developing their leadership skills. "Reading books and studies" is one of the methods of self-directed study, as the respondents also reported that "membership in a work party" and "training courses or workshops" are more effective because they provided opportunities for "discussions with colleagues" on many educational issues.

It was quite remarkable that "the experiences of others" item was only mentioned by a small minority of managers. Although personal experience is built or formed through relationships with others and learning from their experiences, only four of the respondents considered such experiences to be an effective way to develop their leadership skills. This may be due to the nature of relationships between managers and others or their ability to learn from others' experiences.

Table 5.13

*Most Important Informal Learning Methods that were Effective in Developing Leadership Skills*

Informal Learning Methods	N	%
Personal experience	12	28.6
Discussions with colleagues	8	19.0
Reading books and studies	8	19.0
The experiences of others	4	9.5
Other	0	0
Number of respondents	32	76.2
Missing data	10	23.8
Total	42	100

**5.2.4 Importance of Previous and Relevant Experience**

Table 5.14 shows how managers perceive themselves based on their previous experiences that had refined their positions as leaders. Most either agreed or strongly agreed with statements about managers being able to exercise authority, leading a team successfully, being a role model, and being able to inspire and influence others.

In addition, most managers agreed that previous experience had helped them succeed as leaders. This result was later reinforced in statement Q14, which is the opposite of statement Q1. Thus, respondents were aware of the importance of experiences to develop their leadership skills (for further details about the role of previous experiences in the second phase, see Section 5.3.4).

In addition, most of them believed that their relationship with staff had not changed. A diversity of views emerged among respondents concerning this statement compared to

Table 5.14

*How Managers Perceive Themselves Based on Previous Experiences*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q1	Previous experience has helped me perform my leadership role successfully.	0	0	0	0	2	4.8	6	14.3	32	76.2	40	95.2	2	4.8
Q3	My current position gives me more authority than I was able to exercise in my previous post.	0	0	2	4.8	1	2.4	18	42.9	21	50.0	42	100	0	0
Q4	The relationship between myself and the employees of administration is different now that I have become a senior manager.	9	21.4	19	45.2	1	2.4	5	11.9	8	19.0	42	100	0	0
Q8	I see myself capable of leading successfully.	0	0	1	2.4	2	4.8	15	35.7	23	54.8	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q9	I see myself as a role model for team members.	0	0	0	0	6	14.3	14	33.3	21	50.0	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q10	I have the responsibility to lead the team.	0	0	0	0	1	2.4	7	16.7	34	81.0	42	100	0	0
Q13	I can lead others through inspiration and influence them.	1	2.4	0	0	2	4.8	11	26.2	27	64.3	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q14	I do not think my previous experience has helped me lead successfully.	24	57.1	16	38.1	1	2.4	1	2.4	0	0	42	100	0	0

other items in this theme. This diversity may be due to managers' lack of awareness of the nature of relationships that must differ between them and their employees because of their different functions as well as managers' roles as leaders.

## **5.2.5 Leadership Development**

This section includes the preparation programmes managers attended to prepare for their role as educational leaders, whether the programmes were provided by the MoE or the PS and the effectiveness of these programmes (Section 5.2.5.1). It also includes some proposals to develop educational leaders' preparation processes from the participants' perspective (Section 5.2.5.2).

As shown in Table 5.15, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that pre-appointment programmes had helped develop their leadership skills. This result was reinforced in statement Q19, which is the opposite of statement Q20. Perhaps managers realised the importance of these programmes to prepare them, but did they actually include specific activities to prepare them for educational leadership? An answer to this question will be presented in more detail in the interview data in Section 5.3.5.1.

### **5.2.5.1 Effectiveness of Preparation Programmes for Managers**

#### **5.2.5.1.1 Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education (PPMoE)**

Regarding PPMoE to prepare educational leaders, Table 5.16 shows that two thirds of the respondents agreed that there were activities to prepare them for their role as educational leaders, although more than one quarter did not agree or did not know whether such programmes existed. Furthermore, almost one third of the sample agreed (or strongly agreed) that these programmes did not meet their training needs. This may

Table 5.15

*Respondents' Views about Training Programmes to Prepare for their Leadership Roles*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q19	Attending training programmes has not prepared me as an educational leader.	13	31.0	20	47.6	4	9.5	3	7.1	0	0	40	95.2	2	4.8
Q20	Preparation programmes prior to appointment as a manager have helped develop my leadership skills.	3	7.1	4	9.5	4	9.5	20	47.6	10	23.8	41	97.6	1	2.4

indicate that there were some activities offered by the MoE, but managers did not think they were relevant to the process of preparing them for their role. As a result, some managers did not know that the programmes existed or did not know or agree that they met their needs.

To present managers' views about training programmes provided by the MoE to prepare educational leaders for their role, the responses are divided into the following four categories (see Section 5.3):

- Positive responses: Some managers saw these programmes as excellent or very good, and some believed they were sufficient, comprehensive, and successful. Example comments included “comprehensive, diverse and adequate” (28) and “very good especially because it suits our educational role in particular” (32). Participants also mentioned that these programmes had led to the development of functional tasks, such as “add work-related skills to the trainee and changes his behaviour and attitudes positively” (37) and “courses were provided to meet my needs in the administrative field, through which I was provided with some skills and information that helped me to perform my functions” (38).
- Neutral responses: Some participants mentioned some weaknesses in the content of topics, timeliness, or number of programmes provided: “The training programmes offered by the MoE are good and not excellent, but there are also very few and public programmes that are linked to field work within educational institutions” (2), and “good but needs be to intensified and diversified to develop more skills” (41). Such statements indicate that some of the respondents considered the programmes to be useful but too general and not related to the educational field. There was also a demand for specialised courses that would help

them prepare for each supervisory function, with an emphasis on courses that develop the leadership skills needed to exercise their functions. Some of the participants mentioned that these programmes were good and helped in preparing them as leaders, but they also needed to be intensified and diversified to be more effective and develop the skills they need. Some respondents considered there to be a good selection of quality programmes, but the time allocated to them was not appropriate or convenient. Therefore, all of the neutral responses demonstrated that there are weaknesses in many aspects of the educational leadership development programmes provided by the MoE.

- Negative responses: Participants mentioned negative phrases for various reasons, such as the programmes did not achieve their goal or there were no efficient trainers and, therefore, these programmes needed further development. Examples of these responses included “there were not many courses, and these need qualified and academic trainers” (9) and “sometimes the five-day session was not enough, and selection of trainers was unsatisfactory” (34). The respondents mentioned many weaknesses or negatives in the preparation programmes which, if taken into consideration, would have had a significant impact on the development of these managers’ leadership skills. They attended these programmes, but were disappointed with the level, especially as these are expected to be at a high level of preparation and professionalism to achieve the goal of the development of educational leaders.

Table 5.16

*Preparation Programmes Provided by the MoE and PS*

No	Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly agree		Total		Missing data	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q15	The Ministry of Education offers training programmes to prepare me as an educational leader.	0	0	8	19.0	3	7.1	25	59.5	6	14.3	42	100	0	0
Q16	The Ministry of Education's educational leadership preparation programmes have not met my needs as an educational leader.	4	9.5	22	52.4	2	4.8	9	21.4	4	9.5	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q17	The private sector offers training programmes to prepare me as an educational leader.	1	2.4	5	11.9	10	23.8	20	47.6	5	11.9	41	97.6	1	2.4
Q18	The private sector's educational leadership preparation programmes have not met my needs as an educational leader.	2	4.8	14	33.3	15	35.7	9	21.4	1	2.4	41	97.6	1	2.4

- Unable to respond: A few managers did not know how to respond; this could have been because they were not convinced about the importance of the courses, did not attend because of other commitments, or lacked interest in the programmes. According to participant 42, “I do not know if there are training programmes for the preparation of educational leaders”; participant 30 asserted “there are no training programmes for educational or administrative leaders at a level that improves the leaders’ performance or the development of his leadership skills”. Such statements indicate that managers felt no obligation to the MoE to attend these programmes, even though it is one of the conditions for promotion for their supervisory post.

#### **5.2.5.1.2 Programmes Provided by the Private Sector (PPPS)**

More than half the sample agreed or strongly agreed that private sector programmes helped them prepare as leaders; however, it is interesting to note that almost a quarter of the sample answered “undecided” (see Table 5.16). This answer should be carefully considered because it means that almost a quarter of the sample did not know that the private sector provided programmes to prepare educational leaders or, perhaps, knew but did not attend. Therefore, they could not decide if there were educational leadership preparation programmes or not.

Table 5.16 also shows that more than a third of the respondents agreed that these activities met their needs to prepare for their role, although more than a third could not determine whether the preparation programmes in the private sector had met their needs or not. This confirms the result of statement Q17, as previously mentioned: a quarter of the sample did not know about the private sector’s preparation programmes.

Participants' responses were again divided into four categories (see Section 5.3):

- Positive responses: Some participants described the private sector programmes as excellent or very good. In addition, some considered them better than the programmes offered by the MoE. Sample comments included “good and helpful” (8), “slightly better than programmes prepared by the ministry or equivalent” (28), and “successful programmes which help to prepare the educational leader” (17). Such responses indicate that some respondents were comparing the level of programmes offered by the MoE and private sector; in many cases, they considered private sector programmes superior to MoE programmes. This may be because trainees sometimes pay the course fee themselves (sometimes the MoE paid) so they seek to attend the best programmes to develop their skills. It is logical to assume that no payment will be made unless they get value for money. On the other hand, the private sector, whose goal is to profit financially, may have been trying harder to provide the best programmes to attract the largest number of trainees to achieve this profit.
- Neutral responses: Some participants considered the programmes good while commenting on some of their shortcomings: “Private sector programmes develop capacity but serve the private sector primarily” (22), and “good but need a longer time so that the quantum of content does not keep pace with time” (29).
- Interestingly, one participant rated the programmes very good, but not excellent; perhaps this is because these were general programmes and had little relevance to education. This may indicate that private sector courses were being prepared to serve the largest segment of staff or managers of all specialties in the state's ministries because their objective was material profit. If so, some or perhaps all

programmes and courses attended by managers of the MoE to develop their leadership or administrative skills were non-specialised courses in the field of education. In this case, MoE officials were responsible for preparing specialised training programmes to develop managers' educational leadership skills through the private sector. As some private sector courses offered to MoE staff were being paid by the ministry, the majority of managers sought to attend these courses, despite not knowing if they were related to the educational field or not. One participant rated the programmes as good but also that he needed more time to absorb and understand the large amount of information provided during these courses (according to his point of view). This may be a positive aspect to these programmes, because the participant believed that the information was valuable and required more time to process.

- Negative responses: Some participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the programmes provided by the private sector because their objectives were to earn money and, as a result, the training did not meet the participants' needs. The following comments illustrate this result. According to participant 11, "it looks for more money more than the real preparation for leadership, but they are better than the ministry". Participant 38 argued that "it's just a business, after I attended some of them, as they do not measure the personal and administrative aspect of the supervisory function". Although participant 11 mentioned that the main objective of these programmes was money, he considers them better than the programmes offered by the MoE, which he assessed as "not useful". Thus, his comments are considered negative because he basically compared the PPPS to what was not useful, stating that its objective was money (this was also true of participant 38). In addition, participant 30 considered that the private sector

programmes she attended to be training programmes for development in general, which means that they were not specialised in the preparation of educational leaders.

- Unable to respond: Some participants did not attend these programmes, perhaps because they were not convinced about the importance of the courses. This indicates a significant problem in the extent to which these managers recognise the importance of these programmes to develop their leadership skills and prepare themselves for their role as educational leaders.

### **5.2.5.2 Suggested Improvements to the Effectiveness of the Preparation of Leaders**

Table 5.17 shows that half of the respondents suggested that providing “courses and participating in workshops” for candidates of managers before their appointment might help improve the leadership development programmes. Most of the sample stated that attendance at sessions and workshops had a significant impact on improving and developing educational leaders. However, nearly one fifth of the sample (or less) answered that “participation in decision-making—direct contact with experienced leaders and the delegation of some powers”, followed by “holding conferences and encouraging dialogue, discussion, and meetings” may have had a greater role in preparing for leadership. The first three proposals focused on courses, workshops and meetings, and the benefit of experienced people. The final two suggestions are to “identify the leader’s needs” and “setting standards to select an appropriate person”; managers did not consider these to be as important in their development, despite the importance of these two factors in the success of the preparation process, especially in identifying the needs of training leaders. As indicated in the data in Section 5.2.5.1, most participants pointed

out that the programmes provided did not meet their needs, which confirms the importance of this.

Table 5.17

*Managers' Suggestions to Develop Educational Leaders' Preparation*

Activities	N	%
Attend courses—participate in workshops	21	50
Participation in decision-making—direct contact with experienced leaders and the delegation of some powers	8	19.0
Holding conferences and encouraging dialogue, discussion, and meetings	6	14.3
Compelling current leaders to prepare and qualify a second row of leaders according to clear methodology	2	4.8
Provide curricular materials to prepare leaders	2	4.8
Knowledge acquisition—using technology	2	4.8
Identify the leaders' needs	1	2.4
Setting standards to select an appropriate person to be leader and then preparing him/her	1	2.4
Number of respondents	33	78.6
Missing data	9	21.4
Total	42	100

All proposals presented in Table 5.17 are claims from respondents to prepare and develop leadership skills by identifying the needs of leaders; providing courses, workshops, and meetings; and learning from those with more experience. These results emphasise the importance to managers of providing further specialised courses and exchange experiences. However, “setting standards to select an appropriate person to be leader and then preparing him/her” was based on participant 27’s comment that “prior to preparation, criteria must be set for selecting a qualified person for leadership—and then

he/she should be subject to the practical leadership preparation programmes”. Thus, before preparing the employee for a leadership position, he/she must meet specific criteria designed in advance so that candidates for leadership are chosen accordingly. This person should then complete practical leadership development programmes; training must be through practice in the field, not only theoretical and non-educational courses (further detail in phase two, see Section 5.3.5.4).

According to participant 21, “provide curricular materials to prepare leaders” meant:

Providing leadership development curricula; holding leading conferences and encouraging dialogue and discussion during them; adopting special training programmes for leaders and leadership learning; to oblige current leadership to prepare qualified alternatives through training according to clear methodology.

This participant calls for the provision of curricula for leadership preparation and the adoption of special programmes to train leaders and teach leadership, rather than relying exclusively on courses that may not be associated with the education field (according to respondents’ views in Section 5.2.3.2). Participant 21 also called for the preparation of a second level of leaders who were qualified by the current leadership through training that is based on clear methodology (for further details, see Section 5.3.5.4).

### **5.3 Results from Phase Two: Interview Findings**

This section details the results of the interview analysis conducted with eight respondents. After the interviews, the data were transcribed and translated from Arabic into English. To ensure the accuracy of the translations, they were reviewed by a person who had mastered both languages. The interview texts in English were then introduced into the NVivo 11 program to encode data and facilitate analysis. After a number of

refinements to the encoding process, some of the responses were merged or separated into specific categories and then grouped into four main themes: managers' self-perceptions; engagement in different forms of professional development; importance of previous employment experience; and leadership development. These topics are discussed next, after the presentation of demographic data for interviewees.

### **5.3.1 Demographic Data of the Interview Sample**

Table 5.18 shows the demographic data of the interview sample. It is interesting that four of them had not gained any qualifications as a teacher, and three of these four did not have experience teaching in schools. Two others had only 1 to 4 years of experience as teachers. Two of the respondents did not have experience in administrative work, while all the participants had experience in supervisory positions starting from the department's presidency, ranging from 10 to more than 15 years. In addition, seven of them had experience in their current position as managers from 1 to 4 years, and one of them had more than 15 years.

Also striking is the fact that five out of eight had not attended any preparation programmes for their current position, although they had participated in a number of courses over the last 5 years to develop their skills as managers (two of them attended only one course). Some differences in interviewees' responses were attributed to the variants in demographic data, which will be elaborated upon at the end of each of the following theme sections, as necessary.

As this study is based on managers' experience and skills, it is necessary to discuss their demographic data in more detail in order to have a clear picture of their professional backgrounds as their responses were largely based on their backgrounds and experiences.

Table 5.18

*Demographic Data of Interview Samples*

Interviewee Details	Heba	Sa'ad	Noha	Fahad	Hamad	Bader	Ali	Mona
Gender	F	M	F	M	M	M	M	F
Education District or Ministry of Education	ED	ED	MoE	ED	MoE	MoE	MoE	ED
Permanent or acting manager	PM	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	AM	PM
Qualification as a teacher	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Qualification degree	Dip	B	B	B	B	PhD	M.A	B
Years of experience as a teacher	None	10–14	5–9	None	None	1–4	1–4	10–14
Years of experience as an administrator	More than 15	None	More than 15	5–9	10–14	10–14	More than 15	None
Years of experience in supervisor position	10–14	More than 15	More than 15	10–14	10–14	10–14	More than 15	10–14
Years of experience in current position	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	More than 15	1–4	1–4	1–4
Number of pre-appointment training courses as a manager	None	5	None	None	6	None	3	None
Number of professional development courses in service over last 5 years	6	1	4	3	7	1	2	7

### 5.3.1.1 Managers' Professional Backgrounds

Figure 5.1 illustrates participants' perceptions of themselves according to their teaching experience or other functions. Six managers believed they were leaders. There was a significant difference from their professional backgrounds, as some had extensive teaching experience, some had experience in teaching as well as administrative work, and some had experience only in administrative work. In addition, two cases believed they were managers who implemented instructions according to regulations; one had extensive experience in administrative work only while the other had experience in teaching and administration.

However, if managers' experience as teachers helped them to become leaders, what about those who had this experience but thought they were managers? What about those who saw themselves as leaders even though they were not teachers? Bader had less than four years of experience as teacher, so perhaps this was a short period that did not allow him to gain leadership skills from experience in schools. However, Ali also had little experience in education but saw himself as a leader. This was due to his obtaining a master's degree in educational administration (through which courses are offered on leadership) and his attendance of some leadership preparation programmes.

Hamad was not a teacher, but he was dealing with students and teachers (Figure 5.1). He also sought to prepare himself for leadership by attending some leadership preparation activities (according to his response), which helped him acquire leadership skills (see also Sa'ad and Ali in Figure 5.2). Fahad's experience was considered unique and completely different from other cases; whereas the other seven cases all had experience in the field of education, whether as a teacher or in administration, Fahad had professional experience in another ministry before moving to the MoE. He considered this

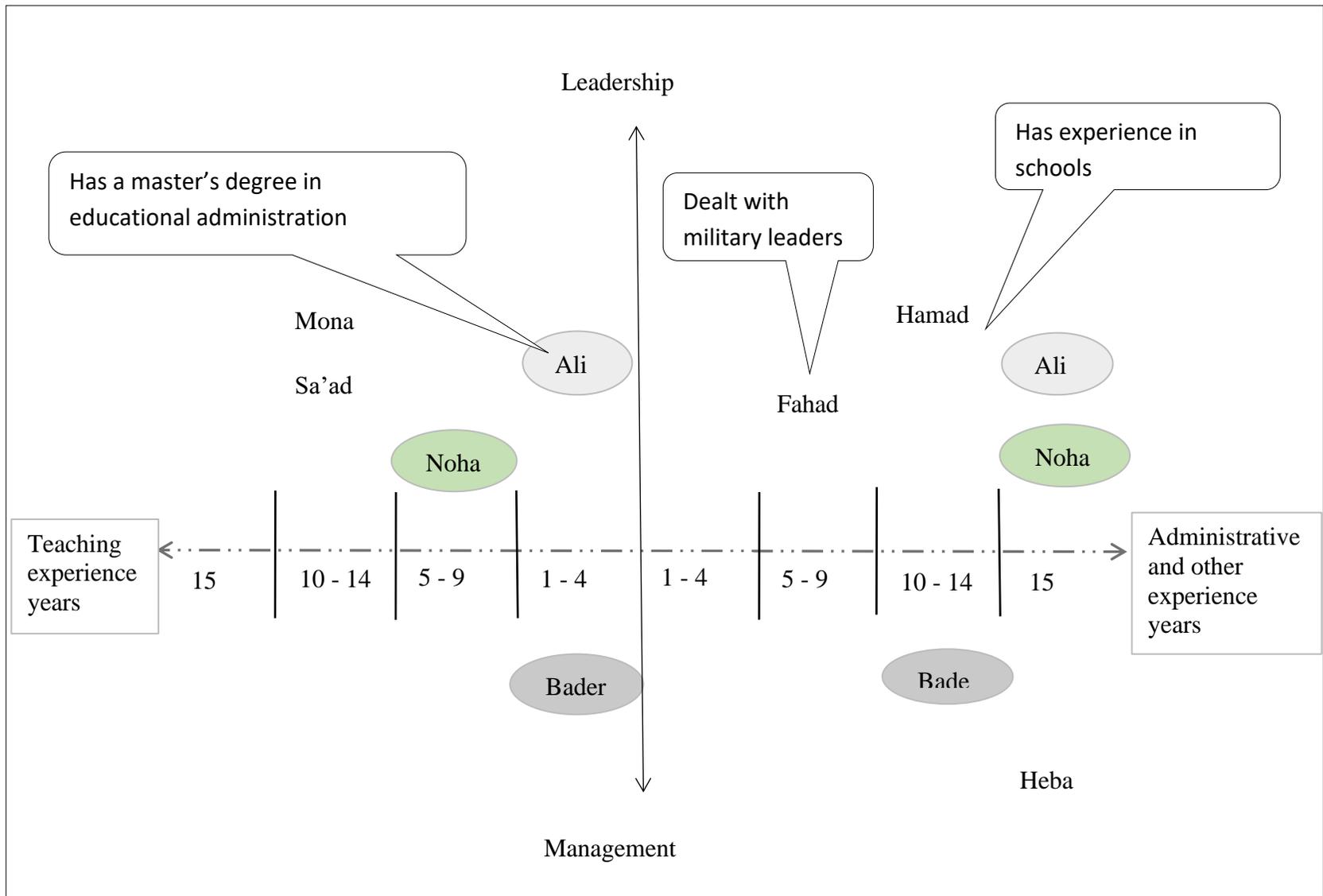


Figure 5.1. Interviewees' distribution according to their perception of themselves as leaders or managers based on professional experience

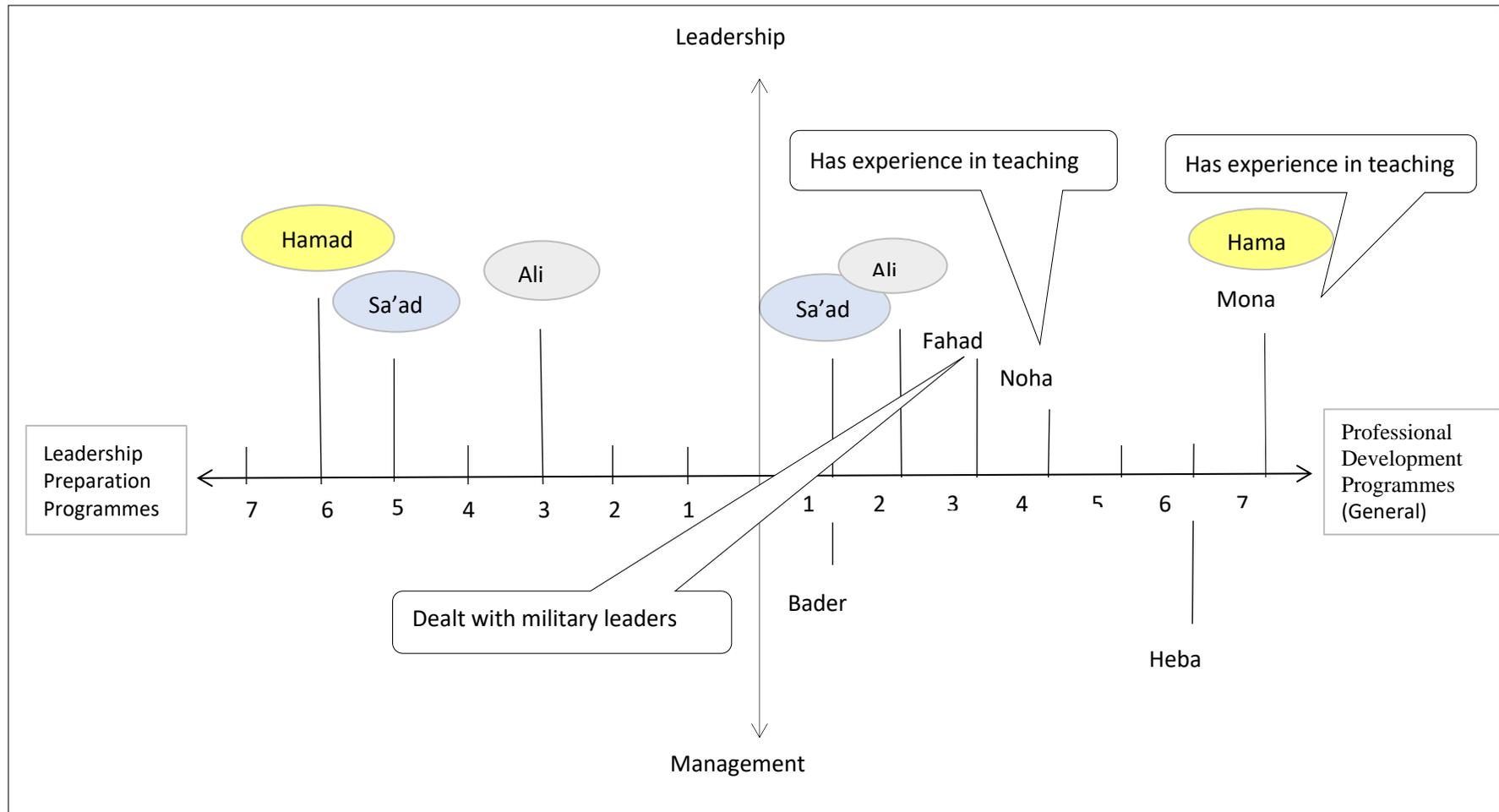


Figure 5.2. Interviewees' distribution according to their perception of themselves as leaders or managers based on attendance of professional development programmes

experience to have had the greatest impact on his experience; in other words, the context in which he worked (dealing with military leaders) helped him gain some leadership skills, so he saw himself as a leader. Kempster (2006) argued that there is a recognition of the importance of the learning processes through involvement in various activities with different leaders.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that the eight managers may be similar in some factors, such as experience or attendance at professional development programmes, but there are also significant differences in other aspects, such as context, specialisation, qualifications, years of teaching, and experience types. Therefore, the training provided should be relevant and reflect the experiences of others who have succeeded in this post (Fiedler, 1978). However, did the providers of professional development programmes for educational leaders take these differences into account when designing development activities? Are these effective in the development of leadership skills for managers?

### **5.3.2 Managers' Self-Perceptions**

#### **5.3.2.1 Understanding of the Term's Management and Leadership**

In the participants' definition of the concept of management, they all agreed that the manager only organises the work and implements the regulations. That was confirmed by Fahad when he argued that the managers only follow the rules issued by the CSC or the MoE:

But the manager doesn't take responsibility; he applies the regulations and rules of CSC and adheres to them and does not take responsibility for any decision.

His comments were consistent with Noha's statement that the manager was the person who managed the work and observed the staff, for example, to determine who was

absent or present. In addition, Bader argued that the manager tried to implement existing regulations and apply them, and he/ she was committed to them and encouraged employees to abide by them.

However, most managers had a limited understanding of the concept of leadership, and some could not distinguish between the functions of a manager and a leader. This was also evidenced when reviewing the skills needed for a leader from the point of view of the participants. Heba asserted that managerial tasks can take priority over leadership functions, although she stated that the leader's role is more comprehensive because he/she has broader capabilities. She argued that exercising leadership was about leadership and meant that the person should offer ideas to staff but not work with them on these, because he/she does not have time to do so. Sa'ad commented that leaders should not be in conflict or be party to a dispute with anyone so that everyone can come to him/her for advice. A leader should also be a motivator, encouraging others and having the ability to discover talents.

Hamad said that a leader should have good rapport with others and be able to identify strengths and weaknesses in management. He also stressed that the qualities of a leader may be possessed by someone not necessarily linked to the role:

The characteristics of a leader are not, in any way, linked to the nature of the position he/she occupies. The leader has the ability to motivate the whole group by his/her own style and influence... To be a leader, you must have the ability to communicate successfully with staff, and you need to have a strong sense of strengths and weaknesses in management.

In addition, most managers asserted that leadership involves being a visionary, affecting others, facing challenges, and taking responsibility for the policy he or she formulates, whether successful or unsuccessful. This was illustrated in the following comment:

Actually, a leader means that a person should attain a goal and have a vision... A leader is knowledgeable and he/she is the one who takes decisions, is responsible for them and takes risks... The leader is fully responsible for any taken policy, either successful or failing. (Fahad)

Notably, there appeared to be no difference in the ability of participants to distinguish between the term leader and manager according to gender, workplace, or as a permanent or acting manager. However, managers who could not distinguish between these terms (Heba, Fahad, Bader) had no experience in education or, in the case of Bader, just one year's experience (see Table 5.18).

Although Hamad also had no experience as a teacher and Ali only two years, they were able to distinguish between the two terms, perhaps because of Hamad's permanent presence in the school to fulfil his functions from the beginning of his appointment until he became a manager in one of the MoE departments. In other words, he had experience with what was going on inside a school. In addition, he attended 13 courses to prepare him or help develop his leadership skills (as mentioned earlier). Ali also received a master's degree in educational administration, which may have helped him define a clear concept for both terms.

### **5.3.2.2 Skills Required to Exercise Leadership**

Most managers were able to mention some of the skills they thought they had as well as the ones that helped them to perform their role as leaders.

Heba argued that the qualities of a successful leader should be demonstrated when carrying out tasks—namely, that a leader should understand the administration tasks he/she leads. This is an inaccurate interpretation, because Heba did not understand leadership and so did not understand very much about leadership skills. Ali argued that the leader should have many characteristics:

The leader is the head of the group and must have qualities such as power and vision and the ability to implement strategic plans and bear responsibilities and to have the expertise and abilities to analyse and motivate...

Fahad confirmed that the moral aspect is very important to the leader so that he/she can present a vision and convince others. However, Mona noted that the most important skill is to be able to form teams that can work well together. Moreover, she thought that a leader should believe in his/her work because, by applying it, he/she can cultivate this attribute in those staff members with whom he/she deals and who, in turn, will serve as a good example for others.

Bader also asserted that he had some leadership skills but lacked others. For example, he commented that a leader should affect others positively; however, he also argued that staff who follow instructions issued by him perhaps do so out of fear of the authority he has as a manager and not because they see him as a leader who is helping them.

All managers except Heba were able to identify some of the required leadership skills they thought they possessed, which means there were few differences between their responses.

### **5.3.2.3 Working with Others**

Noha and Heba agreed that working with others through participation in committees, teams, and workshops with experienced people was an effective way to develop their abilities as leaders. Heba commented that a person, no matter how good his/her ideas were, could not work alone without a team. She also added that working with others helped them face problems.

Fahad mentioned his experience working with others and how he was influenced by those with whom he worked. Although this experience was not in the field of education, he believed a leader's skills were the same and required in all areas and disciplines. Therefore, he thought that his dealings with leaders, regardless of their field or lack of specialisation in the field of education, affected and played a role in his success as a leader when he became the head of a department and then manager in an education district. According to Fahad:

I've been interacting with leaders of (...), and I have learned regularity, order, and connectivity from them, and I have learned how to make decisions. I used to interact with them in harsh conditions in external training camps during the conflict between Kuwait and Iraq, where there were semi-quick decisions from leaders. And I have participated in technical work according to my specialisation. All this qualified me to be a successful head of department.

In Hamad's view, working with others who had experience and in the same specialty affected his experience, largely because he volunteered to work with civil society organisations in the same specialisation (e.g., Martyrs' Office and Captives' Office, established after the Iraqi invasion to deal with families and children of martyrs and captives) to increase his expertise. He also asserted that his work with United Nations task forces after the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion (1990) impacted the development of his leadership skills and his role as manager.

Ali commented that he had developed his leadership skills by working with international experts from the World Bank and by participating on teams and committees in the education districts. He emphasised that these jobs and his participation developed his skills and gained him new experiences. He added:

For example, when I sit with more experienced people than me at the level of consultants and when we interact with them, we find that they run the work differently, so I can tell you yes, I benefited.

However, Mona reported that she was looking for people who were already leaders to work with because she believed they had experiences that would develop her leadership skills. She also added that she had learned to work with colleagues who were at a lower functional level and that they benefited from each other because each had different skills.

Overall, all the participants agreed that working with others was an effective informal way to develop their leadership skills. Although some respondents commented that working with people with experience and specialisation was more effective, some of them considered that working with others at different levels of employment and various disciplines had an impact on the managers' or leaders' acquisition of the necessary skills.

#### **5.3.2.4 Challenges Hindering Managers from Fulfilling their Role as Leaders**

The participants stated that regulations and rules limited their ability to act freely. For example, they claimed that they had to spend their time fulfilling administrative work and, therefore, could not exercise their role as leaders because of their preoccupation with these tasks. Furthermore, they felt that they did not have the freedom to do what they saw as appropriate. For example, Sa'ad argued that:

Our main problem is that we are restricted. Sometimes I tell my manager and supervisor colleagues that what we do daily during work time is wrong because our work should not be only with files and papers, but we should motivate, plan, and put [into action] a vision and message, but we do not have time for that ... but also do not expect that we have the freedom to do whatever we feel appropriate.

Noha confirmed such comments when she argued that it was necessary to obtain approval from some officials to complete certain tasks; she argued they did not have broad enough powers to manage everything in their administration. In addition, she noted that there was no support from more senior officials because of the lack of specialisation such officials may have in the same area of the functions of this department, which subsequently affected the overall performance of the administration.

Noha commented:

Yes. I'll give you an example: I am the national coordinator for education in Kuwait, and my responsibility as assigned by UNESCO is to form a national team; I cannot do that without the approval of assistant undersecretary of our sector... We encountered problems in this administration because of appointing people

who are not specialised (...), these people impaired the performance level of the administration.

In other words, she was tasked with acting as a contact officer between UNESCO and the MoE in Kuwait to facilitate procedures and processes between the two parties. However, she did not have authority to carry out her role without permission from the top official.

#### **5.3.2.5 Managers' Perceptions of Themselves as Leaders**

The managers' perceptions of themselves as leaders differed according to their understanding of the concepts of management and leadership as well as according to the skills of a leader that they believed they possessed, despite the obstacles or challenges that they may have faced. Heba saw herself as sometimes a manager and sometimes a leader, according to the way she needs to deal with employees or working conditions. She becomes a manager when she has to work with or alongside them, but becomes a leader if she had an idea and would like to implement it, leave the execution to her staff, and then wait for the results. However, she noted that the manager role was dominant over the leader role. She commented:

I am a manager; because not all staff are experienced, I had to work with them so that work doesn't stop. I would like to become a team leader, but it takes time and needs experience. So, I have to act mostly as a manager because when the staff make mistakes, I have to work with them.

Three participants did not prefer to describe themselves as leaders, although each of them had their own reasons. Sa'ad argued that he had the qualities of the leader, but he could not say of himself that he was a leader because of the reality of his situation. Meanwhile, Bader felt that he could not evaluate himself because there should be a third

party to assess him. He saw himself as a manager who applied rules and regulations. In addition, and because he considered himself new in this position, he argued that, if he had been in this position for three or four years, he might become a leader. Although he felt that he had leadership skills, he also believed that he needed help to develop and refine them with further training:

I think that I have these skills and capabilities, but what about others? Do they feel that I have these or not? This is the important point...Our performance should be measured by others... I feel that I have these skills but they should be trained and developed; also I need to be assisted in this regard.

Ali confirmed that he could not say that he was a leader, but at the same time felt he had a supervisory side and the ability to influence others, including superiors, to make a difference when putting forward ideas.

The remaining participants saw themselves as leaders and emphasised this. According to Fahad, this was because he achieved goals that could be measured through the satisfaction of his colleagues or staff and because he faced challenges and responsibilities. Noha also saw herself as a leader, and it was the position that gave her the ability to make decisions and take responsibility. Hamad emphasised that, because he planned to become a leader, he knew the difference between being a manager or being a leader and tried to make employees work with him as a leader rather than as a manager. He felt that he was a leader when he became a supervisor because he was making plans for the implementation for those under his supervision:

When I occupied this position, I intended to be a leader, not a manager, because I realise well the difference between the characteristics of the leader and the

manager... I worked to be a leader... Yes, I'm 100% sure that I am a leader because I would not be able to influence others if I am not convinced of that... When I was a technical inspector, I was an implementer, not a planner...

He stressed that he is a leader because he had created new projects to care for students. These were implemented with the help of his staff and achieved good results. He emphasized that this has had a positive impact on the development of work because of his ability to share innovative ideas and a vision he believed in.

Mona saw herself as a leader and refused to be a manager because she thought that the person in her position should have leadership qualities. Mona noted that:

Of course, I cannot see myself as a manager because I have reached this position; honestly, I reject this idea completely. I hope to be a real leader, because in my position, I should have a leader's characteristics, not a manager's ones... I am here as a leader, because there is a big difference between a leader and a manager... In other words, I have a defined goal, message, and vision.

Although some differences in participants' perceptions of themselves as managers or leaders emerged, it was not due to any demographic factors (Table 5.17), but perhaps because of their differing understanding of these two terms.

### **5.3.3 Engagement in Different Forms of Professional Development**

This section gives more details about professional development programmes, whether provided by the MoE or PS, and the impact of these courses on participants. It also includes informal development programmes that have helped managers develop their leadership skills. In order to achieve accuracy and impartiality, the views of the participants in the training courses and their attendance of these programmes will be

presented in general, because most managers referred to the courses without specifying who the provider was or indeed the purpose of their attendance—that is, was it for preparation or professional development (although the researcher did try to draw their attention to that).

Many participants emphasised their attendance at several courses that helped them refine and develop their skills to act as managers, supervisors, and/or department heads. However, their focus was notably not on leadership development courses, but on the administrative or technical aspect of the job they occupy. According to Heba:

I have attended training courses... I was trying to choose what suits my field of work, and I did not choose any course even if it was external... because that is a waste of time... I mean a course not related to my field or my tasks. I only attended courses that I can benefit from to serve my administration.

Bader mentioned that he attended courses before he became a manager, such as courses dealing with planning skills, dealing with individuals, and building and using conceptual maps. These were often used as educational strategies in the administrative field in which he was using in his current tasks and which he felt benefited him greatly. He also attended sessions that he believed would prepare him for functions such as report writing and management meeting sessions.

Ali tried to explain how courses were announced and provided by the MoE, whether for preparation or professional development—namely, whether they are courses offered to a specific class or a certain level of employment and whether they could be rejected or accepted. He noted that:

But what actually happens is that there are annual training programmes offered by the Department of Development and Improvement, and they are sent to all departments in the MoE, either central departments or even to school administrations. They specify that this course is for supervisory positions, which means the heads of department, supervisors, and managers... Of course, the courses are offered to the target group. These courses are optional... not compulsory ...

Ali commented that anyone who has an ambition to advance to senior positions must prepare themselves and choose the courses that suit them. This was also confirmed by Fahad, who stated that the state offers them training programmes and that they have the freedom to choose their attendance or rejection. In turn, he attended some courses only for his professional and administrative development. He asserted that:

Yes, because it is being not obligatory, but the government shows us the way, so if we wanted to be successful leaders it showed us the way ... We have the freedom to choose the way we desire... As for me, by attending these four courses I learned some techniques which helped me in my work as a technician or in administration and I benefited from them. (Fahad)

It is noticeable here that the participant has focused on courses aimed at developing managerial and technical skills rather than leadership. Perhaps that is because of the ministry's lack of interest in developing the leadership side of these managers (more detail is given on this in chapter 6).

According to Ali, the courses offered through the MoE are also provided by the private sector. They were not directed at educational leaders and were rather removed from what is happening in the education field.

### **5.3.3.1 Professional Development In-Service Activities**

There were no professional development programmes specifically targeting leadership development according to most respondents. However, they attended sessions or courses to develop their general job skills. Some of them were recommended by the MoE while others were attended through personal effort because individuals were seeking to develop their career skills. In addition, some participants attended only one or two professional development activities because they considered the tasks assigned to them to be the development of their leadership skills:

No, because since I have held this position, I have been directly assigned as a manager of the Curriculum Development Project, so I have communicated with experts and this was professional development for me. (Ali)

The next two subsections discuss the usefulness and relevance of professional development activities organised by the MoE and the PS.

#### **5.3.3.1.1 Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education (PPMoE)**

Sa'ad stated that, in general, there were no professional development programmes and, because of this, no vision for the MoE to develop its staff. When the researcher tried to draw his attention to the idea that the target was the professional development of educational leaders, he stressed once again that they were not applicable in this relevant field, which may be that he means there were no professional development courses or

that there were sessions, but they did not meet his needs. Therefore, he pointed out that it was only theoretical.

He also wondered why officials did not go out in the field and use this as a starting point to create activities for all levels, from a teacher to a general manager position, to meet the needs of each functional category according to the field needs. He indicated that the courses with which he had experience were not related to his field, and the MoE needed to more stringently codify and identify target groups in order to meet their needs.

However, Hamad had another opinion. He mentioned that the MoE had a list of various courses offered annually, but he claimed that these courses did not meet their needs, so he declined to attend them because he believed were not useful.

Heba attended only one conference on decision making in 2015 to develop the skills for her function, and whilst beneficial, she also believed it came too late. She would have preferred to attend this conference in the early stages of her new role because it would have taught her how to make decisions in her work as well as life in general. Although her attendance at this conference was supported by the MoE, it was organised by the Engineers Society, who are duty bound to invite only two participants from each ministry of the state; as such, the content is not directed at education, but to leaders in general.

Noha indicated that she attended a course to develop her leadership skills in Malaysia. She was supported by the MoE, but the organiser was in the private sector. Again, only two members from each ministry of the state were able to attend, so the course was not specifically directed to educational leaders. However, she did claim that attendance was beneficial because it included visits, workshops, and lectures. Furthermore, Bader had attended only one professional development course in his current position, to which he

had been appointed six months earlier; the MoE only provides people in the position with one course each year to develop their skills. Bader described the course he attended:

It was through the Civil Service Bureau, where they choose from various ministries. It did not address the education field, but it was focused on the strategic planning of the leader in general. We were informed about the experiences in Malaysia.

This means that the courses he attended had nothing to do with education because they were organized by someone else, although it was, in fact the MoE who nominated staff to attend these. They may be useful in general terms, but the content was not presented in an education context and indeed the courses were often held outside Kuwait, i.e. in an environment different from that of Kuwaiti society.

Mona attended a course to develop her skills as a trainer for her role as an educational affairs manager. However, the course was not aimed at developing skills for educational leadership. She considered it as professional development because she learned and benefited from the different experiences. However, she also reported that she had not received any nomination from the MoE to attend a session to develop her leadership skills since her appointment as a manager. She argued that:

I have been in this position for only a year, so I cannot claim if the Ministry conducts such courses for managers or not. Also, since I have been in this position, I spend my energy and time on my work as I have to accomplish many tasks... That's why they do not nominate me to attend any course.

### **5.3.3.1.2 Programmes Provided by the Private Sector (PPPS)**

Most respondents had participated in PPPS through personal efforts to develop their skills. However, most of these activities were not focused or directed specifically to developing their leadership skills, but rather supported professional development in their various supervisory positions and different stages of employment.

Noha stated that she had attended professional development programmes for a long time before becoming manager; these programmes were not for the development of leadership skills, but self-development. Hamad sought to develop his leadership skills after serving as a technical inspector by volunteering in many civil society institutions in Kuwait and working with committees of the United Nations after the liberation of Kuwait in 1990. He commented that:

I have participated in seven conferences; I have always been a member of the drafting committee, which is responsible for drafting the recommendations. In the last two years, I became the head of the drafting committee for all the conferences I participate in... It helped me a lot in my professional development because they involved scientific papers, committees, and work teams.

He stressed that his participation in working with the various committees and in conferences with different bodies, not only with the MoE, had refined his professional and leadership skills.

Mona also attended several courses in the private sector, both inside and outside Kuwait, when she was a head of department and supervisor.

Differences in participants' responses about professional development programmes were evident in terms of gender. Female managers attended the PPMoE but did not attend the

PPPS, except Mona, who was seeking to develop her skills. This may be due to the fact that most PPPS are held in the evenings—a time Kuwaiti women allocate to their families (for further details, see Chapter 6). In contrast, male managers reported that they did not attend any courses offered by the MoE except Bader, who attended only one session. Males also sought to attend private sector activities, except Bader, possibly because of his preoccupation with obtaining a doctorate degree.

### **5.3.3.2 Impact of Professional Development Activities**

Participants mentioned that they found little benefit to the training courses in terms of developing leadership skills. Although they had already stated that there were no programmes to prepare them for their role as leaders, there were some PPMoE, but most claimed these had no impact on the development of their leadership skills. Some participants were seeking to develop their own career or personality skills in general, and sometimes their leadership skills, through personal efforts and by attending PPPS, which were not directed to educational leaders. In addition, some sessions were provided by the Civil Service Bureau to develop the skills of all state employees in general.

Sa'ad stated that, although there were no activities provided by the Ministry to prepare them as leaders, he believed that they were important in terms of developing skills. Therefore, he sought to attend several of these in the private sector, or external sessions, such as attending two in Japan, which he considered had a positive impact on the development of his skills. He also pointed out that his attendance at these sessions was not intended to develop his leadership skills, but because of his social circumstances at that time; still, in his current role he benefited from his attendance. He also attended another session that affected his practice and had been applied in his administration or with school administrations under his supervision. As Sa'ad explained:

Yes, I needed this course. I learned how to manage a project, how to formulate ideas, how to create opportunities, and how to formulate my programmes as a leader. I learned how to put together educational and developmental projects for me and the staff in my department, and now I use this approach in all the schools I supervise.

Again, Sa'ad's focus was only on the development of management skills. This may be because he was unaware of the differences between leadership and management skills, or he did not believe in the importance of his leadership role (more details in chapter 5).

According to Fahad, many factors influenced the benefit of the programme, but the courses themselves were necessary for those who wished to develop their skills. He noted that there was session in which he could interact with from the beginning and that he noticed positive results during that session because he tried to connect what was presented with the events and problems he experienced through his work.

However, Fahad also stressed that there are those who say that the activities were not useful, and that this may be partly true (in his opinion), because the benefit of these depended on the attendee him-/herself and the content of the session. To illustrate, he claimed to have learned what is useful for administrative or technical work, but the courses did not develop or influence his leadership skills. Perhaps this was because most of the activities he attended were not intended to prepare or develop educational leaders (as most participants mentioned). Fahad asserted that:

There are courses which encourage you to be a successful leader; you interact with some courses from the beginning and you see the results during the course,

because you might start linking what the instructor says with events that happened to you ...

Moreover, he felt he acquired some specific job-related skills from this training, adding:

As for me, by attending these four courses I learned some programmes which helped me in my work as an administrator or technician and I benefited from them ... But sometimes we forget what we learned ... (Fahad)

Hamad agreed with Fahad that the PPMoE had no effect on the development of his leadership skills, but that the programmes he had attended through personal efforts in the private sector or civil society organisations did have a positive impact and helped refine his skills. He also sought to apply what he had learned from these in his work as well as transfer the new knowledge and skills to those who work with him by providing lectures or seminars to develop the skills of staff under his supervision.

Heba reported that she attended only one course and that she was positively affected as it gave her an incentive to make decisions on any problem she faced. However, she added that the benefit of all activities is to get out of the work routine in order to share with others and learn about their experiences. She commented:

Yes... Sometimes you get overwhelmed at work and you feel that it is a routine. But when I attend a course, having discussions and training, I generate new ideas... It will affect me only if I want to, and if I don't, I will leave the course without any benefits.

In other words, it depends on the participant if he/she wishes to benefit from the programmes attended by selecting the those appropriate for him/her and applying what he/she learns in the field of work.

Some respondents mentioned that they did not attend courses to prepare as a leader, but instead attended professional development activities when they were a head of the department and/or supervisor. They considered these as the first steps in establishing themselves in the leadership role, which positively influenced their current role. For example, Bader reported that:

After the completion of the session, I conducted a meeting with the staff who are under my supervision, and I took the role of the lecturer and reported back on the session... Definitely I was concentrating more on the staff members who I feel have the capability to be heads of departments in the future; the aim of this is to prepare the next generation of leaders... Yes, I apply what I have learned and make use of it in my work; also, I encourage supervisors and heads of departments under my supervision to apply the ideas I convey to them...

Although as Bader pointed out in his previous comment, what he learned is passed on to his supervisory staff, indicating that he understands the importance of preparing future leaders. However, the focus may not have specifically on leadership skills because he mentioned courses and professional development activities in general.

In addition, Mona sought to attend a session in the private sector through her own personal efforts in order to develop skills for her first supervisory function as a department head in a school. She felt that this had a significant impact on changing her practices and work since become the head of department and currently as a manager in an educational district. However, she also asserted that she experienced no effective impact or good training from any courses or seminars offered by the MoE to develop educational leaders. She argued that:

Frankly, it is merely information... The ministry considers that as training and preparation; however, this is not the right mechanism of conducting training... Additionally, the Ministry conducts some courses that it believes are targeting the preparation of managers and leaders, but I think that they are inappropriate. They are maybe related to this field, but why they are not achieving their goals.

Ali argued that his master's degree studies in educational administration had a greater impact on the development of his skills than the training programmes he attended, which were commercial and only provided information and knowledge that could easily be obtained from books at any time. Such insights suggest that there were activities on leadership in general, but not about educational leadership, which may have been provided by different bodies other than the MoE (such as the Civil Service Bureau) offering programmes for various officials and leaders without specifically targeting educational leaders. As a result, Ali believed the courses' impact was limited and that any possible benefits only applied to some people and not all (e.g., their specific training needs). He did benefit from the strategic planning session provided by the MoE, even though he attended it 20 years ago:

The course on the management of teams opened my eyes, and I benefited a lot. It was given by an American company through the Service Bureau and not the Ministry of Education, and it was very valuable—and one of the courses that has continued to have an impact on me up till now. That was 20 years ago and ever since I have been a head of department. It was at a very high level both in terms of the subject matter and the lectures; because it was not delivered theoretically, there were also workshops...

This emphasizes the importance of workshops due to its positive impact on trainees, because it is considered as an active learning process, under the supervision of trainers or experienced colleagues, and not only lecturers who deliver without interaction from recipients.

He also agreed with most participants that he applied what he learned and communicated this to department heads or staff. Furthermore, he felt that the impact was in the scope of his supervision and management because he tried to make changes through what he had learned. He tried to transfer and apply the training output at the sector level, but there were limits and powers that could not be overridden.

As these comments demonstrate, all respondents noted the usefulness and importance of the courses in general and stated that they had positively influenced their current practice and roles as educational leaders. However, the majority attended these trainings during previous career stages in order to develop their professional, personal, or supervisory skills, not to improve or develop leadership skills for their current role as educational leaders. Some participants believed that a few of the activities they attended had helped them develop leadership skills, but perhaps in an unintended way. Most emphasised that the PPMoE had no impact on their practice and were not aimed at developing their leadership skills. PPS had a positive and significant impact on the development of their skills. Finally, there were no differences in the responses to the impact of training on developing leadership skills in terms of any of the demographic variables mentioned in Table 5.18.

### 5.3.3.3 Managers' Use of Informal Learning Methods

Participants mentioned that informal learning methods are many and varied, such as completing tasks, reading books and studies, learning from others, and discussing with colleagues. These methods had a significant impact on the development of their skills and helped them in their current role as leaders because they learned from them. These methods played perhaps a greater role in developing their skills than formal learning methods, such as the previously discussed training programmes and workshops.

Practice, task completion, trial and error, and learning from others' experiences play a key role in developing leadership skills during work time. Interaction with others also helped gain experience. Heba explained that dealing with different situations and personalities, whether a school principal, employee, or parents, helps managers solve problems that they may face in the future. She noted that:

Meeting others and interacting with them gives us experience. I might deal with a person who has a problem I haven't encountered before, but if I face a similar problem later, I will know how to deal with it because I have already gained the experience.

She also believed that taking colleagues' views on many issues or attitudes helps her find solutions to the problems she may face. However, she was not sure if studying and reading books would help develop her skills because she may not be able to implement or apply what she has read. Therefore, she emphasised that work, practice, trial and error, and dealing with others were the most effective methods for gaining experience for her.

Sa'ad confirmed Heba's comments that, in the achievement of tasks, trial and error, interacting with others, and discussing with colleagues improved his leadership skills. He

also added that reading books and studying were important tasks because they can enrich a leader's knowledge and understanding. He stated that, although his former manager had no influence or role in teaching him leadership skills, he was educated and influenced by the personality of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him), whom he considers a field leader, and his biography includes all kinds of leadership examples.

Hamad agreed with Sa'ad that all the learning methods mentioned on the prompt card (see Appendix 7), such as discussion with colleagues, dealing with others, and trial and error, were effective methods for helping managers develop their leadership skills. However, he also added the use of social media:

From 2013 to 2017, the mobile and social networks played a very influential role on polishing my personality. Also, some religious and cultural programmes played a key role in this field, such as Al Sha'rawi and Dr. Abdulkafi's programmes. I am keen on watching all the episodes. Today, thoughts and opinions can reach us through technology; it is not necessary to attend courses ...

Hamad referred to TV programmes that are concerned with evaluating a person's behaviour and discipline, as well as his/ her morals and build successful social relationships and emphasizes respect for other. He also believed he had learned from others' experiences through social media programs. In other words, Ali believed he had acquired leadership skills from these programmes that emphasized ethics, and which are undoubtedly part of a leader's personality.

The completion and repetition of some tasks also helped Hamad in the development of his skills because he was continuously trying to improve his performance to address the mistakes that may have occurred previously.

Finally, he stated that his former manager had an impact on him, albeit unintentionally. Hamad learned from him only by asking him rather than through any deliberate intention from the manager to teach or guide him. He added that having an experienced manager to work alongside employees did not always happen; therefore, he had to ask about everything and read every paper or bulletin in his field to understand what was going on.

According to Ali, he had learned from three former managers. One applied a chaotic management model, and another applied an authoritarian management method. Ali felt both of these models were ineffective, so his learning took the form of how not to approach management. However, the third manager used a situational leadership style, which deals with employees according to the situation. This influenced Ali, and he became strongly inclined to use situational leadership. In addition, he argued that the most effective methods were to accomplish tasks, participate in task forces, and manage teams, because these activities require engaging in the actual practice of his role as a leader.

Noha mentioned that she had learned from her former manager, who offered insights and worked to educate and develop staff. The former manager worked with the staff in the department, focusing on those who had leadership qualities to prepare them as leaders for the future. Noha claimed that this focus and attention, as well as the support of the assistant undersecretary, significantly impacted the development of her own leadership skills. Noha added that other informal learning methods (e.g., peer discussion, reading books, dealing with experienced people) influenced and helped her develop leadership skills, although she stressed that one of the most effective methods for her was the impact of her former manager.

Bader stated that, when he was department head, he learned from his former supervisor, who encouraged and gave him advice and delegated tasks to make some changes and facilities in department. Based commented that:

He had a great influence on me... While he helped me, I succeeded in polishing my personality, and he gave me authorisation in work. So I started to realise when I can make a right decision after examining it thoroughly. Additionally, I was consulting highly experienced people to know their points of view concerning the decisions I would make or the project I would have submitted; generally, many of them helped and guided me ...

He added that he was seeking to develop his skills through self-learning because he did not have time to attend courses. Therefore, at the end of each week, he read up on different topics to develop himself and his work, such as planning and influencing others. He believed that the most effective methods for developing his skills were reading books and learning from previous experiences. He did not think that peer discussions had an impact on his role as a leader because those at the same level of his career had the same or perhaps even less experience as him. However, he emphasised that discussions with experienced people and those who had a higher-level position were beneficial, so he sought to maintain contact with retirees to discuss some ideas and proposals because he believed they had better developed skills than him.

According to Fahad, personal experiences as well as solving problems that occur during work had a positive impact. He also agreed with Bader, who emphasised that peer discussion, especially with experienced individuals, was more effective than other informal learning methods. As Fahad explained:

But discussing with experienced people is 100% successful and it is the best method ... not just [for] developing my leadership skills, but I consider it the safety valve [that] protects the decision I made.

He also learned and was influenced by those in a higher position, either by attending meetings or engaging in discussions with them in order to learn how to make decisions on some issues and solve problems. Such efforts developed his leadership skills and helped him deal with many of the problems he faced when he became a manager because he already had possible solutions prepared thank to his experience or discussions with experienced people.

Mona mentioned many informal learning methods, such as peer discussion. She believed that, through dialogue, she could gain experience or learn something new. She also believed that she could learn some things without being told by others, but rather by dealing with them herself. Mona gave an example of this process:

Previously I did not know the best method of handling the bulletins that we received from the ministry; however, I was reading them and analysing who issued them, who is the party being addressed, and what is their main topic... I was looking for new things to learn and was looking for those who have innovative ideas so I could call them and ask for more clarification of such ideas ...

She also confirmed that her assignment helped her gain confidence in upper management and in accomplishing her desired goals, which had a positive impact on developing her leadership skills. However, she thought that former managers had no impact on the development of her skills because, although she may have learned some things from them, she did not practice and apply what she had learned.

In summary, differences emerged in participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of informal learning methods. A few individuals thought that some methods were more effective than others whereas others believed that they were less effective or had no effect. Despite the differences in the perceived effectiveness of these methods, the participants agreed that they helped develop their leadership skills and had a positive impact on their role as leaders. They also agreed that the diversity of informal learning methods, such as working with others or participating in work teams, had increased their experiences and helped them in their current tasks.

#### **5.3.4 Importance of Previous Employment Experience**

Participants' comments on the importance of previous employment experience can provide further insights into this area. Heba believed that the experience she gained during work had a positive impact on the development of her skills and success in her role as a leader. She felt she had the necessary expertise to deal with different situations because she had already experienced them. Perhaps as a result of this, she became a department head and supervisor, so she felt that the work became more comprehensive because she was overseeing two departments in the same administration. She commented:

We get the experience from every job and then we gradually become more responsible and more experienced... I believe that doing our work enhances our experience... Because of this experience, I had many ideas that I wanted to apply, so I used to introduce my ideas as projects to the manager of the administration. I gained all this experience through practice and because I am completely familiar with my work.

She asserted the importance of experience as a manager but not necessarily in a leadership role. Furthermore, she only mentioned the experiences that she learned through carrying out tasks while in the process of becoming a manager. Therefore, she did not mention any aspects of her potential leadership role.

Sa'ad also emphasised the importance of a manager's experience, especially if it is acquired when individuals begin as a teacher and then progress to become a school principal. He stressed the importance of this experience, which empowered him in his role as a manager in an education district, and he considered this experience to be the basis from which he launched his success as a leader. He claimed that it helped him understand what happens in a school within "10 minutes" of visiting it, whereas "sometimes we need hours to explain an issue for an official person if he has not been a teacher in education before".

According to Fahad, his previous experience made him more confident. It also developed his ability to make decisions and to succeed in his current role as a manager, despite the fact that much of his experience was gained from working outside the field of education. He was an engineer in one of the ministries and then moved to one of the departments of the MoE to become an engineering affairs manager in an educational district. He asserted that the gradual upgrade in the same department and specialisation positively affected his leadership role because roles required some experience to be familiar with management.

Hamad believed that his expertise and responsibilities prepared him for his role as leader. Although he did not have experience as a teacher, his work and daily presence in school had a positive impact on the development of his leadership skills. He noted that experience is essential to a manager's success in this role and that an employee should

not be promoted to a higher position until at least 8 years had elapsed to gain the necessary expertise to carry out the tasks required in the senior post. He added:

I have learned how to make good interventions in work. Through this experience, the results of such interventions are almost guaranteed. For example, if I want to make a programme, I will make it in the right method because of the experience I got from the position as an inspector and as a supervisor, and that helped me in implementing programmes correctly and in preparing proper ones that respond to certain needs ... This is what I have learned of my previous experiences.

Interventions are the processes that Hamad did to evaluate and correct mistakes during work, because he had the expertise to do so.

In addition, Hamad stated that it was inadvisable to appoint managers from different disciplines in a department in which they had no experience. He argued in favour of using school principals in a management role:

A school's principal is able to be an educational district manager or assistant undersecretary of general education, who led a working team and supervised scientific departments in a school ... and who managed the student affairs[-related] problems. There was a lot of chaos in the field in the last 10 years, although it is easy to solve this problem by appointing specialised and experienced people.

Both Bader and Ali agreed that experience had qualified them for their role as managers of administrations in the education districts. They had almost two years of experience as teachers, then moved into administrative work in the educational districts before being promoted to managers. It is striking that, although Ali had a master's degree specialising

in educational management, he commented that the experience gained during his work as a teacher or administrator in the educational district was more important in his role as a manager because some of the management theories studied did not fit with the culture of the education system in Kuwait. Ali asserted that:

But my experiences were the most beneficial for me, and some of the administrative theories I studied confirmed these experiences, but not in all cases. I mean some theories do not go in line with our education system... Of course, I benefited because I worked to match them, but I think that practice and experiences are more helpful.

Noha agreed with Ali, who felt that the experience gained from people during work may be more effective than the knowledge obtained from academic study. She began her career as a teacher but moved to work as an administrative officer a few years later and was promoted until she became a manager. The experience she gained from working in the same administration helped her a lot in her role as a leader. Noha also emphasised the importance of the appointment of a manager with experience in the same administration that he/she will manage. She believes that if someone who does not have experience in the same specialisation of management is appointed, it will hinder work efficiency and performance. According to Noha:

We encountered problems in this administration because of appointing managers who are not specialised in..., these managers impaired the performance level of the administration ... because the specialisation of the manager was not related to the administration ... because the work here needs specialisation and expertise, it is not administrative work ... because we have many things that depend on experience in the field.

Mona worked as a teacher for more than 10 years before becoming head of department, assistant principal, and school principal. She then became supervisor and was promoted to manager of educational affairs in the educational district. She considered this experience and gradation from teacher to manager had a significant impact on her role as a manager and leader. Mona noted that:

I started do the work initiatives without being nominated for that. I worked in all fields. Frankly I was a head of department, but I worked as if I was a school principal ... I was attending courses and was in touch with students' parents to solve problems; I was doing everything till I became a school principal ... and I started to feel that I am really a leader, and I started giving courses on leadership accordingly.

As the comments indicate, all the participants emphasised the importance of the work experience they gained and their various tasks as practical learning methods that helped them develop their leadership skills. Although some did not have experience as a teacher, everyone stressed the importance of gradual promotion in the same specialisation so that the leader becomes familiar with all the technical and administrative functions of the administration he/she manages.

### **5.3.5 Leadership Development**

This section reviews participants' responses and views on how to prepare educational leaders. The discussion is broken down into four subsections: educational leadership preparation programmes, strengths of the leadership training programmes; weaknesses of the leadership training programmes, and suggested improvements to enhance the effectiveness of the preparation of leaders.

### **5.3.5.1 Educational Leadership Preparation Programmes**

This section reviews the data about preparing managers prior to their appointment; the findings about their professional development in-service were presented in Section 5.3.3.1.

Most managers agreed that they did not attend any training programmes to prepare for their role as educational leaders. However, they did attend some sessions that may have helped them in their current role as managers, although most were for the development of technical or administrative aspects in different functional stages. In other words, these sessions sought to develop attendees as heads of departments or supervisors, but not leaders.

Mona also commented that she attended a few of courses to develop her career rather than enhance her leadership skills: “the courses I have taken for this position [...] were more related to technical work; they were not specialised in leadership.”

According to Heba, any activities she participated in to prepare her as a supervisor or department head may have contributed to her preparation for her current role as a leader: “I hadn’t attended any preparatory courses before becoming a head of department. I only depended on my work experience.”

Mona and Heba commented about a lack of preparation to act in a leadership capacity. This may be because they did not fully understand their role as leaders, or they thought that doing their management job meant that they were already exercising a leadership role.

Fahad stated that he had not attended any programme to prepare as a leader because attending courses depended on the person himself. However, he claimed that he may

have attended one, which he did not feel was beneficial because the nature of his work did not correspond to its content or maybe the sessions did not encourage an individual to become a successful leader. He then said, “but to be honest with you, I never depended on courses but improved my skills through self-development”.

#### **5.3.5.1.1 Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education (PPMoE)**

PPMoE and their role in preparing managers as educational leaders did not exist on the ground, from the point of view of most of the participants, or the ministry did not nominate them if indeed they did exist. For example, Sa’ad argued that:

If we want to talk about the role of the ministry in preparing for programmes; it is nothing, zero... because all these efforts are personal. There is a department which is called the Development Department in the ministry, but it is very far from development and improvement.

Fahad explained that MoE publications announced the existence of sessions, meaning the ministry offered some session from which individuals could choose depending on what suited their needs and circumstances. However, these activities were to prepare managers, not leaders, or perhaps did not meet their needs.

According to Hamad, asserted that it was important to attend preparation courses in the early stages of the job (i.e., before being in any supervisory position). He mentioned that: he attended one of the PPMoE aimed at developing technical aspects of his specialisation. However, the topic of this session was how to be a leader, so he benefited from it in his current role as an educational leader. He explained that:

I attended only one course, but it was at the proper time, just before I became a technical inspector... It was the only appropriate course... Yes, in specialisation,

but its focus was how to be a leader and be able to manage a group of employees in the same job specialisation.

#### **5.3.5.1.2 Programmes Provided by the Private Sector (PPPS)**

Many interviewees stated that they attended many PPPS that they funded themselves in order to be better prepared for future leadership roles. For example, Sa'ad noted that:

As for the preparation programmes that I attended, they were all as a result of my personal quest... Yes, I attended courses in the private sector, but I mean that I initiated them and sought them myself, I attended a lot of courses... I was trying my best to attend training courses and I paid money for that.

In addition, Fahad explained that he attended many PPPS, but they had commercial aspects more than a positive impact on the trainees and were not always related to the field of education. He asserted that "the private sector's purpose is always about business... I mean marketing for their products... We did not know before trying them".

This may mean that he did not succeed in choosing the course because he may not have had any experience in this area, despite the fact he was seeking to develop his skills. Therefore, he attended activities in the private sector, although it was just marketing courses as products for profit, and did not target educators.

Two managers, Heba and Noha, did not attend any private sector programmes to prepare themselves as leaders. Heba did not need to attend these to prepare herself for her role as a leader because she had gradually moved into her position in the same department, so there was no impediment to her in the performance of her tasks. Meanwhile, Noha stated that she had not expected to become manager of her department:

It was not my ambition to be a manager, because after the retirement of our previous manager and assigning new manager from outside the administration, we were frustrated. I did not expect that I would become a manager...

Regarding PPPS, participants' responses differed according to who was currently in either permanent or acting management positions. Permanent managers stated that they had not attended any private sector programmes in order to prepare for their leadership positions. However, acting managers did attend some programmes through their own efforts (participants expected these programmes to prepare them as leaders, but the discussions indicated that the programmes were mostly to develop managerial and technical skills and were not directed to educational leaders). Perhaps they expected to be permanently appointed to these positions or they were seeking to strengthen their leadership skills to prove their eligibility for this position.

### **5.3.5.2 Strengths of the Leadership Training Programmes**

This section examines the strengths of the leadership training programmes (e.g., how to form and lead teams), focusing on preparation before being appointed and subsequent development in-service that were provided by the MoE, the private sector, and internal and external programmes in other countries. Only four participants mentioned strengths in the programmes they attended. They also identified some of the benefits that they hoped would be in these programmes to be useful for them.

According to Sa'ad, having a professional lecturer was one of the strengths of the sessions he attended. He also felt that the content was excellent in terms of the practical aspects and workshops. Yet he asserted that the course should not be merely a theoretical lecture; rather, there must be diversity through the presentation of information. He also

noted that a week was an appropriate period of time because of attendees' need to complete work tasks.

Fahad also commented that having a good lecturer who could easily provide information was a strength in the training courses, because there were examples of other lecturers who could expand on explanations and provide considerable knowledge and information, but did not have a good impact on the attendees.

Hamad also agreed with other participants that the lecturer must be at a high level of skill and have knowledge. He added that the presence of attendees who were with him also played a role and had a significant impact on promoting the strengths of the course he attended in Egypt, which lasted two months. However, he still felt the influence of this course because it included many strengths, such as the quality of the lecturer, the trainees in attendance being in the same speciality, the time period, and the facilitation of various tests that measured the extent to which participants achieved their goals.

According to Hamad:

The strength was meeting highly experienced and knowledgeable people among the participants and the presenters—I mean, they had a great level of thinking and education. I was trying to reach their level diligently. For that reason, I started to go to the library and look for books to read more and be able to compete with them because it is not a good thing to meet knowledgeable people while I am not.

He pointed out that this course motivated him to undertake independent self-directed learning. This is because he was trying to compete with attendees who had greater experience. If directed to educational leaders in particular, participants will be from the same field and perhaps share the same experiences, which in turn can help motivate

managers to develop their leadership capabilities and compensate for a lack of experience when working with more experienced colleagues.

Bader outlined some of the features that he hoped would be in the training programmes, such as in-depth information and the duration of the session being extended for one or two months, according to the quantity and density of information provided. At present, most courses last only five days. He commented:

If they are related to my need and my tasks... the lecturer should be specialists in education if he is going to conduct courses in this field; simultaneously, if we conducted courses for managers of the Finance Ministry, the lecturer should be specified in the same field... where they speak in their problems and in their field.

Each one should conduct courses that match his/her specialisation.

Perhaps Bader's comment suggests that there was no planning for development programmes. Therefore, those people delivering the courses were not contracted to provide suitably relevant content.

Participants' comments about the training programmes they attended indicated that one of the most important strengths of a few those activities was the existence of a distinguished lecturer. Three managers (Sa'ad, Hamad, Bader) attended external sessions (outside Kuwait), some of which were organised by the MoE and some through the personal efforts of the participants. For example, Fahad referred to the strengths of one seminar he attended at Kuwait University before becoming a manager. However, all the courses they attended were not intended to prepare or develop them for their role as educational leaders because, as previously stated (see Table 5.18 and Sections 5.3.3.1 and 5.3.5.1), they did not attend any preparation or professional development activities in

their current position. Rather, they attended professional development courses during their previous career phases, which influenced their current roles as educational leaders.

Differences emerged in participants' responses that could be attributed to gender. Female participants did not mention any positive aspects of the training programmes they attended, which were often provided by the MoE (only Mona attended programmes offered by the ministry and the private sector). However, male participants mentioned some of the strengths that either were or were expected to be present in the programmes they attended provided by the private sector (as mentioned earlier in Sections 5.3.3.1 and 5.3.5.1). Of the males, only Ali did not mention any strengths, perhaps because of his enrolment in the Master of Educational Administration programme, which he believed was better than the courses he attended.

### **5.3.5.3 Weaknesses of Leadership Training Programmes**

Participants mentioned many disadvantages in the leadership training programmes they attended and considered them as weaknesses that reduced their positive impact on the development of their leadership skills or their careers skills in general. In the courses they attended, their main objective for developing leadership skills was not met (as discussed in Sections 5.3.3.1 and 5.3.3.2).

Sa'ad believed that the systems and regulations imposed by the MoE limited how he could apply what he had learned from the courses attended. This may mean that the courses had a positive impact on his skills, but only on the cognitive side and not in a practical way; therefore, he could not apply what he had learned. Sa'ad commented that:

The weaknesses are the rules and regulations that prevent us from applying what we learn. You mentioned that the leader is looking for solutions, but also do not expect that we have the freedom to do whatever we see appropriate.

It means that the rules and regulations limit the manager's power and prevent him/her to work and exercise leadership according to his/her vision. Some respondents pointed this out as a weakness, which will be discussed in more detail later (Section 6.6.3).

He also pointed out that there was no deputy to do his tasks if he could not attend for any reason. This raises the question of why not prepare a second tier of leaders, such as one of the heads of departments under the supervision of this administration. This lack of action may be due to managers not adequately training those who work with them and not delegating at least some of their tasks.

Fahad also agreed that it was not possible to apply what they had learned in the courses, but for different reasons from those mentioned by Sa'ad. He believed that the courses were mere theoretical lectures, and the content could not be transferred or applied and used in practice. He noted that:

One of the weaknesses is that there is no practical application to reality and it needs practical experience. It is mostly theoretical and we haven't applied it. For example, the instructor explains events and we imagine them, but when the event really happened, I couldn't apply what I had learned. Some situations need to be seen in reality.

This refers to implications of too much theoretical input; i.e. lack of workshops, role plays etc. This reduces the usefulness of training programmes because they only contained theories that managers could not apply in their working context.

He added that, although there are programmes for leadership, they were not useful because they were commercial (i.e., courses provided by the MoE through contracts with the private sector). Mona confirmed this when she stated that the MoE believed that there was preparation and development programmes for education leadership skills but, in reality, these did not exist because the mechanism was wrong. The sessions were just a means of receiving information. Indeed, Fahad explained that:

There are some leadership courses but they are not useful to the leader and they are only for profit—and they are just stuffing information. The state pays large amounts of money for the organisers of these courses, which is just a lecture.

There is no motivation, no development, and no leadership preparation.

These courses were organized by the private sector or the Civil Service Bureau, which in turn draws up contracts with the private sector, both inside and outside Kuwait.

Fahad argued that leaders should improve the choice of the courses that they plan to attend because sometimes the lecturer has high skills and capabilities, but there is no useful content in the topic of the session.

The weaknesses mentioned by Hamad further confirmed the participants' opinion that the lecturer may be a reason for not benefiting from the session. Sometimes the time spent at the session was wasted, without any new or useful information being provided. Hamad also believed that the courses offered by the MoE were ineffective and played no role in developing their skills. As for external courses that were held in countries outside Kuwait (which participants attended through their personal efforts or through the MoE's support), Hamad stressed that the different cultural environment between Kuwait and other countries where the sessions were held was also a weakness, especially if the

trainee had little experience in supervisory positions. He felt that participants should have access to information relevant to their own educational environment in Kuwait, but the examples presented in these courses used education systems in different countries. Hamad commented that:

While the weakness is the different environments between the Egyptian society and the Kuwaiti one, I was trying to make a kind of adaptation—that is why I faced difficulties to some extent because I did not have enough experience at that time.

Bader believed that the courses were a waste of time, so he refused to attend because they were not the same specialty, despite the fact that he was encouraged to attend these programmes to change the routine of work and take a break from functional tasks. He also felt that the information in these courses was brief and lacked depth because of the short duration of the session:

Not all the lecturers were professional, although some of them had PhDs, but they did not present the information in depth, or sometimes you can feel the gap between the information presented and facts on the ground... The majority of them are not targeting the education field; they are talking in general. Sometimes I really feel that I am intentionally wasting my time.

This was confirmed by most participants, i.e. that those who provide these courses were not specialists in education. As a result, activities were not relevant to the course participants. Perhaps this is because there was no interest or planning to prepare managers for a leadership role in education.

Ali confirmed that the commercial objectives of these courses overwhelmed their goals and influential role in developing their leadership or functional skills. In addition, he

thought these courses were not at the required level because the providers presented information and contexts from outside the educational field or even the government sector. The education system in Kuwait is government-organised and applies the same conditions and mechanisms of work in other sectors of government. Therefore, what is provided through these courses does not benefit the field of education altogether. This was also confirmed by Mona:

When I was a supervisor, I entered the strategic planning course but it was very far from the educational field; that's why I did not benefit from it. I was so bored to the extent that I could not wait till this course ended... Sometimes the course is about leadership, but it is delivered by an academic lecturer who is not knowledgeable about the educational field and who could not apply the theories and situations in those related to this field. These are some of the things that weaken the effectiveness of such courses.

She also identified the timing of the sessions as well as their short durations weaknesses impacting the effectiveness of these courses. For example, most courses were held in the morning, which had a negative impact on the field of education and the level of educational achievement of students. To illustrate this point further, she implied that not only teachers, but also the educational field at large needed to be the leader in charge of the workplace to help manage different matters and solve contingency problems. She suggested that all courses be held in the evening. She did acknowledge that there were those who would object because of family obligations, but she believed that educating future generations was a priority for her, especially if the MoE paid the fees for these courses. As for the duration of the course, she considered that, in a short period, the lecturer cannot present what he/she deems appropriate for the trainee because of time

constraints. According to Mona, it would not be acceptable to shorten the length of a full course.

Some participants referred to this issue previously, when they stated that the short period of time was a weakness of the courses they attended. In these instances, they were referring to courses that lasted approximately five days, although they argued this was not long enough. Most of them preferred to attend over a period of one to two months.

In short, the most important weaknesses from participants' perspective were the lack of correlation between the courses offered and what was happening in the field of education and their inability to apply what they learned from the training programmes to their work for various reasons. For example, the courses focused too much on theory and not practice, which in turn could not be applied because of regulations that limit the possibility of transferring what they had learned to reality. These deficiencies have been classified and summarized as the following six items:

- rules and regulations, leading to limited influence
- no succession planning
- course content often too theoretical or irrelevant
- private sector courses are too business oriented
- externally run courses do not take account of different contexts
- course duration and timing problems

They also reported that the lecturer was one of the weaknesses in the courses they attended, although some participants previously mentioned that lecturers were a powerful and positive factor in taking advantage of the courses. At first glance, this might

suggest a contradiction in participants' views; however, ultimately, they are all agreeing that the lecturer is key player—whether negatively or positively.

#### **5.3.5.4 Suggested Improvements to Enhance Effectiveness of Leaders'**

##### **Preparation**

This section builds on Section 5.2.5.2 by examining how to qualify educational leaders and prepare them for their role to lead in the education system and exploring the process of selecting leaders, from participants' point of view. Some argued that selection might come before qualifications—that is, a person is identified as having leadership qualities from an early stage and is then developed accordingly. However, others believed that selection must come after the qualification process because they believed that those who met the conditions for nomination to a leadership position must be adequately developed so that the person who successfully passes the qualification process is selected.

##### **5.3.5.4.1 Leadership Qualification**

According to Heba, that there was no preparation for leadership, so appointment in leadership positions depended on experience in the post only. She argued that there should be courses for the preparation of educational leaders, offering different options in terms of duration. She added that courses were necessary for leaders because they may have been nominated by another administration whose functions are different or their previous experience may not have been in the MoE.

Sa'ad noted that the qualification of leaders was not an easy process because it needed to include both theoretical and practical aspects. As a result, there should be a practical training plan linked to education, not only a training file which includes a theoretical plan and is provided to the Council of Ministers but then not implemented. Noha also

emphasised the importance of a specialised centre for the preparation of leadership at the state level to offer courses and workshops that simulate the reality of leadership. As she explained:

We need to establish a centre specialised in the preparation of educational and non-educational leaders. The courses are offered in many levels, and no one can apply for the interviews unless they pass a certain level which is determined by the people in charge, and the period of the courses in the centre should at least be for three years.

Despite the existence of a training centre affiliated to the MoE, Noha believed that there should be a specialized centre for educational leaders, and not for all employees of the ministry. She also suggested that candidates (for supervisory positions) should not be interviewed unless he/she had already achieved certain stages in this centre. That means attending many activities at different stages and levels, where participant learns and exercises leadership skills through, for example, providing working paper about education leadership, or solutions to some educational problems etc... Thus he/ she would have qualified (according to her view) to apply for the vacancy through interviews.

In Fahad's view, candidates could attend courses before being appointed to leadership positions. After appointment, they should be assigned a task such as studying an issue or problem and submitting proposals to solve it. If any candidate does not pass that test or the job is not properly completed, he/she should not be installed in the leadership position. He commented:

Training courses play a big role but they represent no less than 50% to a person we want to prepare and who we think is suitable, and the other side of the preparation is to accomplish the task.

He means that attending courses represents only 50% of the required preparation for candidates for supervisory positions. However, the other 50% must be through assigning candidates some tasks to complete. For example, leading a team to achieve specific goals, or writing an essay, discussing one of the educational issues, and explaining his/ her vision and views on this topic.

What Fahad mentioned is, in fact, close to the current system applied to any candidate appointed manager after passing an interview in which he/she presents a draft of ideas or proposals for the development of work.

Hamad argued that it is not advisable to require the candidate to attend a training programme for one or two years to prepare as a leader because, in his view, there should be tasks delegated to the staff before they apply for a higher position and exchanges of experiences with others, which could be considered training for them. Therefore, he stressed that promotion in the same specialisation is important when an employee is nominated for a leadership position.

On the other hand, Bader argued that the training process should be set up in an academic manner including theory and practice so that there is a renewal of the candidate's knowledge when education systems change and develop. They could be provided with educational and administrative developments and thus be prepared academically; they would then be better able to train in a practical way through workshops, dealing with different situations and how to make decisions. After completing

these steps, the appropriate candidate can be appointed to leadership positions whereas those not selected can reapply for the post next time. He noted that:

However, unfortunately, what happens on the ground is that the manager attends training after assigning him; this is called “disorientation”. He may succeed or fail after that. The reason behind the failure of some management, either in the Ministry of Education or in others, is the assignment of managers before attending preparatory courses.

He emphasised that the problems facing the educational field were due to the presence of managers who have not been prepared for their role.

Ali stated that the candidate should attend activities to train educational leaders which include all the skills needed, such as strategic planning, problem solving, and communication skills. Ali assumed that the selection process was based only on the scientific and personal criteria; therefore, he asserted that educational leadership should be developed through leadership qualification programmes. Then he added:

Since we want to qualify a leader, he/she must obtain a diploma in educational leadership for a period of no less than one to two years. Thus, we re-qualify and equip him/her with skills and knowledge so that he/she is fully capable.

He added that there were currently no such programmes to qualify as educational leaders in Kuwait. This is in the sense that there were no programmes to prepare managers for their leadership role before appointment to the post, and that the development activities in-service also did not target the development of leadership capabilities for them.

Meanwhile, Mona commented that a leadership programme should be developed according to a specified time plan, where the necessary leadership skills were developed in a specific chronological order. She stated:

Then I can focus more on the nature and the mechanism of the programmes set for those leaders: are they supposed to have certain characters and leader characteristics? ... have planning and problem-solving skills (i.e., all leaders' characteristics and skills)? After identifying them, I should set a timetable for implementing the programme; for example, at which stage should he/she learn how to set a vision and plan to execute it? Maybe this should happen at the very beginning, or should I start with changing and improving his/her character?

In other words, she proposes to focus on the way leaders' development activities are implemented after setting targets. She added that development programme designers should consider what the appropriate criteria for selecting candidates for these positions are; what qualities they should have; and whether they have leadership skills.

Accordingly, a timetable could be set up to assist candidates with acquiring the required skills, depending on a predetermined arrangement of their training needs.

She added that training programmes were necessary for the head of the department but not for managers because she thought that the manager obtained this position after learning from previous practice and experience and becoming familiar with all the skills needed for the position. However, she also noted that the leader may need to attend some sessions if there are new issues or ideas in education.

All the participants commented on the need to prepare and develop educational leadership and made several suggestions, which are summarised as follows:

- Establish a specialised centre for the preparation of leaders to provide courses and workshops that simulate the reality of leadership
- Prepare them academically and provide them with educational and administrative developments
- Ensure the qualification of leaders includes theoretical and practical aspects
- Provide courses for the professional development of educational leaders to include all the necessary skills and provide different options in terms of duration
- Identify the needs of candidates according to their career level (e.g., school principal, stage supervisor, manager of administration)
- Assign the candidate to perform different tasks, such as studying a problem and making suggestions for solving it

#### **5.3.5.4.2 Leadership Selection**

Some participants mentioned the current process for announcing the selection of managers for departments in the MoE or education districts as well as the conditions required from candidates to participate in evaluation interviews. They also presented their views and criticisms of these conditions as well as their proposals to amend them to help in setting criteria for selecting leaders in a realistic and impartial manner, without the involvement of other parties such as stakeholders (e.g., member of the National Assembly or senior members of the tribe to which the candidate belongs).

According to the managers, the mechanism begins with the announcement of those who wish to run for the vacant post (manager) on the terms of a competence report, experience, training courses attended (without specifying that the course should be in leadership), and proficiency in using computers. If all of these conditions apply, the

candidate will be interviewed and present a 10-minute presentation on any idea to develop or project he/she wishes to implement in the future.

Sa'ad, Bader, Ali, and Noha agreed that the current mechanism should be completely changed, because it depends only on number of years of experience and the extent to which the members of the committee interviewing the candidate know him/her (i.e., personal knowledge or *wasta* [the intervention of influential people to achieve the stakeholders' goals]), without any consideration for the requirement of efficiency, experience, or certificate. They added that there are criteria such as competence, experience, certificate, interview, and courses, but certification and courses are "rubbery" (meaning these criteria may not always be applied).

Sa'ad argued against the candidacy announcement process for leadership positions because he thinks its goal is only to discharge committee members' responsibility rather than choose the best staff. He also did not think that presenting a new idea or project during the interview was a real criterion for choosing the best person because it may have been prepared by others, not the candidate him-/herself.

Bader confirmed that a reference could be held for the candidate who meets the conditions, but then candidates should be tested to measure their technical skills. If they pass this exam, they will be interviewed. However, Ali argued that the reference process does not work because it is may be influenced by people's emotions and feelings, so their evaluation of the candidate is not real or accurate. He recommended the use of a test that measures the candidate's personal aspects as well as technical and leadership skills.

Ali also objected to what currently happens in the interview process, because the interview questions do not always measure the suitability of the candidate. In addition,

he and Bader raised questions about the process of the interview committee when selecting members:

The interview is an attempt to explore one's personality and identify abilities, but I wonder if the committee is qualified to conduct interviews? Do they have certain specifications? ... There have to be criteria for selecting the members of the interviewing committee. One of them should be a specialist in management, another a specialist in technical matters, and the third a specialist in psychology.

(Ali)

Heba and Bader explained that any employee who had been subject to administrative sanctions due to some administrative or functional errors would not be nominated (officials impose administrative penalties on employees when they discover irregularities that may lead to administrative or financial problems; this is considered a deprivation or impediment that results in the person not being nominated for a higher position), but this condition had recently been removed. Thus, staff members may be nominated for leadership positions even if they have administrative or financial penalties. Heba commented that:

This is the wrong decision because this means choosing a person to lead a group of individuals even if he/she has a penalty! How do I feel privileged? When there are two people interviewed and one of them has a penalty and is chosen, it would not be fair for the other person who has no penalties and has achievements but has not been lucky to succeed in the interview.

She explained her view of the decision to allow anyone who had administrative punishment to run for office. This is because whoever breaks the law cannot be a leader.

Which means candidates that have administrative penalties cannot be qualified for supervision (an example for these penalties is receiving notices for excessive unauthorized absences). In this case, if this candidate succeeds in the interview, the other candidates who did not have administrative punishment may feel this is unjust.

Noha suggested that candidates be nominated by their administration because they know the extent of their efficiency. Furthermore, if the general conditions such as experience and specialisation apply to the candidates, they must attend a course that includes a test to measure the skills they possess; if they pass this test, then they will be interviewed. She added that there was a need for specialists in this area to set standards because unfortunately there were no criteria for the selection of leaders.

According to Hamad and Fahad the current criteria were preliminary conditions for the selection of leaders, with an emphasis on the requirement of specialisation and progression in the same field. Mona agreed that the existing standards were good, but only provided that the *wasta* does not intervene in the selection process. She also explained that what actually happens are that the candidates' names are presented to the head of the interview committee, who communicates with candidates' officials and work colleagues to ask about the candidates' personality and how they deal with others. She noted that:

One of the things that we wish were part of the selection process is that the candidate's CV should not be identified by oral conversations, but there must be documentation of the CV from the people who have interacted with the candidate.

She confirmed that the criteria of certificates, experience, absence of previous penalties, and the interview are important. In addition, candidates' curriculum vitae and achievements during their careers should be considered through the selection process:

They currently do not take into consideration achievement of the tasks and do not include them as a standard. Also, they do not include the training courses among the standards ... If the *wasta* does not intervene, then our affairs are generally good. (Mona)

All managers commented that the current criteria should be changed or new ones be added to the selection standards of educational leaders. They considered the conditions of competence, experience, certification, and computer skills to be general or preliminary conditions. Meanwhile, other criteria, such as curriculum vitae, achievements, courses, and interviews, should follow them.

The managers' proposals to develop the process of selecting leaders can be summarised as follows:

- It is necessary to change the current mechanism for the selection of educational leaders by requiring experts to set clear criteria for selection.
- The process of advertising to run for leadership positions should be changed so that the employee is nominated by his/her managers in the same department.
- A candidate who has had legal penalties (administrative, financial, or ...) should not be nominated for a leadership position.
- The experiences of actual and practical candidates in education and their achievements, as well as the opinions of those who work with them, should be considered when evaluating and nominating them for the leadership position.

- Candidates should write their ideas and plans that they intend to apply if awarded the post as a test.
- Interview procedures should be codified and revised, along with the development of criteria for the interview committee selection.
- Controls should be established to evaluate ideas or projects submitted by candidates to ensure that they are the owners of these ideas and the ideas are not derived from others.
- Influential people or stakeholders (*wasta*) should not interfere when choosing leaders.

Most participants stressed the importance of measuring candidates' technical and management skills in administration, especially as this will be required in the manager positions, they occupy. However, there was no focus on the measurement of leadership skills despite their importance for effective leadership. Most also emphasised that *wasta* played the largest role in selecting who was suitable to occupy vacant leadership positions, regardless of the competence or skills of that candidate.

No differences emerged in the respondents' responses regarding the development of educational leadership development programmes or changing the process of selecting leaders that could be attributed to any of participants' demographic factors (see Table 5.18). However, in general, it was surprising that there were no real differences in views between the six permanent managers and two acting managers. In addition, no differences emerged between those working in the MoE versus the EDs, which is surprising as some difference were expected.

## 5.4 Chapter Summary

One of the most significant results obtained from the two phases of the study is that more than half of the respondents had no experience as a teacher and, therefore, did not have experience in teaching processes, curricula, or student issues. In addition, the managers' perceptions of themselves as leaders differed according to their understanding of the concepts of management and leadership as well as according to the leadership skills that they believed they possessed. For example, some emphasised their attendance at several courses that helped them refine and develop their skills, but their focus was not on leadership development courses—mainly because no professional development programmes specifically target leadership development. However, differences did occur between the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of informal learning methods. All participants highlighted the importance of the experience they gained during their work and their various tasks as an informal learning method that helped them develop their leadership skills. Furthermore, most managers agreed that they did not attend any training programmes to prepare them for their role as educational leaders. The MoE programmes to prepare managers as educational leaders did not exist on the ground.

The participants mentioned many disadvantages in the leadership training programmes they attended, such as the lack of correlation between the courses offered, a lack of information on what was happening in the field of education, and their inability to apply what they had learned because of regulations that limit the possibility of transferring what they had learned to reality. As a result, all participants commented on the need to prepare and develop educational leadership, and they made several suggestions, such as establishing a specialised centre for the preparation of leaders, preparing them academically, providing courses for the professional development of educational leaders,

assigning candidates to perform different tasks, identifying the training needs of the leaders, and setting criteria for selecting the right person to prepare as an educational leader.

The following chapter discusses these findings and links them with the literature and theoretical ideas discussed in Chapter 3.

# Chapter 6: Discussion and Analysis of Results

## 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the effectiveness of the current arrangements for managers working in the MoE and EDs to act in a leadership capacity and exercise the necessary leadership skills to achieve educational goals, such as developing future generations capable of assuming responsibility in all its forms and aspects, encouraging individuals to initiate and make decisions themselves, and planning for the future. This chapter analyses the results presented in Chapter 5 and links these results with theoretical literature on the professional development of educational leadership as well as with both the contingency theory and social learning theory adopted in this study. In this way, this chapters seeks to answer the main research question: To what extent are the leadership preparation and ongoing professional development of the education ministry and district managers effective in Kuwait? To this end, it will address the following five sub-research questions:

**RSQ1:** To what extent do the MoE and ED managers perceive themselves as managers who exercise leadership in the education system?

**RSQ2:** To what extent have the MoE and ED managers engaged in leadership development activities (whilst in post)?

**RSQ3:** To what extent have past and current experiences been helpful in developing the expertise of MoE and ED managers?

**RSQ4:** How effective has the training been for MoE and ED managers (before being appointed) for their leadership role?

**RSQ5:** How do MoE and ED managers think their leadership preparation might be improved?

Section 6.2 examines the difficult issues related to managers' understanding of the differences between leadership and management. A Provisional Model of Managers' Formal Learning Processes is provided in section 6.3. Section 6.4 discusses the extent to which managers have been involved in formal and informal professional development activities. Section 6.5 covers the importance of previous experiences related to work in education and their role in the development of managers' leadership skills. Section 6.6 explores the development of leadership skills prior to appointment as managers through relevant preparation and training programmes. Finally, Section 6.7 presents managers' views to improve the process of preparing educational leadership through the qualification processes and by setting criteria for the selection of educational leaders.

## **6.2 Managers' Perception of Themselves as Managers and Leaders**

This section analyses the findings related to RSQ1: To what extent do MoE and EDs managers perceive themselves as managers and leaders in the education system?

### **6.2.1 Managers' Conceptual Understanding of Management and Leadership**

The quantitative results were compatible with the qualitative findings, showing that most participants were able to define the concept of management more accurately than the leadership term. Perhaps this is due to their role as managers and their long experience in administrative work, where they formed this understanding in line with their managerial functions.

On the other hand, those who were able to correctly define the leadership term (less than half) may have been able to do so because of their attendance at courses focused on

management, where the topic of leadership was discussed in a transient and superficial way without going into educational leadership as an important and independent theme (see Section 6.3.3 for more details about the effectiveness of training programmes). Thus, they formed an understanding of this concept even if they were not consciously aware of it (as explained in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, and 6.2.4). In addition, some managers could not distinguish between these two concepts, perhaps because they did not attend any specialised courses on leadership. They believed that performing administrative tasks effectively and achieving goals meant they were leaders. This is contrary to many authors' views (e.g., Ayub et al., 2014; Bush & Glover, 2003) of defining leadership as influencing others' attitudes. In addition, the term leadership assumes that it includes a process of social influence on persons in a group or organisation to guide, organise, and facilitate relationships and conduct various activities (Yukl, 2013), not only achieve goals. Therefore, clearly these are terms (especially in the case of leadership) with known ambiguity and no fully agreed-upon international definition.

Indeed, the results herein are consistent with existing studies which found that these two terms may cause confusion when trying to distinguish between them, despite their differences. Bush (2011) argued that the term management could overlap the term leadership because management is related to the implementation of operations and technical functions whereas leadership is related to the driving purpose and values of the organisation (Bush, 1998).

Bureaucratic organisations are characterised by three features: a formal hierarchical structure, a division of labour, and control through a set of general formal rules (Jain, 2004). As bureaucracy may not very effective (Gajduschek, 2003), managers would not necessarily have the opportunity to exercise leadership in their roles; indeed, most of

them indicated that they apply the administrative decisions issued by the higher authorities (Hassan, 2008), which confirms that the education system in Kuwait is very central, as pointed out by Alkandari (2013). This may be the reason for participants' increased confusion and their inability to determine a clear and different meaning for both concepts. In rapidly changing environments, rules, regulations, and work procedures might become outdated and irrelevant. In addition, they may become barriers or excuses that managers use to justify their incorrect decisions (Carnall & By, 2014).

### **6.2.2 Skills Required to be an Effective Leader**

The quantitative results indicate that most participants believe that the leadership role requires special skills to enable them to succeed as leaders, and they were able to identify some leadership skills they believed they possessed. Although there is a lack of evidence, NIE (2013) indicated that school principals' leadership skills were weak, which is hardly surprising if headteachers' leadership skills were also weak, as were some managers' leadership skills. Some managers were headteachers, so what would change if they were appointed in the MoE districts and their skills were still weak? It is also in contrast to earlier findings from Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi's (2008) study, which examined and identified the training needs of educational leaders in Kuwait. They identified major training needs in leadership skills (e.g., educational policies, strategic, and decision-making processes). However, identifying some skills does not mean managers already possess them; as a result, they may think that those skills are traits of leadership rather than managerial skills.

Getting a job as a manager and exercising management authority do not mean that managers are exercising leadership. Many factors, such as influence, patterns of interaction, behaviours, and relationships as well as administrative position, are

considered (Yukl, 2013), as most participants stressed—namely, that leadership needs special skills such as how to deal with others and influence them. Yet in a broader sense, what was their concept of leadership?

Some confusion emerged among respondents between leadership skills on the one hand and management on the other. In this sense, participants produced no accurate and comprehensive definition of leadership. This confusion may explain why managers believed they had leadership skills even though, in fact, they had management skills.

### **6.2.3 Importance of Working with Other People**

The survey and interview data indicated that most participants stressed the importance of working with others, such as their former managers or colleagues, because they gained different experiences and developed their leadership skills. Although some stressed that working with those with experience and educational specialisation was more effective, others emphasised that working with others at different levels and disciplines had a better impact for developing their leadership skills. Indeed, Chao et al. (1994) found that socialisation (how people treat each other, not necessarily how they perform the tasks) is often the main way by which newcomers adjust to new functions or roles within the organisation because organisational culture is transmitted through behavioural norms and expectations (Glisson, 2015). If the leaders care about and are interested in others, the organisational culture is shaped by similar values (Stolp, 1994).

The participants also stated that the most important skills they have learned from others were decision making and problem solving. However, Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008) concluded otherwise, finding a high degree of need for both these skills. In addition, Al-Duaij's (1994) study did not agree with this result, noting that there was a high degree of

need for decision-making skills. This is perhaps because these skills are almost daily tasks that the managers perform and, as a result, they had to consult with those who were more experienced, such as previous leaders or perhaps higher levels of leadership, before making any decisions or developing proposed solutions to problems that they faced. Managers often consult with staff, peers, or chairpersons about important decisions (Wildy et al., 2004; Yukl, 2013). Consequently, they feel that they have these skills and they have become a part of their professional identity, especially through practical and actual application, thereby enhancing their perception of themselves as leaders. Once the identity of the leader is absorbed, it becomes a feature of the person, according to Osteen, Komives, Mainella, Owen, and Longerbeam (2005) and DeRue, Ashford, and Cotton (2009).

The process of participation in the implementation of vision and influencing others may be considered one of the most important leadership attributes. Indeed, almost a quarter of the sample considered it to be the most important skill they learned from others, which means the majority may have learned these two skills through formal learning methods, such as training programmes or presentations, rather than working with others (see Section 6.3.1). However, if they did not have these skills because they were not learnt through former managers or colleagues at work or even through those who worked with them as foreign and international work teams (as most of them pointed out), it could mean that former managers or their current colleagues did not have the skills to transfer to existing managers (if that is the way managers develop their skills). There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the impact of training is generally low (Kupritz, 2002). Or perhaps they did not look at their former managers as role models, maybe because of poor relationships with them or those managers' lack of leadership

skills. Modelling is considered a vital technique for social learning theory and is used as a basis for learning (Latham & Saari, 1979). This may be due to the fact that working with others in any organisation is undoubtedly influenced by the dominant culture in it. An organisation's culture is composed of the values and beliefs of employees and managers who contribute to the formation of this institutional culture through the values in which they believe in the work environment (Shamsuddin, 2006).

These values, beliefs, and skills are transferred from leaders to others who work with them. However, perhaps because this process is complex, a leader's ability to change and transform this culture may be limited (Bell & Kent, 2010). As a result, the majority of participants believed they had not learned these skills from others. Al-Kazemi and Ali (2002) confirmed that the main administrative problems in Kuwaiti institutions are due to employees' cultural traditions, customs, and practices.

Furthermore, being involved in international training activities, as some have pointed out, did not lead to developing these skills; perhaps because the time periods for teams and committees are limited and generally end after achieving their goals. The participants then return to their normal daily jobs as managers and apply whatever instructions come from senior leaders, without having the opportunity to apply what they learned from their participation in this international training experience. Santos and Stuart (2003) argued that the main reason for the low transfer of training is the lack of time due to the fast pace of working environments; thus, managers usually quickly return to old patterns and habits. A supportive environment promotes behaviour that seeks change and helps encourage and implement new ideas (Love & Dustin, 2014).

Perhaps the centralised decision-making system in Kuwait is one of the reasons most managers are unable learn some of the necessary leadership skills when working with

others. This is despite many attempts to decentralise, as confirmed by Hassan (2008) and Winokur (2014), who argued that the reappraisal of the application process faced many obstacles, such as the limited authority given to districts and ministry department managers as well as negative interference in some of their decisions. As such, managers were not fully independent or able to perform their roles and exercise leadership according to their perceptions and plans. The managers work in a centralised system, so they have to follow the rules and regulations; thus, they may not be able to make changes because leadership is a process of change. In addition, the situation surrounding the transfer of training in the work environment may affect the benefits received from training (Gilpin-Jackson & Bushe, 2007). Regardless of the reasons for not learning these skills, the indication is that most participants do not have the ability to develop and implement a vision or influence others, despite the importance of these skills for leaders.

The leaders should have the skills to develop a vision and work on its implementation by involving all components of organisational management (such as management staff, heads of department, school managers; e.g., Bush & Middlewood, 2013; Ndalamba et al., 2018). Most leadership studies, such as Yukl (2013), Bush and Middlewood (2013), and Bush (2008), have confirmed that influence is one of the most important qualities of leadership, meaning that those who cannot significantly influence others may not be very effective. Some of the interviewees, such as Sa'ad, Hamad, and Noha, confirmed this as well when they claimed they were leaders because they had a positive impact on those who deal with them.

#### **6.2.4 Difficulties and Challenges Faced when Doing the Job as Managers**

Most participants emphasised that they faced challenges to perform their role as leaders because they were forced to spend time on administrative work to accomplish tasks.

Perhaps this was because the education system in Kuwait adheres to a traditional form of public management that is consistent with steady and predictable conditions in a relatively stable environment; therefore, it was not ready to face new challenges in a rapidly changing world (Katsamunskaja, 2012). They also do not have the freedom to do what they deem appropriate and there is no support from senior leaders. There is a lack of specialised educational leaders (as one participant pointed out) to provide them with appropriate advice and understand the needs of educational departments in the ministry or districts and even schools. This situation underscores the existence of centralisation and its negative impact on the managers, limiting their ability to exercise their leadership role. Alkandari (2013) argued that a centralised system does not allow managers to collaborate on, for example, decision-making. Yet how can managers have a vision, goals, and plans and achieve them if they do not have the appropriate decision-making powers?

The presence of challenges is common while doing tasks or dealing with different individuals, but it is unusual that most participants agreed that this limits their ability to work as leaders because they are preoccupied with administrative tasks. Managerialism (as discussed in Chapter 3) reduces an organisation's effectiveness because over-management has a negative effect on educational objectives (Bush, 2011; Bush & Glover, 2014; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005).

The bureaucratic structure may be suitable for a stable and simple environment, but in a complex and changing environment, the structure should be more flexible and innovative. Inflexible procedures produce frustrating conditions and reduce managers' ability to innovate (Carnall & By, 2014).

### **6.2.5 Managers' Perceptions of Themselves as Leaders**

Although most respondents saw themselves as leaders who possessed the leadership skills that qualify them to succeed in their role, some stressed that they need to be developed and refined through specialised training courses. In addition, some saw themselves as managers even though they had leadership qualities because they were probably acting primarily as managers. In other words, the working environment or rules and regulations in which managers operate have forced them to see themselves as managers. According to Alvesson and Willmott (2002), identity consists of three concepts that interact with each other: self-identity, or how individuals see themselves (Giddens, 1991); identity work, or the active building of a self-identity; and identity regulation, or the reaction to organisational and social processes (Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).

These concepts are related to each other, or perhaps the identity of work and regulations complement or impact in one way or another upon the self-identity of the leader. Some managers saw themselves as leaders because they thought they have some leadership skills. However, this could be down to the impact of the identity of work and identity regulation on the formation of self-identity. In other words, these managers have accepted these positions because they thought they have acquired the skills needed for this position—mostly managerial and technical skills (identity of work). This may be the result of their professional experience and their attempt to implement instructions and orders in a highly centralised system, which in turn may have influenced their identity as managers or leaders (self-identity), because the system may have given them some authority and, sometimes, the freedom to make decisions.

Participants' perceptions of themselves were based on several factors, as previously mentioned. Accordingly, if the majority could not distinguish between management and

leadership terms, they did not learn how to implement and develop vision or have the skills to influence others—or they did not consider it important to learn these from others. Therefore, if most of them are indeed facing challenges while performing their roles and need help to overcome them, how could they be capable of leading the education system? Identity is based on an individual's previous experiences, which are considered to have a subjective meaning and offer answers to questions such as “who am I?”, “what do I stand for?”, and “how should I do this?” (Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).

Some individuals may consider themselves not to have the qualities of a leader or may be in a leadership-like position, but in the social contexts in which they work, they may be expected to be leaders. This collective support may come from senior managers or from the wider social context (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). In addition, Fiedler's (1978) theory confirms that the most significant determinant of the team task and their performance is the relationship between leaders and their group; if there is a relationship of appreciation by the staff to their leader, it encourages trust and loyalty among them as well as for the organisation (Wong-Mingji, 2013).

It is essential that managers be provided with the necessary skills to become leaders by taking into consideration many factors related to identity, contexts, and attitudes associated with leaders (Day et al., 2012), as well as the internal and external environment of the educational organisation. Furthermore, managers should also have the ability to understand attitudes and to choose appropriate leadership styles in a turbulent environment. Educational contexts are complex, so one leadership approach cannot be defined in all situations. Indeed, situational theory states that some restrictions or demands can change the position of the leader (e.g., Bush & Glover, 2014; Yukl, 2013). However, there is a correlation between the pattern of leadership and contingency

variables which is positively linked with the effectiveness of leadership and organisation performance (Wong-Mingji, 2013). In addition, “each individual constructs his or her own version of reality but is influenced in determining this construction by the culture and context within which he or she resides” (Northfield, 2011, p. 36).

However, does contingency theory address the gap between the manager’s ability to choose the most appropriate approach to changing the structure of the task, such as dealing with developments (based on his/her own perception as a leader or manager and in the absence of accountability), and what is actually appropriate? This theory sometimes indicates a great degree of managers’ choice about how to structure their institutions, with no consequences if the outcomes are unsatisfactory (Carnall & By, 2014).

### **6.3 A Provisional Model of Managers’ Formal Learning Processes**

Figure 6.1 provides a provisional model of formal learning processes to explain how to prepare and develop educational leadership in Kuwait from managers’ perceptions. It shows the body responsible for providing professional development programmes for leadership (i.e., the MoE), which in turn relies on the Civil Service Commission and the private sector to design training programmes, although these are often not aimed specifically at developing leadership in education. The MoE offers these programmes to managers who work in the ministry, districts, and schools without any regard for the different training needs or contexts in which these managers operate (see Sections 6.4.2.1 and 6.6.1). It is also responsible for determining conditions for the selection of candidates who may be qualified but not in this field of education.

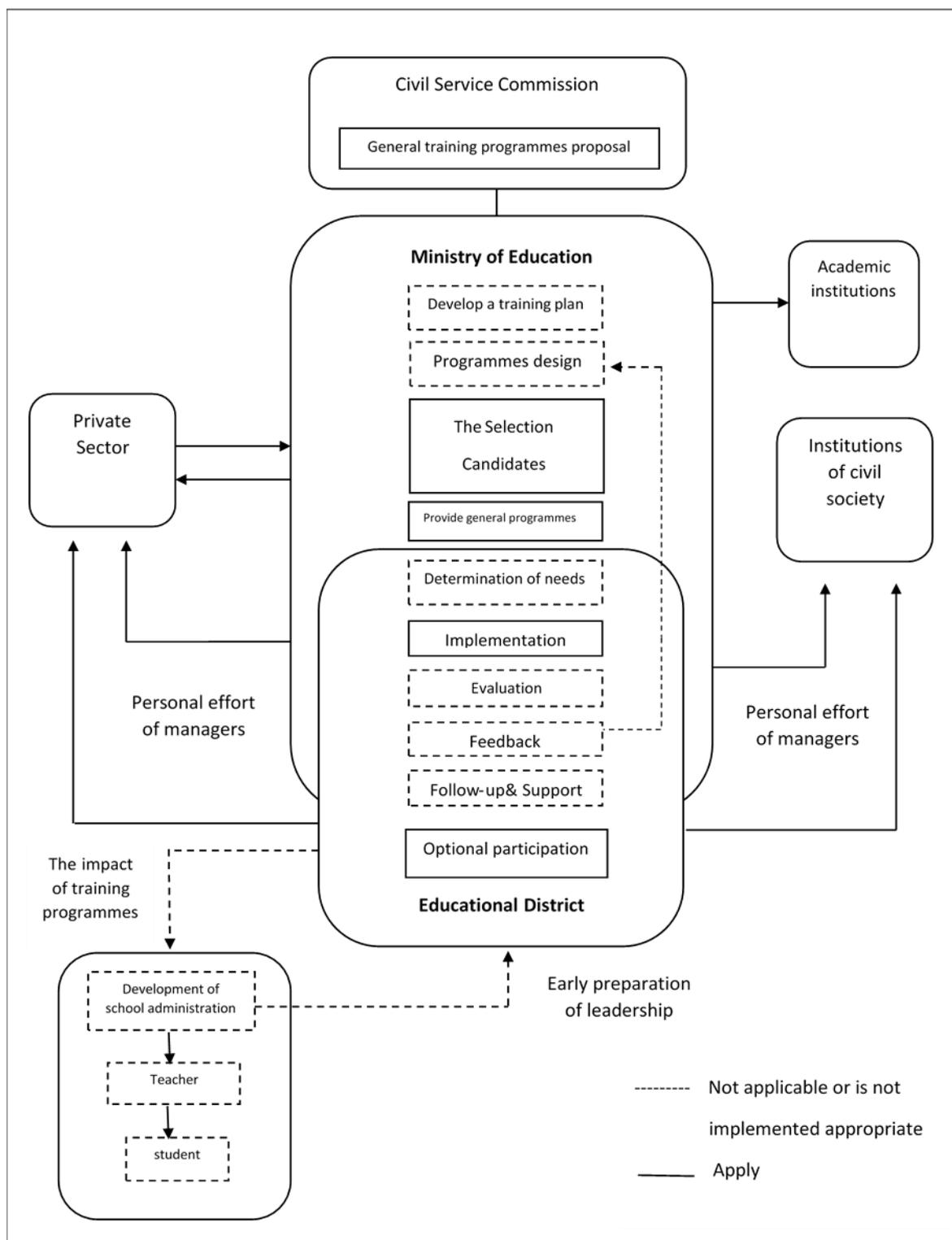


Figure 6.1. Provisional model of formal learning processes to prepare and develop educational leadership in Kuwait, from managers' perceptions.

The findings confirmed that there was no meaningful leadership development plan and the programmes offered did not meet the managers' needs because they were not

specifically designed for them. The MoE and ED share the implementation, support, and evaluation that may not exist in reality. Participation was optional as the courses did not actually fall within the criteria required for the manager position (see Section 6.7.2). Nevertheless, some managers seek activities that meet their needs in institutions of civil society or the private sector, which may also not be designed for leadership in the education sector (see Section 6.4.2.2).

The training could impact on schools through the ministry's supervision of the districts, which in turn oversees schools. As there were no leadership development programmes for these managers, there was no development directed at school administrators, despite the preparation for leadership starting in school (for some managers); here they continue to improve their leadership skills through moving to ED to be managers with leadership skills when they get a position in senior management.

## **6.4 Engagement in Formal and Informal Professional Development**

This section addresses the findings related to RSQ2: To what extent have the MoE and ED managers engaged in leadership development activities (whilst in post)? The discussion focuses on four sections: formal activities carried out by managers to develop their skills; professional development in-service programmes, which includes programmes provided by the MoE and PS; the impact of professional development programmes; and informal learning activities.

### **6.4.1 Formal Activities**

The results indicated that most participants attended several training courses during their careers to develop their skills as managers, supervisors, or even department heads. The majority of survey respondents agreed that the activities were designed for their needs

and helped them prepare and develop their leadership skills (see Section 5.2.3). These results differ from indirect evidence coming from NIE (2013) (see Section 6.4.2), which indicated that training programmes for school leaders were inadequate and ineffective. Also, these were contrary to the results of Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008). However, they are broadly consistent with Amro and Awawda's (2016) results that training programmes for educational leaders in Jordan during service were highly effective.

As explained in Section 6.2.1, the majority of participants could not distinguish between management and leadership, which means that they could not define their identity in terms of whether they are managers or leaders. Therefore, in the future, they would not be able to identify their training needs (Figure 6.1) to exercise leadership because identity is the basis for individuals to understand their needs, strengths, and personal challenges (Day et al., 2012). In this sense, managers may think that these activities meet their leadership needs whereas, in reality, they are programmes that develop the managerial and technical skills of their respective tasks according to specialisation, rather than leadership skills. Indeed, some participants (e.g., Fahad) mentioned this during the interviews. According to Bandura's (1977) theory, desired performance may not always be achieved if the person lacks the necessary skills. If some managers could not identify their role (i.e., leader or manager), their expected needs may be inaccurate.

Furthermore, there is some debate about the actual effectiveness of the activities that the managers are aware of. For example, self-directed study is an educational process aimed at the self (i.e., who they are and how they decide what is important to them), but the self is influenced by societal and cultural factors and values, beliefs, and individual needs (Garrison, 1997; Merriam, 2001; Song & Hill, 2007). This will undoubtedly affect managers' understanding of their skills and how they choose appropriate learning

methods to develop these skills and their sources (Day et al., 2012), which in turn affects their judgement of the effectiveness of these programmes. This was indicated in Figure 6.1, which illustrates personal effort of managers to develop their leadership skills according to their view of their training needs.

However, even if it is assumed that these participants have the necessary professional expertise and capabilities to identify their needs and to successfully meet and develop them, most did not realise that the administrative professional skills of the manager are quite different from the skills needed by those exercising leadership. Therefore, it could legitimately be asked whether it would be possible to judge the effectiveness of these programmes in developing their leadership skills, even if they had already developed managerial skills.

In addition, although attending seminars or presentations was a popular choice for managers (Table 5.10), they got a low rating as the two most effective activities in developing leadership skills (Table 5.11). This may indicate that these programmes were not related to leadership skills and did not meet the needs of these managers. This is because the courses offered by the MoE are general programmes that have no relation to the educational field (see Figure 6.1). They attended them for many reasons—not only for the development of leadership skills, but also to get out of the normal work routine or meet colleagues to exchange ideas and experiences. In addition, the attendance of such activities is documented in the manager's record or curriculum vitae, regardless of the quality of learning as a result of participating in such activity (Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

The data obtained from the interviews contradicted the results of the questionnaires because the majority of interview participants mentioned that seminars and presentations did not meet their needs or benefit them in developing their leadership

skills. Because interviews are ideal for following up on initial questionnaire responses to gain additional information, they can further clarify or shed light on specific issues (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Conversations between participants and the researcher can provide a more detailed explanation and interpretation of some points. The interview participants realised the differences between managerial and leadership skills and, consequently, their responses became more specific. Accordingly, they did not feel that these activities had developed their leadership skills, although they may have had an impact on the development of management skills. This is in line with the study conducted by the Advisory Group of the National Institute of Education in Singapore (NIE, 2013), which suggested that most believed that leadership training programmes in the education system in Kuwait are of low-quality.

## **6.4.2 Professional Development In-Service Programmes**

### **6.4.2.1 Programmes Provided by the Ministry of Education (PPMoE)**

Although the majority of survey respondents agreed that there were professional development programmes provided by the ministry that met their needs to develop their leadership skills, almost all the interview participants reported that there were no professional development activities designed to develop their leadership skills. This difference is due to the inability of most survey respondents to distinguish between professional development programmes aimed at developing their ability as managers and job skills in general, on the one hand, and those to develop their leadership skills on the other. They therefore believed that any professional development activities could be considered leadership development courses.

During the interviews, the researcher drew managers' attention to the fact that the intended programmes were to develop educational leadership skills. Some participants (such as Sa'ad and Mona) stressed that there were no activities aimed at developing leadership skills, but only courses that were not related and did not meet their needs. The interviewees realised that leadership development was intended, and most of them emphasised the programmes' lack of effectiveness because they did not meet their needs to exercise leadership; this probably confirms that there were no professional development programmes for leadership. This finding concurs with the studies of NIE (2013) (indirect evidence) and Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008), who concluded that these programmes did not take into account trainees' needs when determining their content.

The MoE has sought to develop its staff (UNESCO, 2011), including managers, who have attended professional development programmes since the early years of their appointment. However, according to the participants, these were not relevant to their role as leaders. Perhaps this indicated that the MoE did not perceive the need for managers to show leadership skills, but rather only act as effective managers. The MoE may have also provided some activities to managers by enlisting private sector companies to deliver them (i.e., organise, prepare lectures, and determine the programme content and goals). Perhaps the MoE believes in the importance of introducing private sector management techniques to the public sector, especially with the emergence of NPM, which stresses the importance of neoliberal and managerial theories to make the public sector more efficient by restructuring and reorganising the state through privatisation and marketisation (Bevir, 2009).

However, these companies did not specialise in educational leadership; their programmes targeted private sector leaders and public sector leaders, and they tended to focus more

on managerial development than leadership development (for further details, see Section 6.4.2.2). As a result, managers did not feel that these were effective because most of them were irrelevant to the education field and lacked specialist lecturers with the necessary educational experience.

#### **6.4.2.2 Programmes Provided by the Private Sector (PPPS)**

Although half of the survey respondents agreed that there were PPPS, most argued they did not meet their needs. However, regarding the PPMoE, the majority agreed that they were meeting their needs. During the interviews, the majority of managers agreed that they had participated in PPPS which had perhaps helped them develop some leadership skills, even though they were not directed at educational leaders. However, most did not agree that the PPMoE had met their needs to develop leadership skills.

This difference in responses stems from many reasons. Most questionnaire participants attended PPMoE because their activities were held during official working hours and the MoE bore the cost of fees. Regarding PPPS, perhaps the negative feedback was in part because participants were forced to pay for them (and they are often expensive), and they are held in the evenings, which managers normally consider as non-working time. As a result, respondents thought the programmes did not meet their needs. There is also the confusing the distinction between programmes designed to develop leadership and management skills, which led the majority to believe that there were PPMoE to develop their leadership skills. In addition, some of them claimed not to not know about PS programmes because they did not seek to attend them, even though it is generally accepted that managers should strive to develop their skills rather than relying on the MoE (Attard, 2017). They might not trust PPPS due to the private sector in Kuwait being small, undeveloped, and multiracial, as it is heavily dependent on expatriate labour

(Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 1995). Finally, they might have believed that they already had these skills (see Section 5.3.2).

The interview respondents' answers might have been more accurate and specific than the questionnaire responses because, during the interview, the difference between management and leadership concepts became clearer for them. They reported that attending PPS may have helped them develop some of their leadership skills. Perhaps this is because they understood their training needs and sought to develop them through the PS because they were not available (from their point of view) through the MoE. As for the effectiveness of PPS, some perceived them as good, effective, and better than the PPMoE. This may be logical because those attending PS programmes paid the cost, in either money or time (or both). It could be deduced that the managers would not have paid this cost if they were not sure that these programmes would meet their needs (at least according to their expectations). Lapsley (2009) argued that NPM is an influential set of management techniques based on the standards and practices of PS performance. It confirms value for money (Jary & Jary, 2005), which means paying money for good services. Managers tried to choose effective programmes that met their needs through the PS and paid for this service. In addition, some understood the courses were about leadership but not specialising in education, but they still sought to attend, in part due to the absence of MoE activities to meet their training needs as educational leaders.

It should be noted that gender differences emerged regarding attendance of professional development programmes. More women attended MoE courses than PS sessions, perhaps because of their family obligations. As previously mentioned, PS activities are often held in the evening, which is usually when women are committed to their children and homework. Therefore, it can be difficult for them to leave the house for a whole day.

Consequently, they prefer to attend the MoE sessions, which are often held in the morning.

Male managers were more involved in PS programmes than MoE ones, despite their family commitments. However, in Kuwaiti society, their role is not considered the same as the wife or mother; men depend on their wives to run the house and care for the children, while men are often outside the home to do some tasks or maybe spend time with friends at Diwaniyah (a place reserved in most big Kuwaiti houses to gather men from families, tribes, and friendship circles). Therefore, male managers do not perceive evening training programmes as possibly affecting their family obligations.

#### **6.4.3 Impact of Professional Development Programmes**

In general, the participants preferred PPPS because they chose activities which they believed met their needs (at least according to their expectations)—that is, both managerial and leadership skills—although the overall goal of these programmes may have been financial gain for course organisers. Therefore, this may be a reason to provide informative content and lecturers with leadership experience in order to attract managers or employees to attend these courses. This was particularly important when managers sought to attend the PPPS on their own, because they were the ones who paid for them.

In addition, the MoE offers courses in agreement and conjunction with the PS; the MoE pay for these courses. Kuwait, as an active member of UNESCO, has sought to achieve its educational goals for achieving sustainable human development by increasing its proportion of spending on education and encouraging private sector participation and investment in education (MOE, 2014). However, participants considered these activities

as neither useful nor influential. Although they were intended to develop only administrative and technical skills, rather than leadership skills, as Fahad and Ali pointed out, those organising and delivering the programmes (PS) were not specialists in education and, as a result, the lecturers often did not have training skills at the required level. The civil service has adapted to working with the private sector in order to provide efficiency and greater efficacy of delivery (Marobela, 2008). However, these processes lead to many questions being asked about the efficiency and effectiveness of these operations, such as the extent of their contribution to improving management, use of resources, degree of accountability required to organise the learning processes, and the extent to which to accept education as a commodity to be bought and sold on the market (Balarin, 2014).

Surprisingly there is a contradiction between the responses of participants regarding the effectiveness and impact of PPPS. In the first case, the participants chose the subject, lecturer, and institution or organisation which will provide training programmes because they would pay. However, in the second case (when the MoE pays the cost), achieving personal interests (or financial gain for some participants) was prioritised, rather than checking the efficiency or effectiveness of the institution providing these programmes. Furthermore, because there is no clear and deliberate plan from the ministry to train educational leaders, the required competencies, instructor skills, and course content and objectives could not be properly determined. Therefore, these courses had no impact on the managers' leadership skills.

As for the PPMoE, the majority of participants indicated a lack of effectiveness or impact on their leadership skills. Indeed, Earley et al. (2012) argued that a large sample thought that none of the continuing professional development programmes were very useful for

middle/senior leaders, perhaps due to the fact that there were no courses dedicated to a training plan for leadership development. However, the MoE does offer external courses to managers in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission (CSC). In this case, most of the interviewees believed that these sessions were useful and influential, even though they were not always relevant to education. This may be attributed to the different learning experiences of people from other countries (not necessarily related to their role), which led them to believe that this had developed their leadership skills.

Despite their belief in the programmes' effectiveness, some participants felt that many factors may have had a negative impact on them. These factors could be classified as internal and external. The internal factors are the result of *wasta* (similar to nepotism in English) and may have affected the integrity of the processes of selecting those who participate in these sessions (i.e., those who did not need the course or did not have the goal to develop their skills are selected). In addition, they may not be prepared for the teaching methods used (Jones, 2009).

As for the external factors, the differences among societal cultures should be considered. Is it possible to adapt what is being learned in other countries, whether Arab or foreign, with the nature of Kuwaiti society? Slater et al. (2018) confirmed that formal development programmes for both developed and developing countries should not be standardised in all countries. Although all nations are undergoing globalisation, Appadurai (2000) argued that it is certainly a source of concern for many people. As a key part of Kuwaiti society is personal privacy, the failure to take this into account when planning external courses will certainly have a negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the development of educational leadership.

#### **6.4.4 Informal Learning Activities**

The majority of participants agreed that informal learning methods had a more effective role than formal learning methods. That is consistent with many studies on the same topic (e.g., DeRue & Wellman, 2009; McCall, 2004). The majority of the survey respondents confirmed that personal experience was one of the best methods of learning that they experienced during their assignments, followed by discussions with colleagues and reading books and studies. This finding was also confirmed during the interviews.

Clearly some informal learning methods overlap with each other and may be a result of participation in formal or informal learning processes. In this sense, learning from personal experience resulted in managers accomplishing some tasks, whether effective or otherwise, thereby leading to the acquisition of personal experience, where each individual could learn how to accomplish tasks correctly and learn through the process of reflection—namely, what happened to extract knowledge and procedures to develop their practice. Schön (1983) confirmed that reflection is built on past experiences and leads to the development of good practice. It also helps identify personal strengths and improve professional competence (Sellars, 2017). In addition, it helps managers think about their experiences of themselves and with others in the workplace (Miller, 2005).

Informal learning may mean learning from trial and error. For example, Hamad indicated that he always tried to change and develop his performance to overcome the mistakes of previous positions. Thus, although participants attempted to identify specific methods as the most effective for them, in general, informal learning methods were more influential than formal learning programmes. Informal learning sometimes taking place without planning but according to specific situations, thereby becoming more realistic and linked to managers' tasks. In addition, perhaps through trial and error, employees needed to

consult those who were more experienced when dealing with problems, which in turn helped them to build on their experiences. This was confirmed by most participants, including Fahad, Bader, and Mona.

Interestingly, the majority of survey participants believed that the experiences of others were not useful and had no impact on the development of their skills. Perhaps this was because those who dealt with them, such as former managers, did not have the ability to direct or train them (Earley, 2013; Hobson, 2003), whereas the majority of interview respondents confirmed that they had learned from their former directors, religious figures such as the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him), or characters and media programmes (Sa'ad and Hamad). Thus, learning occurred through the observation of eminent or notable people (Ibarra, 1999; Kempster, 2009; Kempster & Parry, 2014). The social learning theory is concerned with understanding types of learning that depend on the observation of human behaviour rather than on direct intervention, which might sometimes indicate imitation, observational learning, or modelling (Bandura, 1977; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011).

This difference may be due to the fact that the interview participants had more opportunity to talk about their experiences, ideas, and beliefs, which helped expand on their ideas and experiences, such as how they were influenced or taught by specific and prominent personalities or even by their former managers. However, some questionnaire respondents may have seen that other methods were more effective for their learning, and therefore learning from others was not significant for them (Kempster, 2006). In other words, they may have learned something without realising that the learning process had taken place, as what was stored in the mind was not activated until they experienced the same condition again and then recalled this experience (Handley et al.,

2007; McCall, 2004). Furthermore, as everyone has to deal with different personalities, managers, and colleagues, how can they not be affected or learn of those around them (Attard, 2017; Lave & Wenger, 1991)?

Informal learning may also have occurred because of mistakes made by a former manager; therefore, the current manager should learn how to avoid them in the future (Ali). Indeed, social learning theory says that observations help people compare their behaviours with others and then make value judgements (Roedelein, 2006). Alternatively learning may come from lived experiences, which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

## **6.5 Importance of Previous and Relevant Experiences of Working in Education**

This section addresses the findings related to RSQ3: To what extent have past and current experiences been helpful in developing the expertise of MoE and ED managers? It includes a discussion of the managers' perceptions of the importance of their previous employment experience. The interview and survey participants agreed that previous experience played a significant role in their success as managers and educational leaders, concurring with results from Kempster (2006), McCall (2004) and DeRue and Wellman (2009).

The majority also strongly agreed that they had the authority to exercise their role and that they had an influence on others, which enabled them to lead successfully because their experiences had helped them. This outcome contradicts the findings of Winokur, (2014), Alkandari (2013), and Hassan (2008), who found that the education system in Kuwait is heavily centralised and, therefore, the MoE is the ultimate decision maker. As a

result, managers do not have the freedom to make decisions and exercise power properly. For example, there may be some situations in which managers feel that they have some authority or that they can make some decisions, but according to Wildy et al. (2004), managers can find it difficult to make decisions due to a number of factors, such as being accountable to higher educational authorities. This result also differs from the findings presented in Al-Duaij's (1994) study, which concluded that there were relatively poor performances in some leadership functions of ED managers, such as decision-making ability.

On the other hand, this result agrees with the sample's responses in Sections 5.2.2.2 and 5.3.2.2, which indicate that they believed they had leadership skills. This discrepancy may be due to their thinking that, throughout their years in supervisory positions (see Tables 5.2 and 5.18), their performance of administrative work had become easier and more flexible. In addition, it could be because they had learned from their mistakes or from others, whether their former managers or those with whom they dealt.

In addition, the results showed that most respondents believed that their relationship remained unchanged with others after they became managers, suggesting that they may not fully understand the nature of the relationship between managers and employees. Perhaps their responses could be attributed to their belief that, if leaders exercised their real roles in leadership, others might perceive them as authoritarian. Although this may be true, the relationship between managers and staff might differ in one way or another due to factors such as influence, motivation, and the responsibilities borne by leaders. They might also possess leadership skills that distinguish them from others (Ayub et al., 2014; OECD, 2001; Yukl, 2013). However, because most participants may not have

understood the nature of this relationship, they believed that, if it changed, it would be a negative indicator of their success in their leadership roles.

Several interviewees pointed to the importance of expertise in specialisation in the same field. In other words, functional experience in general is necessary, but experience in specialisation and career progression in the same field had a greater impact on the success of managers in their leadership role according to Sa'ad and Hamad. Although Hamad was not a qualified teacher, his constant presence at school and his contact with students and their parents helped him develop his leadership abilities through his experience of dealing with some issues in schools. Similarly, DeRue and Wellman (2009) emphasised that leadership learning encompasses the profession, learning orientation, and context to support the development of leaders through experience.

Fahad also confirmed the role of experience in the same specialisation, although his experience was outside the MoE before becoming a head of department in one ED. He believed that it had a positive impact on his leadership role; for example, he was aware of matters related to administration. Fahad's perception may perhaps be influenced as a result of his previous experiences working with military leaders during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (1990) before moving to the MoE. At that time, these circumstances were characterised by rapid changes, speed of decision-making, and taking responsibility and risks to meet the difficult situation facing the country. Therefore, it can certainly be concluded that this context helped develop his leadership skills. This also corroborates Kempster's (2006) suggestion that growth through difficult situations in the context of the senior leadership enhances the identity of the leader.

Most participants emphasised that specialist experience was of great importance when appointing a manager. This is probably because of the problems from which the

education system suffers and, indeed, which remain unresolved because those working on these issues may have no knowledge or experience about problems occurring in the educational field. Their experience might be in a different specialisation. The presence of managers with extensive experience does not mean that they will be successful in exercising leadership in their roles because experience is not based exclusively on how many years an employee spends at work. An employee is likely to acquire practical experience for skills such as using a computer or doing certain administrative tasks. However, this does not mean he/she learned leadership skills. Indeed, Wheelahan (2007) suggested that institutions may need specific skills (e.g., IT, teaching or leadership skills, according to the requirements of the profession). For example, employees with extensive experience in administrative work and who have practiced many tasks, such as organisation and coordination, may have acquired managerial skills because their role required them to do so, but they were unable to exercise any leadership or did not acquire leadership skills because they were immersed in administrative work.

There was an assumption that managers gained a variety of experiences through formal or informal learning methods to develop their leadership skills according to their perceptions and identification of their needs. Again, this does not mean that those who used these methods will also have acquired the necessary leadership skills. The process of learning depends on the extent of the individual's willingness to learn, how to explain the new information, and how to store and recover it when it is needed. Zepeda et al. (2014) argued that adult learning has five characteristics: self-directed, learner-driven, focus on the problem, appropriate orientation, and goal-oriented. All of these can undoubtedly affect the learning or acquisition of any skill (e.g., McCall, 2010), as the data obtained from Fahad indicated. He pointed out that he tried to link what he heard or learned

during the situations he was experiencing or sessions he attended with the information already been stored in his memory. But was he dealing with the data or information correctly? In other words, is what he acquired the necessary skill? The answer can, of course, vary from one person to another. According to Bandura (1977), perceived self-efficacy affects the identification of behaviours (as discussed in Chapter 3 ).

Managers also did not realise the significance of having experience as teachers and emphasised only the importance of expertise in the departments they manage. As the research sample included managers from different departments in the MoE and ED, some had experience in education whereas others were more familiar with administrative or engineering activities or psychological and social services. Those with managerial or engineering experience did not need to have prior experience as a teacher (which also applies to psychosocial services and activities management; see Sections 5.2.1 and 5.3.1).

If the research study participants did not have experience with what happens in schools, they may not be able to deal with educational developments, such as renewal of curricula, development of teaching methods, and the use of technology in the process of education. Furthermore, they will not understand the teacher's role, functions, and professional needs and would find it difficult to develop a vision related to their roles as educational leaders or lead others to achieve it. This corroborates with the ideas of DeRue and Wellman (2009), who suggested that leadership is learned through activities and events in the context of lived experience.

## **6.6 Leadership Development: Relevant Preparation and Training**

This section discusses three topics related to RSQ4: How effective has the training been for MoE and ED managers (before being appointed) for their leadership role? The first subsection covers the educational leadership preparation programmes specifically designed to provide managers with the necessary leadership skills for their new role before being promoted to a higher post. This is followed by a discussion of the effectiveness of the preparation programmes. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of leadership training programmes are summarised.

### **6.6.1 Educational Leadership Preparation Programmes**

Participants' views on the preparation programmes for educational leadership that they attended before being appointed to their new positions were almost identical to their responses on professional development programmes in-service (see Section 6.4.2). Therefore, this section discusses their views of the PPMoE and PPPS together with a focus on preparation activities to avoid repeating what has been discussed previously.

The majority of the survey respondents agreed that PPMoE prepared them for their leadership role and helped them acquire the necessary leadership skills before being hired as managers. As for the PPPS, about half of respondents suggested that they helped prepare them to exercise leadership; some respondents could not determine whether PS preparation programmes existed or if these courses met their training needs. These findings indicate the confusion that participants experienced when determining the type and/or topic of these activities—namely, whether they were focused on leadership or management, not to mention that if they were for professional development or preparation.

In contrast to these findings, the interview results stressed that there was no preparation for PPMoE, which agreed with the results obtained by Alkarni (2015) (indirect evidence), who emphasised the absence of a preparatory programme. However, the MoE offered courses which may have been aimed to develop staff in supervisory positions, and some managers sought to attend them since becoming heads of departments or being appointed to supervisor positions in order to prepare themselves for their role if they were promoted as managers and leaders, even though the programmes were not specifically designed for leadership preparation. In addition, they indicated that there was no preparation PPPS, but there were various courses for management and sometimes leadership, although not specifically educational leadership. From the participants' point of view, these courses were commercial sessions designed only to make a profit.

This discrepancy may be due to the fact that most survey participants were confused between courses designed to develop their job skills on one hand and programmes designed to prepare them for their leadership role before being appointed as managers on the other hand. They considered any course they attended was to develop their professional skills also aimed to prepare them to exercise leadership (according to their responses) because professional development refers to broad changes that can occur during service, leading to qualitative shifts in aspects of teachers' or managers' professionalism (Fraser et al., 2007). The preparation process is often done during service, but its goal is to provide the employee or manager with the necessary skills for a higher position (Earley, 2013). In other words, before managers occupied these positions, they were, for example, department heads or supervisors (in service). Therefore, before they were promoted, some activities should be undertaken to prepare them for their leadership role. The preparation focuses on training skills for the new role, but the

participants in the survey did not realise that, perhaps because the process of preparation interferes with professional development procedures, where the main objectives and content are developed according to the needs of the individual (Hamilton et al., 2018). Therefore, most respondents found it difficult to determine the type of activities they attended (i.e., whether they were for preparation for the new role or for professional development).

During the interviews, most participants realised that preparation courses were different from professional development courses; thus, their answers were clearer and more specific, and they confirmed that they had not attended any preparation programmes for their new role. In addition, some believed that the process of preparing for their roles had to start at early functional stages, not just before their appointment as a manager (e.g., Hamad and Ali). This corroborates the ideas of Bush and Jackson (2002) and Hamilton et al. (2018) (see Section 6.7.2 for more detail).

This result confirms that there were no specialised programmes directed to managers before their appointment in order to prepare them for their leadership role. In this sense, it could be concluded that the ministry does not have a clear plan in place (see Section 6.7), although this is its responsibility. These managers work with others and influence their attitudes; therefore, they should have the necessary leadership skills. However, what is currently happening is that some employees, whether heads of departments or supervisors or even managers, are making personal efforts to prepare themselves and develop their leadership skills by attending courses, which may not be suitable for their role or their actual needs to exercise leadership. When these courses were not related to leadership, perhaps because of their lack of experience in this area, there appeared to be

some confusion among the majority of participants between the terms of management and leadership.

Others did not seek to prepare themselves for their leadership roles and did not attend any courses (e.g., Heba and Noha), perhaps because there is currently no plan in the ministry to prepare for leadership or there is no mandatory requirement for the candidate to attend such courses before promotion. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory confirms that there are many activities that people (managers) can do to ensure that they can succeed, but they might not always carry them out because they have no motivation to do so. This raises questions about managers' roles, performances, and impact on others, not to mention their need for different leadership skills that they may only be able to obtain through preparation activities.

Although there were contradictions and dilemmas in the responses between quantitative and qualitative results (e.g., the questionnaire participants' confusion, inability to distinguish between development or preparation courses, and lack of distinction between programmes aimed to develop their leadership skills or their management skills), it is difficult to doubt the sincerity of interviewee's responses. Therefore, it could be concluded that there were no PPMoE aimed at preparing them as educational leaders, but perhaps there were PPPS that some managers tried to attend in order to develop their abilities and prepare themselves for their leadership roles in the future.

### **6.6.2 Effectiveness of the Preparation Programmes**

This section discusses participants' views on the effectiveness of these programmes. The quantitative results will be analysed separately because, during the interviews, the strengths and weaknesses of the activities that the interviewees attended were classified

regardless of the providers, as the goal of the interview was to get a fuller and deeper picture of the training activities that best prepared participants for their role as leaders. Their comments emphasised the lack of specialised training sessions aimed at developing the necessary leadership skills.

The quantitative results showed that participants were not satisfied with the preparation of either the PPMoE or PPPS, although there were some responses that mentioned a few strengths of these activities. Similarly, NIE (2013) and Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008) emphasised the weaknesses of the preparation programmes of educational leaders in Kuwait.

The participants referred to courses that had developed their managerial skills. For example, some participants pointed out that these courses were provided to meet their needs in the administrative field. However, there were also neutral and negative responses that pointed to many weaknesses (e.g., they were not relevant to education; it is just theory and does not relate to practice), indicating that these were ineffective in their preparation.

In addition, some responses showed that managers were unable to determine whether these activities had developed their skills and prepared them for a leadership role, simply because they did not know about their existence. Another possible explanation for this is that they did not attend these courses because they were felt to be irrelevant to educational leadership or were ineffective in meeting their training needs. Alternatively—and perhaps more likely—there were no programmes to prepare educational leaders before their appointment as managers. As determined in Section 6.6.1, these activities were for the development of managerial and administrative skills only, yet had many weaknesses at the same time. As such, how could they have met their needs?

### **6.6.3 Strengths and Weaknesses in Leadership Training Programmes**

Although the interview participants did not attend any preparation courses, they did mention some strengths and weaknesses in the activities they attended, either from the MoE or PS, in addition to some of the courses they attended in different countries outside Kuwait. The interview data indicated that there were some strengths in the training courses which managers attended, such as quality of the lecturer and time period. However, some respondents (e.g., Noha, Sa'ad, and Hamad) were describing courses held outside Kuwait or that they were hoped that these features would be present in the sessions offered in Kuwait.

These strengths are important factors for any training activities regardless of their objective (whether to develop managerial or leadership skills) because, as Section 5.3.3.1 suggested, there were no training or preparation programmes aimed at educational leadership, despite MoE attempts to organise courses. Yet these courses were based on a plan not to prepare them as leaders, but rather to provide them with some of the expertise and skills they needed as managers or perhaps supervisors or employees (such as decision-making skills and development of strategic plans).

The participants emphasised that specialisation in both courses and lecturers (Section 5.3.5.2) was one of the most important strengths of these programmes. They felt the need to attend specialised courses in educational leadership for each department separately, because managers roles and tasks differed by their departments. McCall (2010) confirmed that, to support leadership learning through experience, emphasis should be placed on individual learner differences as well as cognitive levels. This may increase the complexity of how training activities for leadership are designed and point to the urgent need for specialists with experience in doing this.

One of the main providers of training programmes for MoE staff in Kuwait is the Administration of Development and Improvement in the MoE (Al-Khatib & Al-Enezi, 2008), which also uses the PS to organise some courses. Occasionally, it has asked experienced current managers to present a lecture to fellow new managers. Crow (2004) mentioned reservations about using veteran principals for leadership preparation; he argued that experienced professionals may not promote creativity and innovation.

Another area for debate is the criteria for selecting an experienced manager to provide a course. Is the information or expertise that the trainer has relevant to what other managers need? Or does the manager see him-/herself as having leadership skills that he/she seeks to transfer to colleagues? If so, why were these experiences not already transferred to staff, such as managers or leaders in their administration, especially the as essence of professional development includes many approaches to learning and practice in the context of public professional values and accountability (Bolam, 2000). Earley (2013) argued that not all leaders have the ability to provide training and mentoring for new leaders, which underscores the need for mentors at different times and for various purposes. Bandura (1971) pointed out that people (managers) are drawn to models (e.g., senior leadership) with significant qualities (see Section 3.2.3 for a discussion of the social learning theory).

As some participants mentioned a few strengths, each according to his or her perspective, this may mean that the others did not see any significant advantages in any activities they attended (assuming they attended training programmes during their career, as demonstrated by demographic data). Alternatively, it could mean that they did not attend training courses outside of Kuwait. However, does this mean that all courses held within Kuwait offer no advantages or strengths? Or does it mean that the participants attended

some sessions but they did not have an impact on their skills or leadership experience, thus they did not mention any of their strengths? Perhaps managers lack experience in identifying the training programmes needed to develop and prepare themselves.

Participants' responses also highlighted numerous weaknesses among these programmes (Section 5.3.5.3), leading to a lack of benefit from them. Maybe they did not attend the programmes because of their lack of confidence in their effectiveness. According to the social learning theory, a learner might ignore models that lack distinctive characteristics, although they may have some skills that are not visible (Bandura, 1971). This is in line with indirect evidence from Alkarni (2015), who emphasised that the training of headteachers (because some managers were headteachers) did not fulfil their needs entirely.

Some respondents indicated that MoE regulations limited the possibility of applying what they learned from the courses. As such, these programmes might have had a positive impact on managers' skills, but they could not apply them because of the regulations that reduced the capabilities developed by these activities. These managers apply top-down regulations in a highly centralised system, so they could not exercise their leadership role or apply skills acquired because of constraints imposed by central systems, resulting in ineffective skills.

According to Carnall and By (2014), the tendency to comply with rules and regulations—whether appropriate or not—confirms that the organisation system is somewhat deficient, because the bureaucratic structures are characterized by a high degree of functional specialisation, through reliance on formal procedures, and by hierarchical control. This is perhaps because of the centrality of the education system and consistent with Alkandari's (2013) study that such organisations receive directions from a central

authority and apply the decisions of the government. Abdalla and Al-Homoud (1995) concluded that the resultant Kuwaiti bureaucracy may be criticised for being rigid in hierarchical authority.

It is possible that the content of these programmes was not related to the education system in Kuwait; therefore, the regulations did not permit their application in practice. In addition, some administrative and leadership theories presented may not be appropriate or consistent with the education system in Kuwait, as confirmed by participants such as Mona and Ali.

Despite the openness of Kuwait to developed countries in the era of globalisation and the exchange of advanced education systems, some managers find it difficult to apply what they learn in different environments of Kuwaiti society. This raises questions about using specialists from outside Kuwait to provide courses or develop training plans for managers or sending trainees to courses in other countries, as is usually the case. Although participants mentioned the strengths of the external courses, they also noted this weakness because the information may not be compatible with applicable to the Kuwaiti education system. It is important to recognise the importance of culture and context in shaping the preparation and development of leadership in each country (Bush, 2013; Walker, Bryant, & Lee, 2013). Alkandari (2013) concluded that change is necessary to meet the requirements imposed by the state and globalisation.

Most participants considered the lecturers or trainers to be a weakness of the training programmes, although they were also mentioned as one of the strengths of some activities. This contradiction suggests that individual lecturers' training skills and capabilities are important to consider. In addition, some participants believed that commercial programmes only aimed to generate profits, not meet training needs.

However, this may contradict the quantitative results as some participants believed these courses were better than the MoE's activities (Section 5.2.5.1). In certain cases, the employee can attend PS training courses that the ministry pays for, but managers may not have considered whether the trainer was efficient, the content was relevant, or the course met their needs because they trusted in the MoE to provide them with these sessions. Yet other participants noted many related weaknesses (e.g., content and lack of relevance to education), concluding that PS programmes were merely commercial in nature.

To clarify, NPM tried to convert different tasks to executive agencies by introducing private sector management techniques to the public sector (Bevir, 2009). Therefore, a reasonable question to ask is whether the contracting agency had the necessary experience in education or leadership or whether the objectives, content provided, and even methods of training and education used were applicable to participants' context. All of these issues undoubtedly affected the participants' view of the effectiveness of these programmes.

Interestingly, all participants reported only the strengths or weaknesses of the training courses they attended, but in some cases did not address other activities (e.g., membership in a work party; collaborative learning; receiving on-the-job coaching, tutoring, or mentoring; job shadowing; using distance-learning materials), even when they indicated that they had participated in such activities and had developed their skills (Table 5.10). Interviewees might not have practised these skills following the activities, so they did not mention any of their characteristics. This outcome is contrary to that of Mohammed (2008), who found that training courses often use group discussions,

problem-solving, seminars, and workshops as well as seminars between trainers and trainees and cooperative education.

Another possible explanation is that participants participated without realising that these were activities to develop their leadership skills. For example, Fahad mentioned that, “during the lecture, we began to link ideas, and say yes that happened with me, or not happened, or say that decision I had taken was right, or if it worked like this or that, would be better.” In other words, he engaged in reflection while attending a lecture and tried to think about what he did at work, linking it to the new information he learned to discover whether he had achieved the desired and expected results (Schön, 1983). Belvis et al. (2013) argued that it is necessary to think about what happens in each activity or experiment because this is the basis of learning through reflective practice. However, in the absence of expertise in different training methods, the participants may not have realised that they had participated in various activities that may have contributed to their development.

Again, this raises the issue of who is responsible for the development and preparation of these managers. Is it the managers themselves or the ministry? If the managers are the ones who must develop themselves, the results indicated that there were attempts to attend many programmes, but perhaps that they lacked experience in how to do so, thereby corroborating Lorsch's (2013) finding that organisations are complex social systems that require the accurate diagnosis of the specific situation. He further suggested that there is some debate as to whether some leaders can change their style flexibly and conduct task- or relationship-oriented behaviours, according to their perceptions and assessments of the situation (Wong-Mingji, 2013).

Yet if this is the ministry's responsibility, then it the diversity of sessions for the preparation of leaders could be reasonably questioned. Social learning theory confirms that particular models should be provided to illustrate how to implement activities rather than waiting for mistakes to occur to learn from them (Bandura, 1977). In addition, the existence of meaningful development activities for the preparation of educational leadership with different leadership experiences is a vital, important, and necessary issue. Advocates of contingency theory (Fiedler, 1978) argue that training and experience may help the leader obtain power and influence others. Furthermore, improving organisations' performance through leadership training and providing instruction on how to deal with changes in regulatory environmental conditions will lead to the development of capable educational leadership to control the ongoing changes in education.

However, in their criticism of the contingency approach, Carnall and By (2014) noted that the environment itself may be problematic and cannot be considered as one of the determinant institutions because it is likely to generate differences within the organisation.

## **6.7 Managers' Views to Improve Educational Leadership Preparation Processes**

This section discusses managers' views of the methods currently applied in Kuwait's education system to develop educational leadership. The discussion focuses on two areas: leadership qualification and leadership selection. The discussion aims to answer RSQ5: How do MoE and ED managers think their leadership preparation might be improved?

### **6.7.1 Leadership Qualification**

The majority of participants on both the survey and interviews agreed about the need to prepare educational leadership through qualification processes; they also emphasised the importance of courses and workshops being tailored to managers' needs. In addition, they stressed the need to create conditions for those expected to become managers to deal with experienced managers in order to gain skills. This means focusing on some informal training methods, such as working with others or job shadowing. The literature indicated a general acceptance of the importance of informal methods to contribute to the learning and development of leadership (DeRue & Wellman, 2009; Kempster, 2006; McCall, 2004; Robinson & Wick, 1992). These views may have come about because managers sensed the extent to which such activities were needed to develop their leadership capacities. Furthermore, they believed in the importance of dealing with experienced people and their role in developing leadership skills. Indeed, this could be considered more significant than formal methods, such as courses and lectures, given the ineffectiveness of the courses and programmes these managers attended—a conclusion consistent with that of Hunzicker (2011) and Attard (2017). These authors asserted that traditional professional development opportunities, such as courses or seminars, do not have an effective impact on the development of managerial skills. In addition, the data in the current study (Section 5.3.5.3) indicate many weaknesses in existing training programmes. The managers also believe that working with experienced colleagues is a qualification process in itself—one which will have an effective impact on their preparation, helping them to acquire the skills necessary to practise leadership. According to Bandura's theory, humans seek to learn to fulfil their needs and desires by observing the consequences of behaviours and events (Roedelein, 2006).

However, these views do not mean that formal methods were not important to the participants (Kempster, 2006). For example, the majority believed that the existence of a specialised centre for the development of leadership is an urgent need to qualify leaders. Perhaps this suggestion confirms their desire for a specialised entity to develop a training plan for educational leadership and design activities according to their needs. Such a view concurs with those obtained by Shields and Cassada (2016) and OECD (2008); they argued that strategic plans to prepare and improve managers should be developed. Furthermore, Earley (2013) asserted that education managers should be able to get support from a variety of reliable sources. This, in itself, may indicate the participants' inability to correctly identify their needs as leaders, or indeed how to develop their leadership skills, causing them to be frustrated by the lack of methods that facilitate their own development and skills to be educational leaders. However, these feelings could also confirm participants' desire and personal effort to develop their capacities (Sections 5.2.5.1 and 5.3.5.1), despite not always achieving that goal.

Although almost all of the participants agreed on the need for training activities, some (such as Hamad) believed that qualification through specialised educational programmes is unnecessary for managers. They argued that the experience they acquired was sufficient to prepare them. However, this outcome contradicts Hamilton et al.'s (2018) finding that leadership forms for senior roles require more complex development activities.

Mona argued that the qualification should occur in the early stages of the employee's work. Hamilton et al. (2018) also emphasised the importance of leadership development throughout the stages of a person's career from the beginning. However, they also stressed the need for its continuation for senior leaders with experience.

Furthermore, as the process of learning is continuous and varies from person to person, what is learned and gained from an attitude or experience differs from what another person is learning. An individual's self-efficacy is influenced by several factors, such as performance accomplishments (Bandura et al., 1977) and vicarious experiences (Bandura et al., 1980), as discussed in Chapter 3.

This discussion begs the question of whether what has been gained from this experience is what is needed to be learnt? In addition, although managers have had previous and different experiences, what did these experiences mean? For example, are they managerial, technical, or leadership experiences? To further illustrate the point, it could be reasonable to ask, if someone has a long career, does that necessarily mean that he/she has acquired leadership skills? Learning is more complex and involves more than just acquiring elements of organisational knowledge (Gherardi et al., 1998).

Fiedler (1978) noted that experience and training increase and drive effectiveness. Perhaps this confirms Mona's previous assertion. However, what about educational developments, rapid changes, and the current information revolution? Is it not necessary to shorten and organise the huge amount of information that is available and adapt it to an appropriate context in order to facilitate and guide the learning process and take advantage of it?

In contingencies, some changes occur in organisations when changes are made to avoid inefficiency in performance through the adoption of new organisational characteristics to suit new levels of contingencies (Donaldson, 2001). In other words, preparation is a necessary process that should start early, but there could be a qualification according to a well-thought-out plan that helps managers act as educational leaders before they occupy these positions.

### 6.7.2 Leadership Selection

The majority of participants agreed that the current selection mechanism for leaders should be completely changed, although some believed that it only needed to be revised or applied impartially, away from stakeholders and nepotism (*wasta*). The Transparency Centre of Information (2013) similarly confirmed that the spread of *wasta* and favouritism in leaders' selection was depriving other national competencies from taking leadership positions.

Despite the apparent variation in opinions (i.e., complete change versus merely revision), participants seemed to agree that the selection of leaders needs to change to some degree. For those who demanded complete change (such as Bader and Sa'ad), the current conditions of selection (efficiency, experience, certification, interview, and courses attended) are prerequisites that are not applied effectively. In terms of efficiency reports, Sa'ad and Noha felt they were not a real measure to assess employees for managerial positions because of the intervention of *wasta* in staff evaluations. Ashkanani (2001) underscored the inefficiency of the evaluation system in the public sector due to many shortcomings. Yet according to NIE (2013), almost 90% of teachers obtained excellent reports. Therefore, the problem is not the efficiency reports, which are tools to help make decisions (Ashkanani, 2001), but rather the evaluation process itself. In other words, clear controls should be put in place for evaluation processes to include accountability processes to ensure a fair and actual evaluation of the employee (Alkandari, 2013; Bush & Middlewood, 2013; Thurlow, 2009; Trow, 1996).

The majority of participants also pointed to the regular futility of interviews because *wasta* also interferes with the process of evaluating the candidate. They doubted the abilities and skills of the committee members to choose the right person to be manager

and leader. Indeed, Bush and Middlewood (2013) suggested that this process is the most susceptible to biases for several reasons.

Again, this does not mean that interviews were not acceptable as a condition of the selection process, but the problem here is twofold. First, there is the mechanism of the application and intervention of stakeholders (i.e., *wasta*). The spread of favouritism in the education sector at the expense of public interest will potentially have a devastating impact on schools and Kuwaiti society as a whole, especially in the selection process of educational leaderships. Values are strongly associated with leadership (Bush, 2008a, 2011; Bush & Glover, 2003, 2014; NCSL, 2007) and are considered a moral compass and the basis for the work of leaders (NCSL, 2007). Therefore, perhaps most respondents believed that the interviews were not effective in selecting leaders because they might lead to choosing someone not suitable for leadership. This result is in line with Al-Rayes and Al-Fadhli's (2004) argument that a large percentage of Kuwaiti citizens use *wasta* to ensure that they receive what they see as a legitimate right for them. Perhaps this confirms the critique of contingency theory because an organisation's design is subject to political and ideological factors, as various interest groups will turn to conflict when defending their own interests. Thus, structures are often the outcome of bargaining and satisfaction to all parties (Carnall & By, 2014).

Second, it is about the ability of the committee members to evaluate candidates. Some participants questioned this, perhaps because there were no real and clear criteria for committee members to use in the evaluation processes, such as undue focus on technical tasks of department (i.e., those which will be part of the role being interviewed for) or sometimes on administrative aspects to the exclusion of personal aspects (e.g., whether the candidate has the requisite leadership skills). Leadership performance can be

measured and interpreted through a number of key elements and factors (Hutton, 2018). Although committee members are experienced in education, it is unclear whether this experience is sufficient to help them choose the best, within a period of time (minutes or hours) and in one sitting through the interview. It is important to apply the contingency theory to human resource management processes when attracting, selecting, and appointing leaders with suitable guidance for their specific roles as well as conforming these roles and their requirements to the current leadership (Wong-Mingji, 2013).

Manager's views of the process for selecting leaders may reflect their disapproval (i.e., whether those chosen as managers are actually leaders), but what about themselves? As discussed in Section 5.3.5, the majority believed themselves to be leaders, despite the data indicating that they were managers with limited leadership skills.

Their views also indicate their dissatisfaction with what is happening in the education field. Success in the selection of educational leadership will have a positive impact on education because leaders have a significant influence on others (Carnes et al., 2015). These findings may also explain the cause of successive failures of the Kuwaiti education system to obtain advanced grades on international tests such as PISA and TIMSS, despite the considerable efforts of successive governments and budgets allocated for the development of the education system.

Interestingly, a difference emerged in the managers' opinions regarding the priority of selection and the qualification processes. For example, some believed that the selection process might be done first, but should then followed by a qualification process because (according to their point of view), if done correctly, that selection process will determine who will be a leader in the future, meaning they should be qualified and equipped with the necessary leadership skills. This may mean conducting personal tests for those who

meet the initial conditions (competence, experience, etc.) to measure some of the candidate's skills and predict his/her success as a leader after qualification.

Yet others believed that qualification should precede the selection process, perhaps because they wondered how a person could be properly evaluated before providing him/her with some leadership skills? These managers apparently overlooked the role of experience and its impact on the candidate's personality and skills. In other words, if a potential candidate has not acquired some of the necessary skills and abilities that may help him/her become a leader, is it possible that he/she can learn everything during the qualification period? According to Fraser et al. (2007), professional learning leads to specific changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professional actions, but professional development refers to broader changes that can occur over a longer period of time.

## **6.8 Chapter Summary**

The findings revealed that most participants saw themselves as having demonstrated leadership with necessary skills that qualify them to succeed in their roles, despite the fact they emphasised the need for more specialised training programmes in educational leadership to refine these skills. Most participants had been involved in various professional development programmes throughout their careers. However, there had been no significant impact of formal learning activities because these did not achieve their goals or meet their leadership needs in general.

The majority of participants believed that the experience they had gained had helped them in their role as managers and leaders. However, the results indicate that the experiences are mostly career experiences that may have helped them in their role as managers; such experiences were not relevant to education or leadership.

The results also confirmed that there were no training programmes for the preparation of educational leaders, but the managers attended some courses during their careers to develop their skills in both administration and leadership. The majority stressed the importance of developing processes to prepare educational leaders through professional learning that considers their training needs. All managers believed that the initial conditions should be applied with controls and accountability processes for those who break these rules, with the addition of certain criteria such as tests to determine who has leadership skills.

The next chapter will summarise the main conclusions from this study and analyse the findings to answer the main research question and sub-questions.

# **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

## **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the findings of the study to answer the main research question and five sub-questions. Section 7.2 explains original contribution to knowledge arising from this research. Section 7.3 discusses the Substantive findings. Section 7.4 describes the limitations of the conceptual framework and research design. Section 7.5 addresses the implications for practice. Finally, recommendations for future research are provided in Section 7.6.

## **7.2 Original Contribution to Knowledge**

This study sought to explore the effectiveness of the professional development programmes which might include leadership development of the MoE's managers and educational districts in the Kuwaiti education system. Various original contributions to knowledge were made and are outlined in this section. However, the key ones are the two models relating to formal and informal leadership development (sections 7.2.1 & 7.2.2).

All the collected data showed that the development processes of educational leadership was not particularly well-thought-out. Thus, these models have been proposed for the development of educational leadership, which were derived from the findings of this study. The researcher hopes that these can be taken or developed and applied to help develop leadership effectively—namely, by meeting the needs of managers and providing them with leadership skills to exercise their role and lead the education system in the era of globalisation.

### **7.2.1 Formal Learning Model (FL)**

This study contributed to knowledge by providing a leadership development model based on formal learning, with an explanation of the impact of this learning on school administration. It is the first model for formal learning to be proposed for MoE and ED managers in Kuwait.

Using Figure 6.1 (see Section 6.3.1), a model for formal learning is proposed in Figure 7.1. The model may contribute to the development of managers across the MoE and EDs to help provide them with the required leadership skills to perform their leadership role. Figure 7.1 shows the MoE, representing the centrality of the education system, and the EDs, indicating the attempts to decentralise the education system in Kuwait.

The model can be explained as follows. It begins with the MoE leadership development plan, which includes training content, objectives, required skills, tools and methods, and teaching, among other factors. The MoE sets clear criteria for the selection of managers to fill vacant positions in the MoE and ED departments. Participants emphasised the importance of this selection and the need to set tight controls throughout these processes (Section 6.6.2). At this point, the need arises for the MoE to engage with EDs in applying the remaining stages in this model.

The training needs of managers are assessed. The MoE, working hand in hand with the EDs, implements this process. Each party examines the status quo and required skills per department through the context in which it operates.

Deriving from the need's assessment, the activities and the professional development programmes are designed and targeted to the managers at the MoE and EDs, but not for

school principals due to the difference between their needs and required skills for managers of the MoE and EDs (see Sections 5.3.3 and 6.3.2.1).

The programmes are implemented and evaluated, followed by a feedback stage (respondents called for these programmes to be intensified and continuously monitored and evaluated; see Section 5.2.3.2.1). The latter continues through the follow-up and support of the officials of the MoE and EDs. These processes are also joint operations. They (i.e., feedback, follow-up, and support) are considered as reciprocal operations and rely on each other. In other words, the support is provided based on the feedback.

Each determination of training needs and the training programme design processes take into account the feedback to develop improvements in management skills over time as a result of their participation in the training programmes or the experience they accumulate through their work.

However, there is also a need for each ED to organise activities and sessions separate from the MoE programmes to develop its managers, according to their needs and context.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) organises and provides the MoE with a range of professional development programmes. Nevertheless, Figure 7.1 considers the CSC as an entity that supports the MoE managers' development plans. For example, it facilitates the organisation of external courses that specialise in educational leadership, but does not provide general training programmes for the MoE like other ministries (Sections 5.3.3.2 and 6.3.3).

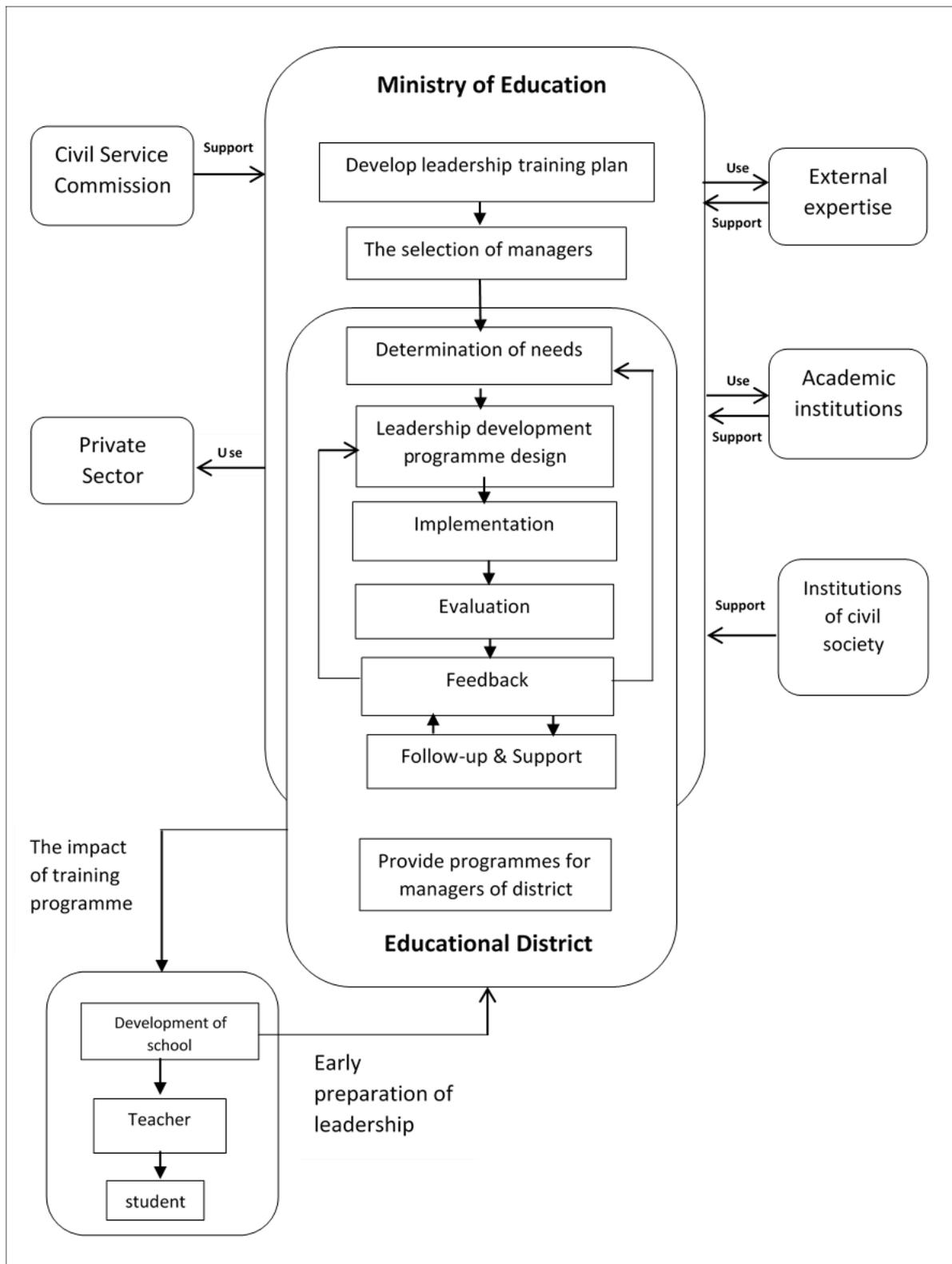


Figure 7.1. A formal learning leadership development model

Institutions of civil society (e.g., Kuwait Teachers Society [KTS]) might also support the MoE to improve leadership skills, as they represent a large segment of teachers and administrative staff at the MoE, by communicating their opinions, expectations, and training needs. For example, the KTS may be able to determine these needs from the reality of what is happening in the field. In particular, the process of preparation and professional development (to acquire leadership skills), not to mention the leadership activities that the KTS offers to teachers, could be carried out in cooperation with the MoE.

External expertise (e.g., the World Bank) and academic institutions, such as the Kuwait University and Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), could support the MoE in developing the leadership skills of managers. In return, the MoE would consult them in this domain to deliver different lectures and hands-on activities to help these managers understand more about leadership as well as conduct studies to evaluate the development activities or assess the needs of those managers, both academically and systematically (see Section 5.3.3.1.1).

The private sector could play an important role in developing managers' leadership skills. Therefore, this model sheds light on the importance of consulting private sector expertise, taking into consideration the alignment of the training activities it provides with managers' training needs as a public sector (see Section 6.3.2.2).

This model assumes that the impact of this training will take place in schools; when these managers acquire the necessary leadership skills, they will have an impact on those with whom they deal or work as a team. Being a supervisor is closest to being a manager; in addition to visiting and interacting with school management, they are expected to exert a positive influence on the schools. Leadership skills could be learned through interaction

between the managers, supervisors, and principals (Bandura, 1977; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; also, see Section 5.3.2.3). Consequently, this is considered as early preparation and development of school principals prior to their promotion to supervisor and then manager in the MoE and ED departments.

FL is a multi-dimensional, targeted, and planned process to accomplish its objectives. To benefit from this model, it has to be applied, practised, and promoted alongside informal learning (InFL) processes, which are discussed next.

### **7.2.2 Informal Learning Model (InFL)**

According to Kempster and Parry (2014), observation learning plays a role in the development of leadership skills, “but its significance is rather under-explored” (p. 164). Therefore, this study presents a proposed informal learning model to contribute to the development of theory because it is still “significantly under-theorized” (Kempster & Parry, 2014, p. 164).

By studying Kolb's (1984) cycle of learning (see Appendix 18) and Marsick and Watkins's (2018) model for enhancing informal and incidental learning (see Appendix 19), the researcher attempted to adapt these models to the results of this study to provide a proposed informal learning model (InFL). (See Fig. 7.2).

This model assumes that the beginning of the learning stems from previously learned skills through managers' experiential learning because of relationships with their parents, teachers, and/or co-workers (relational proximity). Observation-based learning is a perspective that changes over time because the individual's needs differ during various stages of their career; as a result, people within his/her domain of interest will vary as well (Kempster & Parry, 2014).

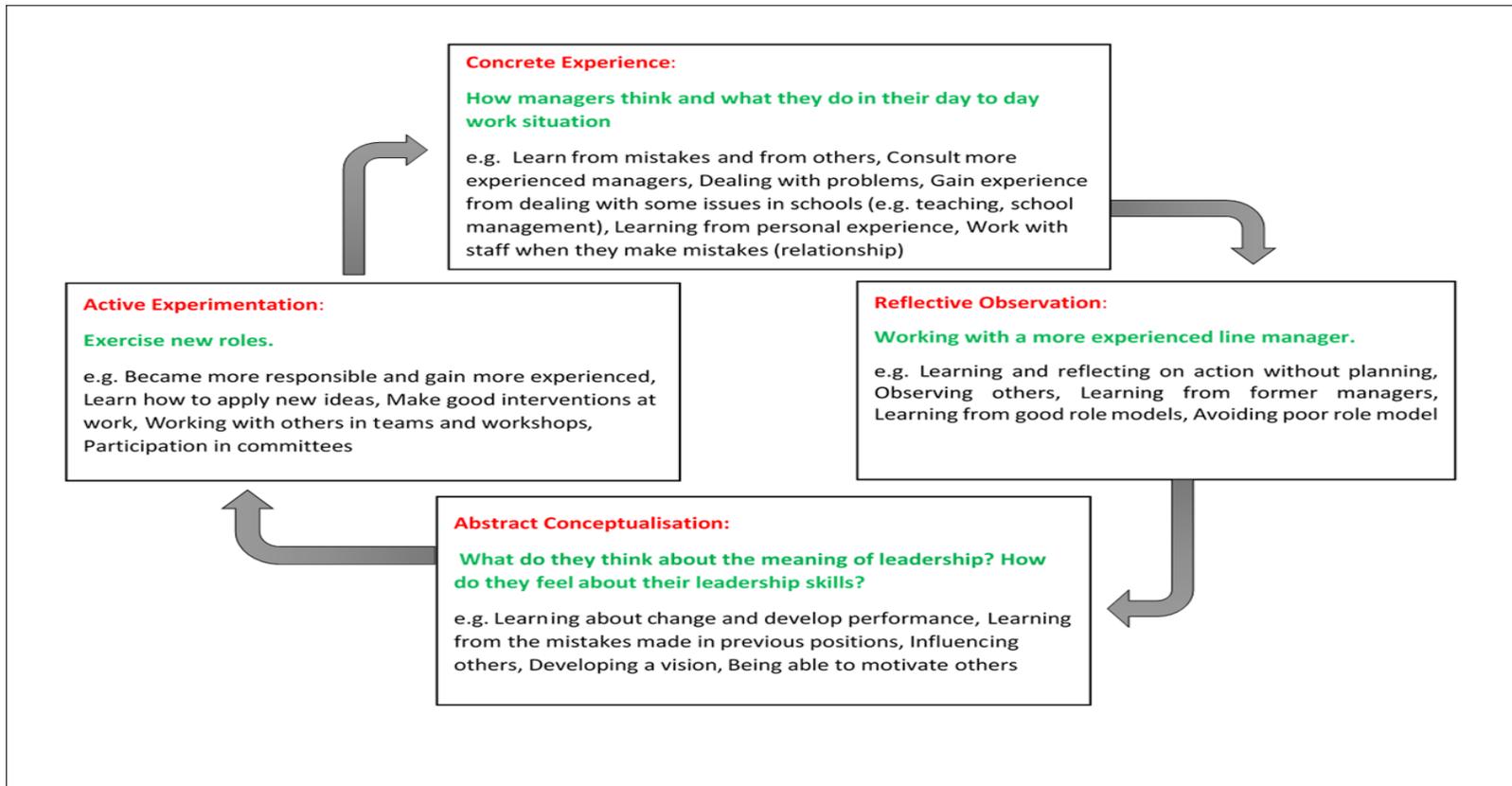


Figure 7.2. Proposed informal learning model (InFL) for leadership

Therefore, this model focuses on informal learning processes for managers' leadership skills, taking into account the social and professional contexts and the relative proximity of the managers with the prominent people who will be observed in order to acquire the skills necessary to exercise a leadership role.

The proposed model follows several stages. First, knowledge and experience are extracted, reshaped, and constructed during InFL processes as they have been reframed and adopted in the mind as a result of previous FL and employment processes (perhaps through early phases of education); this refers to the concrete experience gleaned from previous practices (see Section 5.3.2.1). These practices were acquired by dealing with others, making mistakes, and consulting with or receiving mentoring or coaching from their former managers or those more experienced when dealing with problems that they have never experienced.

Through the reflective observation processes, triggers—perhaps due to a sense of dysfunction or problem—act as interpreters and analyse situations according to the context and circumstances in which they appear. In this sense, managers who felt that there were errors or problems due to their training needs sought to consider these issues to find explanations or solutions by observing others or working with managers who were good models (to imitate them) or poor role models (to be avoided). This stage may occur without planning because it is realistic and related to the managers' role or their practices (see Section 5.3.2.3).

The manager then begins to examine existing solutions and alternatives and adopts these in her/his mind as newly acquired knowledge and skills; these processes are known as abstract conceptualisation. IN this stage, managers form concepts by building

experiences, acquiring new skills by determining and selecting appropriate ones, avoiding previous mistakes, and developing concepts adopted for experimentation, such as developing vision or influencing others (see Sections 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.3.2).

The process of implementing the solutions adopted (as a result of reflective observation) then begins, and consequences—both intended and unintended—are assessed. Implementation is a test of the suitability of these solutions to the status quo (i.e., active experimentation). By exercising leadership roles such as participating in committees and teamwork, developing vision, influencing others, providing new ideas and initiatives, and implementing and developing work, the solutions or experiences gained will be evaluated to become concrete experiences (see Section 5.3.4).

As a result, InFL processes shape managers' experiences based on the information and experiences acquired in advance. They can structure this information with the knowledge that they acquired during practice in work, where their experiences are shaped according to their interpretation. However, the method of analysing and extracting knowledge from attitudes and experiences is different from one person to another according to their specialist knowledge and their lived experiences (the impact of InFL increases with frequency and a variety of practices). For example, a person who has qualifications and experience as a teacher differs from someone who is qualified and worked as an engineer or an accountant because, according to Kolb's (1984) cycle model, individuals acquire concrete experience from their studies and specialisation and then begin to think and extract knowledge according to their experiences.

### **7.3 Substantive Findings**

The study sample consisted of managers holding positions of high administrative level in the MoE and EDs (department managers) who manage a group of staff at different administrative levels. At the same time, they can expect to be promoted to senior administrative positions, such as an assistant undersecretary for one of the eight education sectors (see Section 2.5.5.3). Therefore, the process of preparing them and developing their skills to exercise a leadership role required by their position is an important issue affecting the education system. This study attempted to determine to what extent the leadership preparation and ongoing professional development of the education ministry and district managers are effective in Kuwait.

The data indicated that there were no specific formal programmes to prepare managers and provide them with the appropriate leadership skills. Although professional development activities were available, they were not dedicated to improving leadership capability; rather, they only sought to develop some managerial and technical skills. These programmes also did not target this category of managers in particular. Consequently, they were not effective because they were essentially not tailored to develop the leadership skills of these managers and instead focused on management functions for various administrative levels.

Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008) indicated that there is a high level of training needs for managers in many areas, including administrative processes and leadership models. In addition, due to the lack of studies that examined the preparation of this category of managers in the Kuwaiti or Arab Gulf context, the researcher used some indirect evidence that investigated the preparation and development of school principals. For example, NIE

(2013) found that the majority of participants agreed that leadership preparation programmes were inadequate and considered the quality of the existing school leadership training programmes as low. Furthermore, Mohammed's (2008) study conducted in the Saudi context noted that leadership training programmes for leaders and deputy school principals did not take into account the needs of those participating in these activities.

However, the finding of the current study contradicts the findings of Amro and Awawda (2016), who found the training programmes provided for educational leaders in the UNRWA in Jordan to be effective. Perhaps this difference is due to the fact that Amro and Awawda's (2016) study included all supervisors and managers who attended supervisory training programmes according to their specialties. In other words, there were pre-planned training programmes designed to develop the leadership skills of these participants (see Section 3.8). Such pre-planned programmes seem to be lacking in educational leadership development activities in Kuwait, as the results of this study confirmed the lack of a clear plan to develop managers' leadership skills. The MoE might not know how best to prepare existing or future managers for a leadership role.

What is much more effective is novice managers learning by observing more experienced managers in the workplace (informal). Evidence suggested that these managers had learned a great deal from other managers observed at work through lived experiences. Furthermore, these results corroborate the idea of Kempster and Parry (2014) that leadership skills are developed through observation, which is in turn conducted through their lived experiences, playing an important role in the development of leadership. DeRue and Wellman (2009), McCall (2004) and Kempster (2006) also support such ideas.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from the current study is that the majority of participants were unable to define a clear concept of management or leadership—or even distinguish between them. Thus, there was often confusion in their responses, which was further marked by their inability to determine the effectiveness of the programmes or activities they attended (i.e., whether they were to prepare them before their appointment or were intended as professional development programmes they attended during their career, whilst in post). Yet Bush and Middlewood (2013) argued that there are no clear boundaries between what represents management activities and what represents leadership activities, suggesting that the respondents' confusion is warranted.

Five research sub-questions were derived from the main question. The researcher sought to answer these by investigating many of the relevant issues examined in the study. These issues are outlined in the following subsections and are linked to each sub-question.

### **7.3.1 Managers' Self-Perceptions**

In answering RSQ1 (i.e., To what extent do the MoE and ED managers perceive themselves as managers who exercise leadership in the education system?), the responses of participants revealed that most saw themselves as leaders with at least some leadership skills (e.g., collaborative decision-making and working with a team) that had helped them exercise their leadership role to a certain extent partly because of the centrality of the education system in Kuwait. Alternatively, in the social contexts in which they worked, they exercised leadership through collective support from senior managers or from the wider social context (see DeRue & Ashford, 2010).

According to Fiedler's (1978) theory, if employees respect the leader, it encourages trust and loyalty among them. As a result, managers might believe in their ability to be leaders. In addition, there is a correlation between leadership style and contingency variables that is positively correlated with the effectiveness of leadership and organisational performance (Wong-Mingji, 2013) due to the impact of identity work and identity regulation on the formation of self-identity. These three concepts interact and form managers' perceptions of themselves through self-awareness and skills (self-identity) as well as the active construction of self-identity (identity work) and the reaction to organisational and social processes and the ability to deal with them (identity regulation) (see Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Giddens, 1991; Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).

Participants' perceptions of themselves were based on four factors. First, some could not distinguish between the concept of management and leadership, perhaps because they did not attend any specialised courses in leadership. Thus, they believed that performing administrative tasks effectively and achieving goals meant they were leaders. This is contrary to the views of many authors (e.g., Ayub et al., 2014; Bush & Glover, 2003), who defined leadership as a process of influencing others.

Second, although participants emphasised that leaders need special skills, such as dealing with and influencing others, their responses indicated some confusion in identifying leadership skills on the one hand and management attributes on the other. Indeed, most participants could not provide a thorough and comprehensive definition of leadership; therefore, they believed they had leadership skills when, in fact, they had managerial skills. Furthermore, the responses were also in contrast to the findings of the study of Al-

Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008), which identified major training needs in terms of leadership skills (e.g., educational policies, strategic, and decision-making processes).

Third, most participants stressed the importance of working with others, especially those with experience and educational specialisation. They also mentioned that the most important skills they learned from others were decision making and problem solving (despite problem solving being a managerial activity). Perhaps this is because these skills are daily tasks and therefore had become part of their professional identity, especially through practical and actual application, thereby enhancing their self-awareness as leaders. However, Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008) and Al-Duaij (1994) suggested otherwise, identifying a high degree of need for each of these skills.

Although participation in the development and implementation of vision and influence on others is one of the most important features of leadership, the majority of participants did not have these skills because they were not learnt as a result of working with former managers or colleagues at work. Alternatively, maybe they found it hard to transfer what they learned inside one office in that context and apply it to another in a different context. This confirmed that the training cannot be applied effectively to the workplace (Kupritz, 2002).

Despite the fact that modelling is a vital method for social learning theory and is used as a basis for learning (Latham & Saari, 1979), participants perhaps did not look at their former managers as role models, possibly because of poor relationships with them or because their former line managers lacked leadership skills.

In addition, the central decision-making system in Kuwait could explain why most managers were unable to learn some of the necessary leadership skills when working with others. This working context means very little independence, and it is much harder to develop a vision for the role and practice how to influence others. Centralism also negatively affects managers because it limits their ability to exercise their leadership role. This is consistent with Alkandari's (2013) argument that the central system does not allow managers to cooperate in, for example, decision-making. In addition, Bush (2011), Bush and Glover (2014), and Hoyle and Wallace (2005) argued that managerialism reduces the effectiveness of the institution because excessive management has a negative impact on educational goals. Thus, the situation surrounding the transfer of training to the work environment may negatively impact any benefits received from training programmes (Gilpin-Jackson & Bushe, 2007).

However, regardless of the reasons for not learning these skills, the message is that most participants did not believe that they had the ability to develop and implement a vision or influence others, although these skills are important to leaders.

Fourth, most participants faced many challenges when exercising their leadership role because they were forced to spend a greater proportion of their time on administrative work to accomplish tasks. This could be because Kuwait's education system applies traditional public management methods that require stable and predictable conditions. Such a system cannot easily meet the challenges posed by globalisation in a rapidly changing world (Katsamunski, 2012).

In a complex and changing environment, an education system is supposed to be more flexible and creative to allow managers to fulfil their leadership role by, for example,

developing a clear vision, drawing up and implementing plans, and making the necessary decisions in accordance with the circumstances. Inflexible procedures produce frustrating conditions and reduce managers' ability to innovate (Carnall & By, 2014).

Accordingly, the results showed they were managers with managerial skills who administered their departments and sometimes exercised a limited number of leadership roles because they worked with employees and made decisions within their powers as managers. These findings concur with those obtained by Al-Duaij (1994), which emphasised that there was a relatively poor performance in some leadership functions, such as the inadequate use of appropriate leadership styles and decision-making capacity.

### **7.3.2 Engagement in Different Forms of Leadership Development**

The investigation of RSQ2 (i.e., To what extent have the MoE and ED managers engaged in leadership development activities (whilst in post)?) demonstrated that, although participants attended several professional development programmes during their careers, these were not specifically designed to develop leadership skills. This result seems to be consistent with other research, such as NIE (2013), even if it is related to school leadership, and Al-Khatib and Al-Enezi (2008), which found that these activities did not consider the needs of managers when determining their content.

This may indicate that the MoE did not recognise the need for managers to demonstrate leadership skills as they only function as effective managers. Alternatively, it could be concluded that the MoE did not realise how it could develop a leadership role for these managers.

Courses have been provided for the managers through the MoE's Department of Development and Improvement or by recruiting private sector companies to run them. The MoE supports the need to introduce PS management techniques to the public sector, especially with the emergence of NPM, which seeks to make the public sector more efficient by restructuring and reorganising the state's privatisation and marketing (Bevir, 2009). Furthermore, some managers made their own efforts to attend some PS courses because they believed they were better than PPMOE, and also perhaps because there was no training plan from the ministry to develop leadership knowledge, understanding, and skills. This underlines the importance of the formal learning model in Fig 7.1 which shows this is an essential part of the model to develop a leadership training plan (this could act as the starting point for the MoE).

However, these companies did not specialise in educational leadership; they targeted private sector and public sector leaders and tended to focus more on managerial development than leadership. Therefore, managers did not feel that these measures were effective because most of them were irrelevant to the field of education and lacked the necessary educational expertise by specialised lecturers.

Most managers appeared to recognise that carrying out their job role effectively helped them acquire leadership skills and learn through the process of reflection. Schön (1983) confirmed that reflection is built on past experiences and may lead to the development of good practice. According to Sellars (2017), it can also help identify personal strengths and improve professional competence. According to social learning theory, effective performance has the greatest impact on this efficiency because it is based on genuine competence experiences (Bandura et al., 1977).

This investigation also confirmed that lived experiences and observations of (more senior) leaders had the greatest impact on developing leadership skills. (Ibarra, 1999; Kempster, 2009; Kempster & Parry, 2014). Such learning based on the observation of human behaviour works with other managers who model how managers or leaders behave (Bandura, 1977; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011).

Accordingly, managers acquired some leadership skills through informal learning methods (e.g. being a team leader) as a result of their participation in some professional development programmes, even if these were not specifically intended to develop leadership skills. Referring to Fig 7.2, these skills will be learned through experience in the workplace by working with others to be a team leader which means "Active Experimentation". However, learning leadership can also be through "Reflective Observation" to avoid learning from poor role models.

### **7.3.3 Importance of Previous Employment Experience**

RSQ3 asked about the extent to which past and current experiences have been helpful in developing the expertise of MoE and ED managers. The analysis of the data indicated that most participants believed that their previous work experience, as well as their current role as managers, had helped develop their expertise. This result is in line with Kempster (2006), McCall (2004), and DeRue and Wellman (2009), who emphasised the importance of previous experience in developing leadership skills. This is evidenced by the stage of "Concrete Experience" in Figure 7.2, which emphasizes, for example, the importance of experience gained through dealing with others.

However, these experiences were often professional experiences that may have helped them in their role as managers; they were not related to leadership roles or teaching experience (experience meaning what happens in schools and what the needs of students and teachers are).

Managers believed that they gained a variety of experiences through formal or informal learning methods to develop their leadership skills according to their perceptions and identification of their needs. However, this does not mean that they had acquired the necessary leadership skills because the learning process depends on the extent of the individuals' willingness to learn and how they retain and apply information when needed. Adult learning depends on the learner him-/herself (Zepeda et al., 2014). According to social learning theory, perceived self-efficacy affects the identification of people's behaviours. Such issues can undoubtedly affect the learning or acquisition of any skill (McCall, 2010).

Interestingly, the data did not refer to any obvious differences between managers who had teaching experience and those who had not had any teaching experience. It could be concluded that they did not realise the importance of their past experience because they only mentioned it in relation to the departments they managed. Managers who did not have any experience working in schools may not have been able to deal with issues related to students' needs and would not understand the teacher's role, functions, and professional needs. This would make it difficult to develop a vision related to their roles as leaders or lead others to achieve it because leadership is learned through activities and events in the context of lived experience (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). This means leadership is very context dependent.

### **7.3.4 Effectiveness of Preparation Programmes for Managers**

The investigation of RSQ4 (i.e., How effective has the training been for MoE and ED managers (before being appointed) to their leadership role?) showed another important finding of this study as there were no specialised training programmes to prepare managers before being appointed in their positions. The managers did attend some courses during their careers to develop their skills, and the majority believed that these activities were to prepare them to carry out their current tasks as managers. They might have also helped them acquire some leadership skills. However, the analysis of these results indicated that managers were confused between what constituted professional development in-service and preparation programmes before appointment to their current position. This is probably because there were no preparation activities specifically targeted to leadership development; as a result, they thought that any development programmes they attended were to prepare them for their new managerial role. Nevertheless, they stressed the ineffectiveness of these courses in developing their skills and ultimately relied on their experience to develop and prepare themselves. This is consistent with data obtained by Alkarni (2015); although this research was related to school leadership (in Saudi Arabia, it emphasised the absence of a preparatory programme for leadership).

The managers in the current study worked with others on a regular basis and had many opportunities to influence their attitudes. This made a key contribution to their leadership development. Some managers tried to prepare themselves and develop their leadership skills during their careers by attending courses, which might not have been appropriate to their actual needs (perhaps because of their lack of experience in this

area), and this therefore refers again to the importance of the MoE playing its role to provide formal learning activities. Figure 7.1 indicates the role of the MoE in cooperation with educational districts to design leadership development programmes after the completion and implementation of the first three stages in FL model (develop a leadership training plan, selection of managers and determination of needs). This model also emphasizes the importance of the education districts' role through organizing activities to develop the leadership skills of its managers in cooperation with other parties (such as Kuwait University or private sector) according to their training needs.

Participants argued for more specialised courses in leadership in each department because each manager's roles and tasks differed from those of his/her colleagues. Indeed, McCall (2010) emphasised that, to support leadership learning through experience, learners' individual differences should be considered. They considered the range of both specialist courses and lecturers as one of the strengths of the preparation programmes. However, this raises a question of how leadership preparation activities are designed most effectively; it might also indicate a need to identify experienced specialists who might need to become involved.

It should be added that participants identified many weaknesses in these programmes (e.g., course leaders were poorly prepared or of a low quality), which in line with indirect evidence from Alkarni (2015), who confirmed that the training of school principals did not fully meet their needs. In addition, the MoE's regulations limited participants' ability to practise what they learned through these activities, as these managers apply regulations from top to the bottom in a very centralised system. Alkandari (2013) highlighted the centrality of Kuwait's education system. According to Carnall and By (2014), the tendency

to abide by rules and regulations, whether appropriate or not, confirms that the regulatory system somewhat limits their ability to carry out their job role effectively.

Some managers also found it difficult to apply what they learned about a leadership role from countries that are different from Kuwaiti society, thereby raising questions about the use of specialists from outside Kuwait to provide courses for managers or to develop training plans. Moreover, sending trainee managers to attend courses in other countries could be questioned. It is important to recognise the significance of culture and context when designing leadership preparation and development programmes in each country (Bush, 2013; Walker et al., 2013).

### **7.3.5 Improving the Effectiveness of the Preparation of Leaders**

Finally, in response to RSQ5 (i.e., How do MoE and ED managers think their leadership preparation might be improved?), the analysis of the data indicated that the majority of managers emphasised the importance of improving the processes of leadership development through professional training programmes which take into account their training needs. Some managers proposed the establishment of a specialised centre for the preparation and professional development of educational leadership, where various activities (such as training courses, workshops, and seminars) could be offered to develop the leadership skills of all candidates before assuming leadership positions. Shields and Cassada (2016) and OECD (2008) also stressed the importance of having strategic plans to develop educational leadership development programmes. In addition, Earley (2013) argued that education managers should be able to obtain support through a variety of reliable sources (e.g. Academic institutions and Institutions of civil society - Fig 7.1). However, most of what is learned about leadership is learned through experience and

cannot be learned before these managers are appointed, unless they are team leaders in another job or headteacher of a school.

Nevertheless, some managers believed that qualifications through specialised educational programmes were unnecessary for managers because the experience they had acquired should be sufficient to prepare them. This assertion contradicts Hamilton's et al. (2018) study, which found that leadership for senior roles requires more complex development activities. Professional development refers to broader changes in the knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and professional actions that can occur over a longer period of time (Fraser et al., 2007).

The results also indicated the importance of dealing with people with relevant experience to develop leaders' skills. In fact, this can be considered more important than formal methods. Working with experienced colleagues is seen a process which helps develop these skills and effectively enhances managers' preparation for their leadership role. Figure 7.2 illustrates the role and importance of consulting experienced managers through the "Concrete Experience" phase, which helps to develop leadership skills for managers. According to Bandura's theory, human beings seek to learn how to meet their needs and desires by observing the consequences of behaviours and events (Roedelein, 2006).

In addition, most managers who participated in this study believed that the current conditions for selecting candidates for the post of manager should be applied more scrupulously and that accountability processes could be activated for those who violate these rules, which is in accord with studies by Bush and Middlewood (2013), Alkandari (2013), and Thurlow (2009). Such efforts could reduce the interference of *wasta* in staff

evaluation, which is consistent with Ashkanani's (2001) conclusion that the inefficiency of the public sector evaluation system is due to many shortcomings.

The results also indicated that interviews were not useful for selecting the right candidates for a management position because *wasta* also interferes in the candidate's evaluation process. This belief was further compounded by a lack of clear criteria used by the committee members. The managers also doubted the committee members' abilities and skills to choose the right person to be a manager. Bush and Middlewood (2013) suggested that this process is most susceptible to personal bias. Therefore, the selection processes should be reconsidered to ensure that those who possess the required abilities and skills of leadership are selected.

#### **7.4 Limitations of the Conceptual Framework and Research Design**

The researcher has identified many limitations which affected the interpretations of the data.

First, the use of an interpretive approach meant relying on the researcher's interpretations, which created a kind of bias or tendency towards personal opinions when discussing the data. However, because of the researcher's professional experience working in schools, this helped instigate more profound dialogues and discussion, which in turn led to the clarification of key issues. Still, this approach has limitations because responses are dependent on participants' activities, experiences, expectations, and statements, making it too subjective in nature. The participants' attitudes varied because of their backgrounds and experiences; in other words, they had many different perspectives on the same issues. However, on the positive side, this made it easier for the

researcher to provide more than one reason or explanation for participants' opinions when discussed, away from any prejudice.

In addition, the extent to which participants understood the differences between some of the key concepts in this study, such as management and leadership, as well as development programmes (in-service) or preparation activities (before appointment) was one of the limitations that the researcher attempted to overcome. The researcher clarified these concepts during discussions and gave participants more time to ask and inquire about any misunderstanding of these terms.

Some participants' attendance at a limited number of professional development programmes is another limitation of this study, as they did not have a clear understanding of these programmes and thus could not judge their effectiveness. Participation in such activities was not a prerequisite for promotion, so some managers did not consider these to be a priority.

During the interviews, it was necessary to clarify some questions for the participants, despite the questions being piloted to ensure clarity. In addition, there were individual differences between participants because each person interpreted each question according to his or her own understanding.

Wider contextual limitations in Kuwait were also evident. The study was conducted between December 2016 and March 2017, a period between the end of the first semester and the beginning of the second of the academic year in Kuwait. Managers were often very busy during this time because they were attending administrative meetings to follow up on preparations for the second semester. Furthermore, conditions

that prevailed in the country during that period, such as the Kuwait National Assembly elections and the restructuring of the government (during November and December 2016) as well as Kuwait's National and Liberation Day celebrations (in February), also affected participants' availability because managers were busy with these important events in Kuwaiti society as a whole. The researcher considered these events as limitations mainly because some of the managers were initially reluctant to participate because of their preoccupation with other tasks.

The presence of vacancies in the departments of some of the managers in the sample reduced the number of participants, despite the researcher trying to collect the largest number of questionnaires to improve the response rate. The researcher tried to overcome this limitation by engaging in in-depth discussions with the participants and taking notes during the interviews so as not to lose any explanations or possible analyses of any word or gesture from participants. This approach ensured that the researcher obtained and retained as much of the data as possible.

The research sample included acting managers who had to move between two departments to carry out their tasks. This may have reduced their ability to focus on their administration issues. In addition, these participants might have lacked familiarity with other departments' problems.

The translation of dialogues also had its limitations. Some gestures and phrases used in colloquial Arabic are difficult to translate directly into English. Therefore, the researcher sought to take notes during the interviews and then, after the translation, presented and discussed the transcripts and recordings with someone who had mastered the two languages to ensure that the translation was done correctly and accurately.

Finally, interviews were conducted with only eight managers; as a result, these findings cannot be generalised, despite the sample representing all 42 managers and targeting different ages, genders, and people from various departments (some from the MoE and others from ED with different expertise), as well as managers and acting managers.

## **7.5 Implications for Practice**

This research highlights a number of implications for managers to help them exercise a leadership role more effectively in future. These are discussed herein.

The education system in Kuwait is centralised; therefore, the responsibility of the Ministry of Education is to develop opportunities to design programmes to better prepare managers for a leadership role. This could be considered by specialists in leadership training, but the MoE should not neglect the role of civil society institutions, academic institutions, and the private sector in contributing to the design and facilitation of these activities.

In-service training programmes could be designed to be continuous by integrating development activities with managers' daily activities. This can be achieved by having senior and experienced leaders participating with managers in meetings and seminars, where their previous work experiences can combine with new practices.

Conditions could be created for new managers (or those who are expected to be promoted to the manager position) to work with experienced managers as well as allow them to exercise some leadership roles, where the proximity of experienced people would help new managers learn from them. In addition, the MoE might encourage InFL processes, such as self-awareness, reflexivity, relational aspects of leadership,

experiential, work-based stretching activities, and mentoring/coaching, to improve leadership development.

As experience has a significant impact on the development of leadership skills for managers, there is a need to follow up, reflect upon, and evaluate their performance to discover weaknesses and take remedial action. If the methods used are effective, the approach can consolidate these attitudes as positive, adding to managers' experiences and enhancing their leadership skills.

Although the Department of Development and Improvement aims to develop all MoE employees, there may be a need to establish a specialised training department as a part of a centre for the development and preparation of educational leadership. This might include trainers with the requisite experience and qualifications to train the staff of the MoE in supervisory positions only. It could also include various activities according to different levels of management, such as programmes dedicated to school management leaders separate from the development activities of departmental managers in the MoE and EDs.

The development of a training plan needs to include the identification of training needs, objectives, and target groups (education leaders) and contain content relevant to educational leadership. There also needs to be a clear identification of qualified lecturers with experience in training methods so that they can connect theory with application. In addition, the time and duration of the course should be proportional to the content and the predetermined goals.

Diverse and effective sources of learning should be provided, such as a database of the latest studies in educational leadership as well as the establishment of a specialist advisory board to advise and assist new managers, as needed.

Qualified teachers can understand more about teachers' work and how to work with others, such as parents and students, but that does not mean that they will be successful managers and leaders. Although those who are not qualified as teachers may not understand what the educational field needs, they can become good managers because they know the details of administrative processes. Therefore, perhaps one solution to this problem is to combine qualifications in teaching with professional experience in leadership and management. Moreover, the promotion and appointment to the manager position could be linked with obtaining a qualification from the Centre for the Development and Preparation of Educational Leaders or by attending integrated courses for the development of educational leaders for a period of three months to one year. In other words, attending professional development courses is a prerequisite for applying for leadership positions, with an emphasis on relevant courses aimed at providing trainees with leadership skills.

Those who have experience in schools and have already exercised some leadership roles during the various stages in their work in the education field should be targeted when selecting candidates for manager positions in any department, whether the MoE or EDs, which may improve and facilitate leadership preparation processes for these managers.

Selection methods for managers need to be developed, such as by creating practical and clear controls for nominating managers for their new positions.

The current conditions for promotion, such as years of experience, performance in evaluations, and interviews, are appropriate, but may need to be adapted to avoid some gaps when applied. For example:

- A candidate's experience should be in the same management specialty to which he/she been nominated so that he/she is aware of his/her tasks and role in this department.
- Some of the performance appraisal items should be redesigned to match the roles and functions of the new position so that these items are specific and clear to reduce bias when assessing the employee.
- The candidate might present a new plan to develop the department that he/ she is expected to manage (or by solving any problem related to the education system in Kuwait) in order to better evaluate this candidate (e.g., through presentation skills and the quality of ideas).

The preference of managers for private sector courses may indicate that they are aware of the importance of such opportunities, especially in light of the growing impact of globalisation on the education system and the entry of the private sector into the labour market in Kuwait (including the education sector). Therefore, it is very important to focus on efficiency when making changes in the formal organisation of the education sector as well as identifying the necessary expertise for procedures related to partnership with the private sector. In addition, managers should be given greater power and freedom in decision-making to enable them to exercise their leadership roles and develop their skills by applying what they have learned from the training programmes, activities, and professional experiences acquired during their careers.

## **7.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

The aim of this research was to explore the effectiveness of the educational leadership preparation and development programmes, focusing on the MoE and ED department managers only. The following suggestions for future studies will make a useful contribution to the theoretical literature in this area:

- More qualitative work is needed to understand how the identity of managers develops, especially in relation to becoming effective leaders.
- Issues that emerged from this study should be explored in greater depth, such as investigating managers' perceptions of themselves and how they form a personal, social, and professional leadership identity.
- Future researchers should investigate the impact of the training programmes on managers' practice in their leadership roles from the point of view of the lower functional levels, such as supervisors and school administrators.

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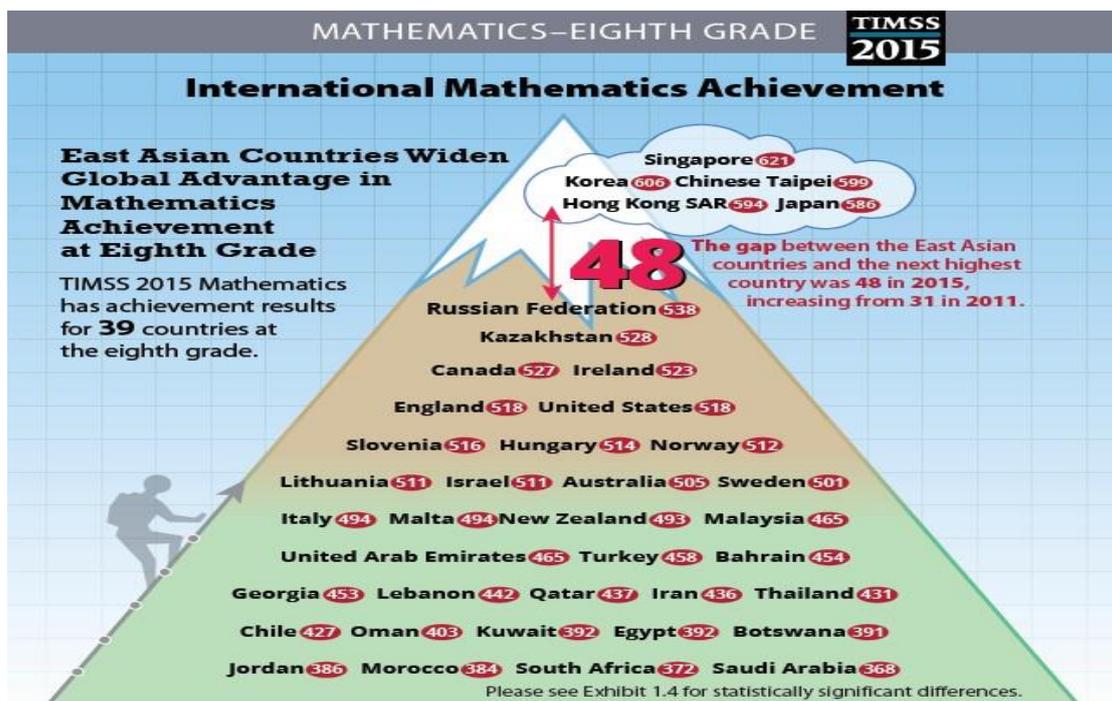
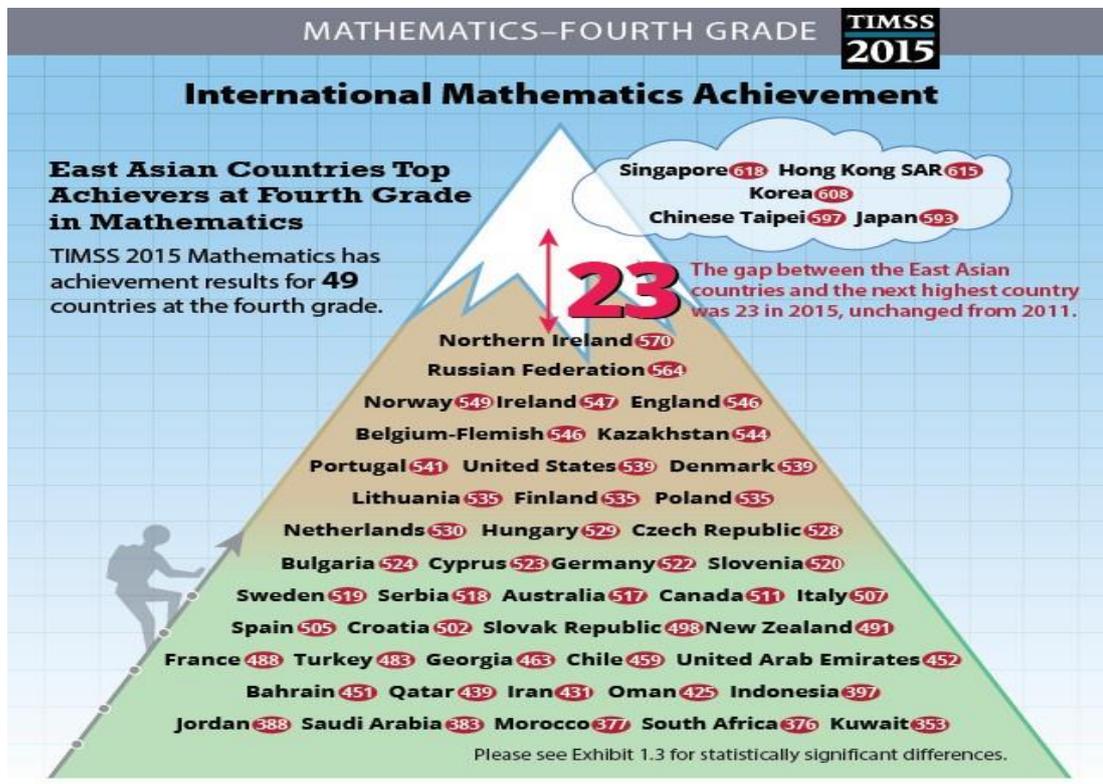
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# Appendix 1: Kuwait's Ranking in TIMSS 2015

(Mathematics and Science)

Source: <https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/timss2015/>



**International Science Achievement**

**Singapore the Top Achiever at Eighth Grade in Science. Japan, Chinese Taipei, Korea, and Slovenia also in the Top Five.**

TIMSS 2015 Science has achievement results for **39** countries at the eighth grade.

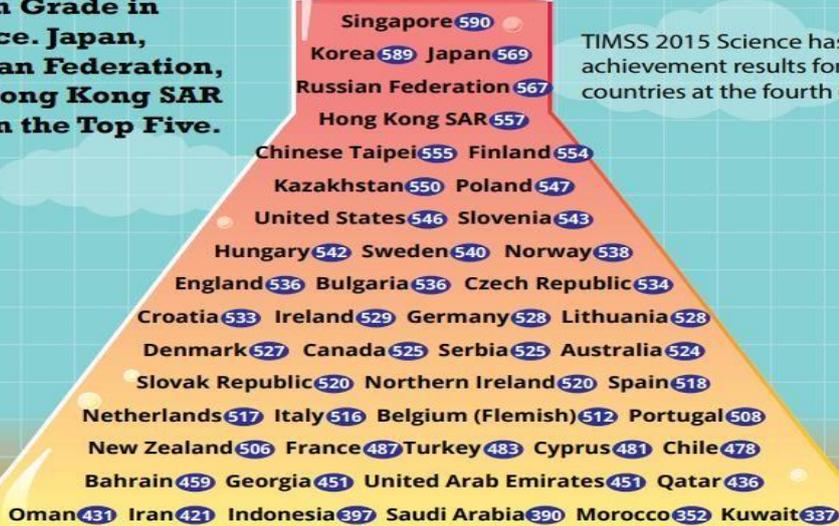


Please see Exhibit 1.4 for statistically significant differences.

**International Science Achievement**

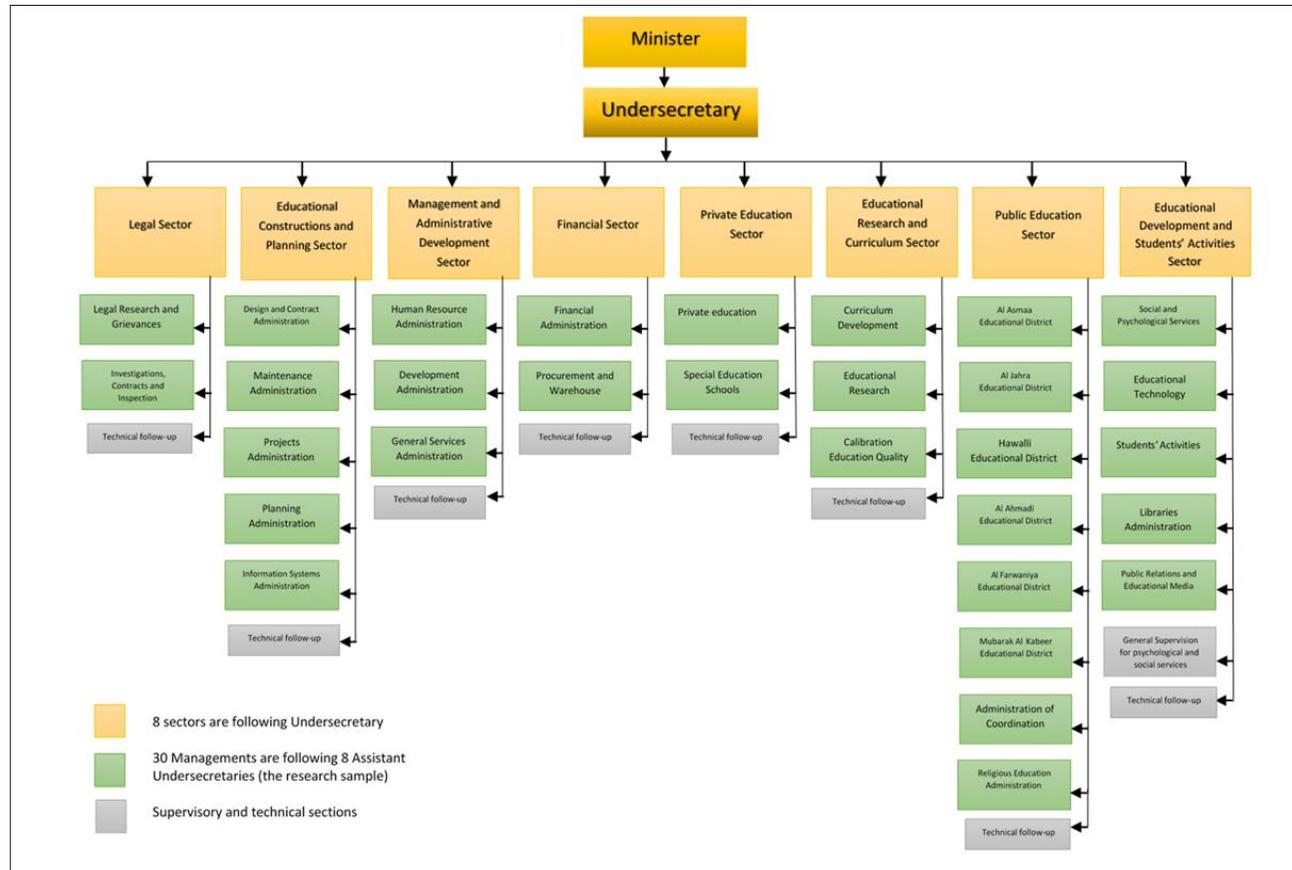
**Singapore and Korea the Top Achievers at Fourth Grade in Science. Japan, Russian Federation, and Hong Kong SAR also in the Top Five.**

TIMSS 2015 Science has achievement results for **47** countries at the fourth grade.



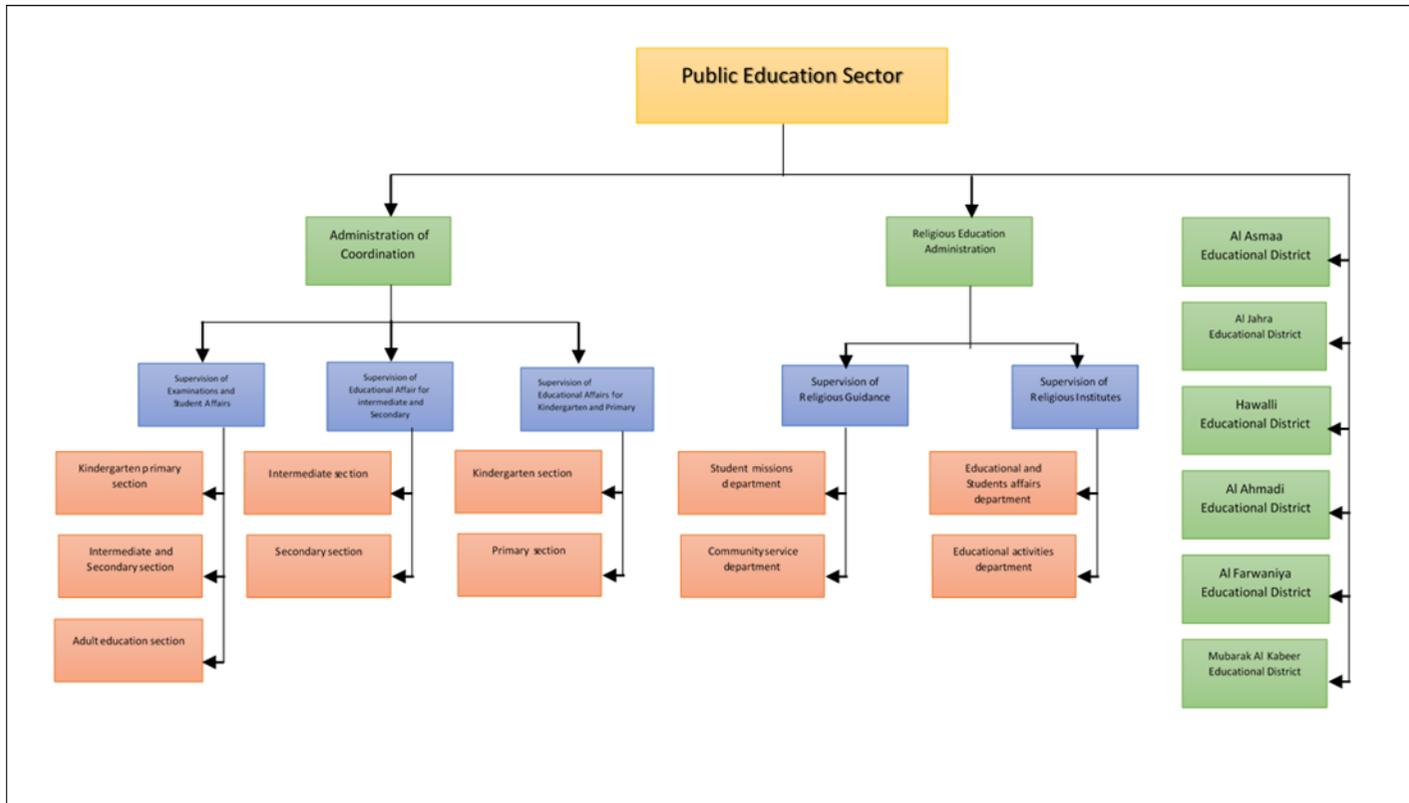
Please see Exhibit 1.3 for statistically significant differences.

## Appendix 2: Structure of the Ministry of Education (MoE)



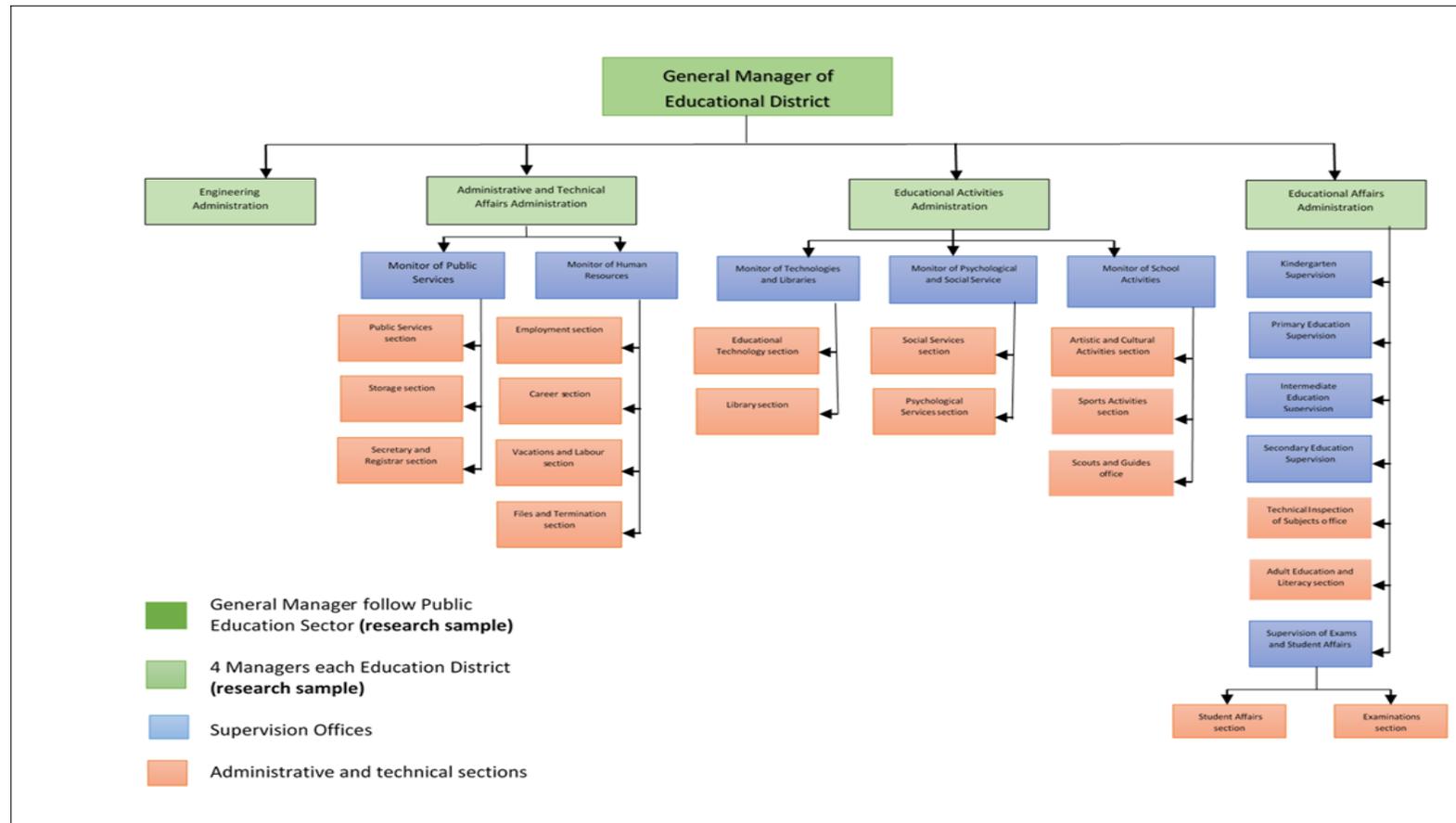
Source: MOE (2015). Organizational Structure. Retrieved from [http://www.moe.edu.kw/about/Pages/Ministry Hierarchy/moe-Stru.aspx](http://www.moe.edu.kw/about/Pages/Ministry%20Hierarchy/moe-Stru.aspx)

### Appendix 3: Structure of the Public Education Sector



Source: MOE. (2015). Organizational Structure. Retrieved from <http://www.moe.edu.kw/about/Pages/Ministry Hierarchy/moe-Stru.aspx>

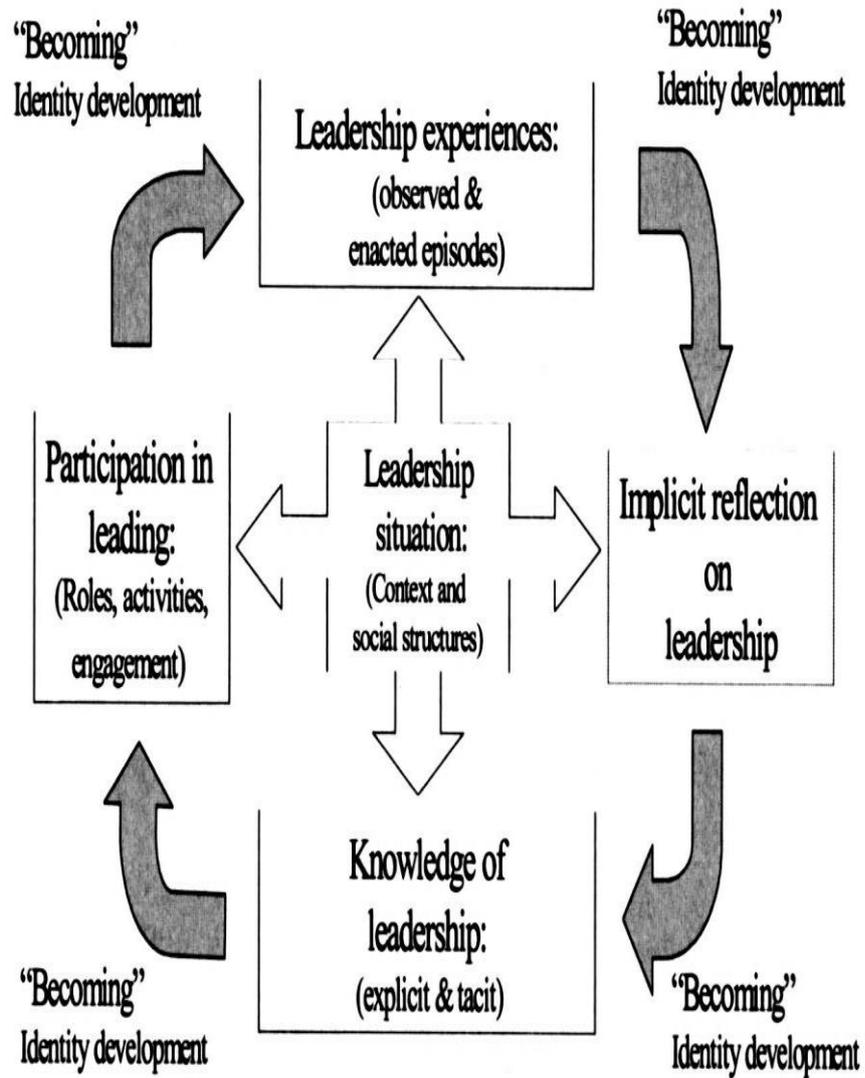
## Appendix 4: Structure of an Educational District (ED)



Source: MOE. (2015). Organizational Structure. Retrieved from <http://www.moe.edu.kw/about/Pages/Ministry Hierarchy/moe-Stru.aspx>

## Appendix 5: Emerging Concept of Leadership Learning

This emerging concept of leadership learning draws upon Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle (Kempster, 2006).



**FIGURE 2: LEADERSHIP LEARNING AS LIVED EXPERIENCE**

## Appendix 6: Questionnaire (English version)

Title of research: *Learning about leadership in the Ministry of Education and Educational Districts in the State of Kuwait*

The aim of this research is to investigate your perceptions about educational managers' preparation, both in post and before being appointed that can develop their abilities and skills to fulfil their leadership functions. It is hoped that your participation in answering the sections of this questionnaire may help to select the most appropriate ways of improving leadership training in Kuwait. Please answer all the questions.

- Name (optional): .....
- My Job: .....
- My workplace: Education Ministry  Education District
- Gender: Male  Female
- Years of Experience since my appointment: 5-9  10-14  above 15
- How many years have you spent as a teacher:  
None  1-4  5-9  10-14  above 15
- How many years have you spent as an administrator:  
None  1-4  5-9  10-14  above 15
- Years of Experience since appointment to the supervisory position (starting from Head of Department): 1-4  5-9  10-14  above 15
- Years of experience in my Current Position: 1-4  5-9  10-14  above 15
- Number of training courses you attended pre-appointment as a manager to prepare yourself for an educational leader role .....
- Number of professional development and training courses attended over the last five years: .....

**First:** please answer the following two questions:

1. What do you think the term 'management' means to you? (In one sentence or more)

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2. What do you think the term 'leadership' means to you? (In one sentence or more)

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**Second:** Please tick one of the boxes which most closely represent your view.

**Section A: Perception of myself as a leader in the education system.**

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q1	Previous experience has helped me perform my leadership role successfully.					
Q2	I have the skills and abilities to be able to lead my department.					
Q3	My current position gives me more authority than I was able to exercise in my previous post.					
Q4	The relationship between myself and the employees of administration is different, now I have become a senior manager.					
Q5	I have the skills to deal with different personalities who are the employees of the administration.					
Q6	I sometimes experience real challenges and difficulties as an educational manager.					
Q7	The leadership role requires special skills.					
Q8	I see myself capable of leading successfully.					
Q9	I see myself as a role model for team members.					
Q10	I have the responsibility to lead the team.					
Q11	I need help to understand and deal with different personalities who are members of the team.					
Q12	I have experience and skills to enable me to achieve the educational goals.					
Q13	I can lead others through inspiration and influence them.					
Q14	I do not think my previous experience has helped me to lead successfully.					

**Section B: The impact of any training in preparation for my role as educational leader.**

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q15	There are training programmes provided by the <u>Ministry of Education</u> to prepare myself as an educational leader.					
Q16	Educational leadership preparation programmes provided by the <u>Ministry of Education</u> have not met my needs as an educational leader.					
Q17	There are training programmes provided by the <u>private sector</u> to prepare myself as an educational leader.					
Q18	The training programmes provided by the <u>private sector</u> have not met my needs as an educational leader.					
Q19	Attending training programmes has not prepared me as an educational leader.					
Q20	Preparation programmes prior to appointment as a manager have helped to develop my leadership skills.					
Q21	The training programmes for educational leaders were designed upon a prior estimate for their actual needs					

Q22: What are your views about training programmes provided by the Ministry of Education to prepare educational leaders for their role as leaders?

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Q23: What are your views about training programmes provided by the private sector to prepare educational leaders for their role as leaders? (If you have attended these)

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**Section C: Engagement in leadership professional development activities**

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q24	Professional development (in service) is necessary for educational leaders.					
Q25	There are professional development programmes provided by the <u>Ministry of Education</u> to improve educational leadership skills.					
Q26	Professional development programmes of educational leadership provided by the <u>Ministry of Education</u> have met my needs as an educational leader (in service).					
Q27	Professional development programmes of educational leadership provided by the <u>Ministry of Education</u> do not develop my leadership skills effectively.					
Q28	There are professional development programmes provided by the <u>private sector</u> to improve educational leadership skills.					
Q29	Professional development programmes of educational leadership provided by <u>the private sector</u> have met my needs as an educational leader (in service).					
Q30	Professional development programmes of educational leadership provided by <u>the private sector</u> do not develop my leadership skills effectively.					

Q31: The following activities have helped me develop the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills as an educational leader.

(please tick more than one box, if it is appropriate)

- Self-directed study**
- Using distance-learning materials**
- Receiving on-the-job coaching, tutoring or mentoring**
- Membership of a working party.**
- Training courses or Workshops**
- Seminar or Presentation related to your role as a leader**
- Action research** (any systematic enquiry conducted by administrators, counsellors, or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process, for the purpose of gathering data about how they and their team or organisation operate).
- Job-shadowing** (work experience option where a person learns the functions of the position through the follow-up experienced at the workplace).
- Personal reflection** (such as writing daily notes and discussions with experienced colleagues, or re-revising part of the previously set plan and re-evaluating achievements and goals achieved).
- Collaborative learning** (opportunity to share good practice can occur in departmental meetings and other more informal settings such as a lunchtime discussions).

Q32: Of the activities described in Q31, please explain which **two** have been the most effective, and why they have been effective?

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Q33: What are your views about professional development programmes provided by the Ministry of Education to improve the skills of educational leaders (e.g. strategic planning, problem solving, etc.)?

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Q34: What are your views about the professional development programmes provided by the private sector to improve the skills of educational leaders? (If you have attended these)

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**Section D: Informal Learning:** May occur in institutions, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured. (e.g. task accomplishment, interpersonal interaction, trial-and-error experimentation).

**Da: My experiences as an educational leader.**

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q35	Experience I gained before upgrading to a leadership role enables me to carry out my functions successfully.					
Q36	My previous skills and expertise have had a positive effect on the ways I exercise leadership.					
Q37	My previous experiences have increased my professional knowledge as a leader.					
Q38	My previous skills and expertise have no significant impact on the way I exercise leadership.					

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q39	My relationship with my previous managers developed my knowledge as a leader.					
Q40	I learned some leadership skills from my former managers.					
Q41	My experience in dealing with my former managers has not helped me in my current role as a leader.					
Q42	Learning from the experience of others develops leadership skills.					
Q43	Discussing work problems with colleagues develops my knowledge as a leader.					
Q44	Dealing with team members enriches my experience as a leader.					
Q45	I share information and knowledge with my staff to develop work.					

**Db: Working with others:**

Q 46: What are the most two important leadership skills that you have learned from dealing with others (e.g. other managers, your team members)?

**Please select from the following list:**

- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Sharing a vision of how to implement current educational policy
- Leading a team of colleagues
- Influence others

Q 47: What are the most important informal learning methods that are effective in developing leadership skills from your perspective?

**Please select one from the following list:**

- Personal experience
- The experiences of others
- Discussions with colleagues
- Reading books and studies

Other:

**Section E: Some suggestions to improve educational leadership preparation.**

Q48: Educational leadership preparation can be improved through:

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**Note:** As a follow-up to this survey, is the researcher's intention to carry out personal interviews with a sample of leaders in the Ministry of Education and educational districts based on the results of this questionnaire. If you are willing to participate in these interviews, please tick the box:

agree                       disagree

If you agree, could you please provide the following:

Your name: .....

Contact details (telephone, email): .....

Thank you very much for dedicating some of your time to completing this questionnaire.

Researcher's mobile: .....

## Appendix 7: Prompt Card

### **Examples of leadership skills:**

- Strategic planning
- Problems solving
- Communication skills
- Work as a team
- Decision-making skills
- Ability to resolve disputes
- Analytical skills
- Inspiration and motivation
- Confidence
- Ethical commitment

### ***What is informal learning?***

It happens in any institution or organisation, but not in classes, and is considered less structured. Examples include:

- Task completion
- Interpersonal interaction
- Trial and error
- Previous personal experiences or others' experiences
- Peer discussion
- Reading books and studies

## Appendix 8: Interview Question (pilot study)

- 1- Could you please describe any differences between being a leader and being a manager in your present role?
- 2- To what extent do you see yourself as a leader in the educational system?
- 3- Could you please describe your previous experiences and responsibilities before you were appointed to your present post? What are the effects on your present job?
- 4- Did you receive (attend) training programmes to prepare you for your title (present role) as an educational leader?... Tell me more about those programmes ... What did you learn from those programmes?
- 5- What are the most 3 sides of these programs that helped you?  
Why this side of the program helped you?  
What is the effect of this on you personally?
- 6- To what extent did you participate in the professional development programmes for educational leaders after being appointed as an educational leader?
- 7- Do you think that those programmes had a significant impact on developing your leadership skills? How? Tell me more.
- 8- What are the most important informal learning methods that are effective in developing leadership skills from your perspective? What are the methods you used to develop your skills? Can you explain please.
- 9- Did you change your practice in any way after going on the programmes?  
If yes, How?... Tell me more  
If no, why? ...Tell me more about that
- 10- How do you think the educational leader's preparation process can be developed?
- 11- To what extent do you think the present method of selecting educational leaders should be changed? Why? What are the criteria that should be taken to select educational leaders?

## Appendix 9: Interview Questions (main study)

- (1) Could you please describe any differences between being a leader and being a manager in your present role?
- (2) Could you please describe your previous experiences and responsibilities before you were appointed to your present post? What are the effects on your present job?
- (3) Did you receive (attend) training programmes to prepare you for your title (present role) as an educational leader?  
If yes, tell me more about those programmes and what you learned from them. What are their strengths and weaknesses from your point of view?  
If no, why not?
- (4) To what extent did you participate in the professional development programmes for educational leaders after being appointed an educational leader?
- (5) Do you think that those programmes had a significant impact on developing your leadership skills? How? Tell me more.
- (6) What are the most important informal learning methods that are effective in developing leadership skills from your perspective? Why? Please explain.
- (7) Did you change your practice in any way after going on the programmes?  
If yes, how so? Tell me more.  
If no, why not? Tell me more.
- (8) How do you think the educational leader's preparation process can be developed?
- (9) To what extent do you think the present method of selecting educational leaders should be changed? Why? What are the criteria that should be considered when selecting educational leaders?

## Appendix 10: Participant Information Sheet

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study about the preparation of educational administrators which helps you to carry out your role in order to lead and manage change in the State of Kuwait, in the light of the recent reforms in education from 2005 onwards.

### *What is the study?*

The study is part of a PhD dissertation that I am completing at the Institute of Education, University of Reading. It aims to explore the effectiveness of leadership and management preparation in the Ministry of Education and educational districts to carry out their role in terms of leading and managing change in Kuwait.

### *Why have I been chosen to take part?*

You have been invited to take part in the project because you are an educational administrator in the Ministry of Education or educational districts.

### *Do I have to take part?*

It is entirely up to you whether you participate. You may also withdraw at any time during the project, without any repercussions to you, by contacting the research team using the details above.

### *What will happen if I take part?*

An interview will be conducted with you at a time convenient to you, lasting about 45 minutes, in which you will be asked about your professional development and the experience you gained as an educational administrator. With your permission, this interview will be recorded and transcribed.

### *What are the risks and benefits of taking part?*

The information you give will remain confidential and will only be seen by the researcher and her supervisor. You will not be identified in the final dissertation, although some of your responses will be used in an anonymised form. No information will be shared with others.

The information you provide will be useful for achieving the research study aims, which will in turn help the development of educational administrators' performance by exploring and understanding participants' experiences (without their identification). A copy of the findings of the study can be made available to you by contacting the researcher.

*What will happen to the data?*

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence, and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer. Only the student researcher, Mrs. Alenezi, and the researcher's supervisor, Dr. Chris Turner, will have access to the records. The data will be securely destroyed after 5 years. The data will be presented in my dissertation and possibly in subsequent academic publications.

I do hope that you will agree to take part in the study. If you do, please complete the attached consent form.

This application has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. Thank you for your time.

## Appendix 11: Questionnaire Participants' Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what you want me to do. All my questions have been answered. I agree to take part in this project.

I understand that it is my choice to help with this project and that I can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

I have received a copy of this Consent Form and of the Information Sheet.

Please tick as appropriate:

I am willing to take part in a survey which will be conducted by Mrs. Alenezi

Name:

Signed:

## Appendix 12: Interview Participants' Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what you want me to do. All my questions have been answered. I agree to take part in this project.

I understand that it is my choice to help with this project and that I can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

I have received a copy of this Consent Form and of the Information Sheet.

Please tick as appropriate:

I am willing to take part in an interview where Mrs. Alenezi will take notes

I am willing to take part in an interview which will be recorded.

I am not willing to take part in an interview.

Name:

Signed:

## Appendix 13: Interview Transcript Sample (pilot study)

### **1-Could you please describe any differences between being a leader and being a manager in your present role?**

P: There is a big similarity between the manager and the leader, with a simple difference, which is that the manager focuses on a particular classified part, for example, a manager can be a financial manager, an administrative manager, etc...

R: You mean it's according to speciality and position?

P: Yes, it is, the similarity between a manager & a leader lies in the technical & behavioural things, i.e. how he deals with his team & how he can manage the emergent problems. A leader should have a strategic solution & a strategic view to the future, which according to it he can run the place. There is a big similarity, but the difference is that the manager is the specialization in something & the management of a certain speciality, that includes being a leader. The leadership is how to lead a group of people, a leader leads a group of people and also leads the whole place.

R: So, do you describe yourself as a leader or as a manager, or both?

P: For me, I basically consider myself a manager more than a leader, because I have the leadership abilities but in certain specialities.

R: This leads us to the second question:

### **2- To what extent do you see yourself as a leader in the educational system?**

P: No, No... I'm so far from leadership in the educational system, because the leader in the educational system is supposed to have more than one side such as: general education, curricula and teaching style. These sides should be specified and should include more than one group; I think I'm responsible for one side only, which is the (...) side.

R: Well, but who is the leader from your point of view?

P: Yes, the leader is the person who develop the general policy, this is a general leadership; I'm a leader in my group, I'm a leader in the (...) group (he means ... administration), I'm not an educational leader.

R: So, you are now a leader of the (...) administration, but you are working inside the educational system which this means that you are may be dealing with teachers and headteachers, beside that the (...) matters in the Ministry of Education differ from the (...) matters in other ministries, don't they?

P: that's right... I'd like to explain a certain point: I'm the manager of the (...) administration, if I was a manager in another ministry, my performance and my production would be the same (according to my speciality), but if you meant that I'm helping in the educational process, then yes, I do... I have an effective role in it because I introduce the (...) and other issues, but I don't have any relationship with the curricula or in the educational process itself... I did not say that (X) is a teacher who teaches (Y) subject or teaches in (Z) school, this person has an effective role in educational process, but me , I'm helping in, but I don't have an effective role in the educational policy, because my position is more restricted (he means that he has limitations in his relationships and dealings) because I works under regulations and rules, and I don't have scope for creation because I receives orders and execute them. This is the difference between being an educational leader and a leader of a group.

R: This means that you are considering yourself as a leader of a group?

P: Yes, I'm a leader of a group (he means in his administration).

**3- Could you please describe your previous experiences and responsibilities before you were appointed to your present post? What are the effects on your present job?**

P: I have achieved many tasks and missions and I have taken over the management of many team works; I have also achieved some developmental activities at work before being a manager.

R: Do you mean that you have previous experiences in team management?

P: Yes, I have managed important teamwork in very sensitive situations; I delegated large groups to handle certain problems, I have established a new division for work development. I started working through computers instead of paper work, I have put in place mechanisms for work and documentation and many other jobs I have achieved before being a manager, I have progressed in my job from a novice (...) to a manager; through that, I worked in different departments and I became aware about many tasks and jobs.

R: you mean that your previous tasks and responsibilities you achieved, earned you an experience that helped you so much?

P: yes, I have been a leader of small groups and large groups - up to 100 or more employees.

R: well, but what is the effect of these various experiences on your current role?

P: It helped me face the problems and solve them quickly, it raised my promptitude and helped me to take the decisions with trust, not in a hurry, by following the right scientific style based on my experience and on certain procedures followed to solve certain problems. It also helped me face certain crises and execute orders issued by the higher authorities. So, thanks to Allah, these previous experiences qualified me to be fast in decision making and in my way of thinking.

R: Do you mean that you are successful at your role?

P: I can't say that, but there are others who can evaluate me.

R: yes, I understand that, but we'd like to know your opinion about yourself?

P: thank to Allah, I have enough trust to be here.

**4- Did you receive (attend) training programmes to prepare you for your title (present role) as an educational leader?... Tell me more about those programmes ... What did you learn from those programmes?**

P: No, I haven't attended special training courses to prepare me to be manager, I had benefits from the courses I attended.

R: Do you mean that you had courses but not specialized courses in leadership? Because we are interested in leadership courses.

P: Yes, I had one course (I can't remember its name) but it was about preparing leaders.

R: When did you attend this course?

P: Before being a manager.

R: Was it provided by the ministry of education or it was you who looked for it?

P: It was provided by the ministry and I accepted it; I also had benefit from a previous course.

R: You mean you had a professional benefit?

P: No, No, on the contrary, I have attended a course I wish everybody could attend, which was for interpersonal skills - how you can interact with surrounding people and how to solve any problem immediately and independently. I learned how to control myself.

R: Did you learn this on the leader's preparation course?

P: No, this was different, I had that when I was head of department.

**5- What are the three aspects of these programmes that most helped you? Why did these help you? What is the effect of this on you personally?**

P: The most effective point is the people who attended with me, because I discovered other experiences other than mine. Well, the lecturer introduced theoretical material, but the attendance of other participants helped us to exchange experiences during discussion.

R: Do you mean that the course was like a lecture?

P: Yes, it was a class lecture, where the lecturer introduces the lecture, then started a discussion, it became like a workshop. What I have learned is if there is someone whom I was watching from a distance, he was acting in certain situations, I judged that he was not a good person, it was an external judgment, but when I talked to him, I knew him well. I

discovered that there are things I can learn from others and get benefit. I always prefer panel discussion rather than lectures.

R: you mean like workshops or seminars?

P: Yes, seminars are more important than lectures in classes. Of course, we receive information, but how can we gain more experiences in such classes if we didn't have interactive conversation with each other?

R: You mentioned one benefit only for these programmes which is the in-class discussions.

P: Yes, it was very helpful and it broke down the fear inside me.

R: Was this the effect on your personality? I mean did it increase your self-trust?

P: Of course, when you find someone to discuss with, it's completely different from being just a recipient; I mean you can receive information, listen and listen again, but where is the action? Where is the response? if I couldn't speak (discuss) in such lectures, it's less useful. I'm going to tell you about a previous experience: when I started holding meetings with the assistant undersecretary, I was young and my voice was always loud; I was impulsive too, because I was enthusiastic, and one day, the assistant undersecretary said to me: "This is not the right way for discussion, you should listen, meditate then reply, and your reply should be always useful (he means I should reply appropriately), I'm asking you to keep this advice in your mind at every meeting". Sometimes I was shouting and screaming but he said to me: "No, No, we are listening to you". At the next meeting I developed the experience of listening and writing notes, I had complete self-control. At the third and fourth meetings I repeated that until I became the leader of such meetings. These all were experiences I have gained.

**6- To what extent did you participate in the professional development programmes for educational leaders after being appointed as an educational leader?**

P: can you explain more? Do you mean if I had participated or had been asked to join such programmes?

R: I mean did you seek participation of such programmes?

P: I have attended some special seminars about (...) and about Civil Service Commission - they were related to my speciality.

R: These seminars were about your speciality. Have you ever attended courses about leadership?

P: There weren't any courses about leadership, or conferences about it on the educational level; there were no conferences about leadership at all. There is no what we can call an extended conference for the leaders. Even on a national level. If I need to attend a lecture or course, where can I go for? There is no specific location to attend such courses to develop certain abilities in leadership. We asked for courses, but in most (90%) cases, there were no such available.

R: Does the Ministry provide these courses?

P: Few, so so few.

R: Do you mean it is not dedicated for leadership?

P: These courses are not specific for educational leadership. For example, if you want to attend a preparation course for educational leaders, ... etc. Where will that kind of course be? It does not exist. Sometime I select some courses from the course programme (He means list of courses) - which I think it is proper for me – and when I went for registration, I found nobody registered and accordingly it was cancelled. This situation has happened many times.

R: Do you mean that you selected the courses as per your requirements?

P: Yes, I did, but it had been cancelled. If the courses had been selected before, why didn't the Ministry provide these courses upon those prior selections? I am wondering, how many courses are provided by the Civil Service Commission related to leadership? (He means there are no such courses or may be negligible)

R: Do you mean the courses which you asked for are not provided by the Ministry?

P: I already asked for those courses many times before because I am not looking forward to my current professional position after all that period, I am already saturated from it such as (...) issues and preparing (...). I already saturated from all of them but I need to learn how to be a leader, develop myself and develop the work itself. At this point, we have a very big deficiency in those courses.

**7- Do you think that those programmes had a significant impact on developing your leadership skills? How? Tell me more.**

(Presented a prompt card for participant to clarify what leadership skills are)

P: All those abilities already existed (He means that he has those skills).

R: What I mean is, are those abilities gained from the courses or from experience?

P: Everybody knows himself well... I am a self-confident human and I am not afraid of anything even taking decisions. I am ready to do what I think is right, face everything and defend my decisions. On the other hand, I will not do anything that I am not convinced about and nobody can make me do it. So, if we want to talk about strategic planning; we already have it but unfortunately it is not available for everything. Sometimes, I prepare a strategic plan for five years hence to develop a certain task then I am surprised that there is no available budget for it and in these cases, we transfer it to another department to provide it. We plan, but sometimes we cannot execute that plan. We just do our best.

**8- What are the most important informal learning methods that are effective in developing leadership skills from your perspective? What are the methods you used to develop your skills? Can you explain please.**

R: I am always up to date and follow up on the specialist television programme related to the management topic. I gained experience from them. From my point of view, to be inside the issue or problem is much better than observing it from the outside. (He means to coexist and react to the issue). It could be an administration issue but you just observe it from the outside and you do not react to it, so you will not gain any experience from it. But when you coexist with the issue, you will gain the experience. For example, it happened that someone came to my department to review some requirements and he

was very nervous and caused disruption in his work. I dealt with him patiently, although I did not have any previous experience in such cases, and I resolved that issue. That was a successful experience for me and I learned how to cope and gained experience which I used in other situations. So, as I said, it is better to coexist with the issue than to observe it from the outside. I learned that without attending any courses.

R: Can we consider that type of learning as the personal experiment?

P: I think it is how dealing with a difficult situation. Also, I would to add another case, that was a sudden assignment for some task. For example, one of the top managers assigned me to a certain position which was far removed from my career and asked me to achieve some tasks.

R: Did you feel that was challenging for you?

P: Yes, it challenged me. I was assigned to be contact officer with the Ministry of Finance, although I am employee and the task was related to computer techniques but also related to (...) and under the special circumstances I was assigned to that task, and when I rejected that due to lack of experience of this, my top manager advised me to learn, and he added, that there was nothing difficult. He provided support and helped me. That situation made me put pressure on myself and to collect all the required information, even it was out of my job remit and, thanks to Allah, I succeeded.

R: Did that situation and sudden assignment affect you?

P: Yes of course, all kinds of situations, education and the professional position teach us. Dealing with every emergency situation teaches us how to act correctly. I do not mean only work problems or issues, but also situations with family or friends.

R: Do you mean that when you deal with your family or friends?

P: Yes, at a family level, when I coexist with the problem or issue, I will gain experience.

R: Did the previous experiences, such as personal ones and achieving tasks, influence you as informal learning methods?

P: Yes of course, because when we coexist with some situation, we will gain experience.

R: Ok, you have talked about effective informal methods to develop leadership skills from your perspective, but what are the most effective methods you used to develop your abilities?

P: Reading books and following up on television and radio programmes.

R: What about learning from situations and problems which you mentioned before?

P: Yes, problems teach us, but I am not considering them, I am seeking to read books, watch television and listen to radio programmes.

### **9- Did you change your practice in any way after attending the programmes?**

**If yes, how? Tell me more**

**If no, why? Tell me more about that**

P: Yes of course, there is improvement in my performance, not only in my personality, but in the manner of performance. I have become more careful in making decisions and have more acumen. Previously, I was rushing in my responses and was loud, but now I have become quieter, choose my words and know how to act in various situations. I learned that from the experience. My position as a leader in my work makes me a leader also out work. It affected my whole life and taught me how to lead my family and how to distribute tasks to the members of my family. That experience is useful in all aspects of my life. Previously, I was nervous in some situations but now I am patient in everything; even at work I have become patient in judging things.

R: Does that mean your professional performance is affected by the experience you are gained?

P: Yes of course, it has changed.

### **10- How do you think the educational leader's preparation process can be developed?**

P: From my point of view, in addition to the academic part we have to utilize past experiences, to organize open conferences with successful leaders, such as former ministers and former top managers. Also, to organize such sessions with retired academic

staffs. Also, to organize extensive conferences to transfer experiences from former leaders who develop and change educational processes. We have to listen and to learn from them. If there any deficiency in any aspect we have to discuss it or if there is any development or success in, we have to boost it. Nobody can learn with himself alone. As a student, he needs a teacher to teach him and to teach him how to read and write. I am now aiming for the position of manager, but I still need more experience. I need previous experience with all its advantages and disadvantages. I need to utilize its advantages and to understand its disadvantages.

We do not have that principle here in Kuwait. Here, if someone retired from his position, we will forget everything about him; despite the fact he may have rich professional experience but some people will consider him old fashioned in his thinking. Sometimes this may be useful rather than the modern thinking and sometimes I vary between both of them. Books exist everywhere - we can read them, download the information from the internet. Also, I may attend some lectures and learn some academic subjects but at the end of the day all of that is limited by its course or subject. But, what do we gain from them, how to apply what I learned before, where and with whom? We are not utilizing the previous experiences. Our fathers and grandfathers learned from the experiments. So, that is why we should transfer previous experiences and do not only depend on courses for a one-week period only.

**11- To what extent do you think the present method of selecting educational leaders should be changed? Why? What are the criteria that should be taken into account to select educational leaders?**

P: First of all, from my point of view, to select a leader we should review his biography or his curriculum vitae first, to review his career history and his type of career. I have to review his previous experience, what has he developed or achieved? what courses did he attend? what is his performance? I should investigate the opinion of others about his performance. We should evaluate him through others and through his co-workers. I prefer to select him through a referendum. I mean, when I want to choose a manager for a place, first I should know how he will deal with other employees in his administration. He should know how to adapt to the group, because he is supposed to have enough

experience to deal with different personalities. He also should be of the same speciality as the position he is appointed to. Because it's not acceptable to appoint an Arabic language teacher (as example) to run a financial administration, so we should choose a leader from the same field.

R: Well, you are now considering these criteria not ideal to select a Leader, i.e. do you think that current criteria should be changed?

P: Of course, it should be changed.

R: Let's retrieve the current criteria of appointing managers?

P: Qualification, years of experience, competency assessment and interview.

R: Excuse me, qualification is an elastic word, this means that diplomas, bachelors or any scientific degree could be accepted.

P: Yes, they 're accepting diplomas and bachelors, but I don't consider this as a measurement, because I hold a diploma degree but I took over this title with my experience.

R: But do not you think that a qualification degree is necessary for this position?

P: Yes, and I don't undervalue the importance of a qualification, but it's not everything; a diploma holding person can perform and produce better than those who has bachelor. My circumstances allowed me just to hold a diploma degree. I don't like to link the criteria of selecting with the qualification degree but I can link it with performance. We should interest ourselves in the thoughts of Candidate for the post and the level of his performance.

R: If we took the performance as a criterion for selecting leaders, how can you measure it? What is the mechanism? for example, you mentioned (questionnaires) how can we apply it?

P: An administrative and a technical questionnaire should be carried out, i.e. what is the attitude of this person in his/her administration? what is the level of flexibility in his/her personality? Candidate managerial position started as a head of department, supervisor

then he/ she progressed through numerous previous positions, that had been imprinted on his/her employees (means that employees in the same administration had been influenced by the long term dealing with him/her). So, those employees will tell us how he/she acts (meaning employees can evaluate the candidate), especially since the questionnaire was general without names. Then, we should look at the percentage he/she got on this aspect. The response of employees - maybe it's zero and this means that he/she can't deal with others or maybe he/she has arrogance and vanity or we can find an unmeasured decision, etc...or I can find an informed person who knows how to make a decision in the right way; these results tell me who I should select .

Then I can run another questionnaire with the candidates as an employer. I can ask if he/she was a hard worker and ambitious person? So, by the questionnaire I can evaluate in two ways (employers and employees).

R: Does it mean from your point of view that the current way of selecting leaders is useless?

P: Yes, it is useless, because even in the interview he/she will be asked about the technical part and the administrative part only.

R: But what about the ability or skills of leadership, how can you measure them?

P: I can't, but the confrontational approach may help (through showing a certain problem and observing how he/she copes), but in general, 90% of the interviews rely on drawing attention of members of interview committee even if a candidate is not qualified. I prefer to count on questionnaires and give only 10% of the evaluation based on the interview.

R: You said that in interviews, technical and administrative aspects are measured; but what about the personal side, don't you think that there is a need for psychological experts or behavioural specialists to evaluate this aspect?

P: that's right, there is a need for a specialized committee but from people who met the candidate before (which means there must be previous relationship with him/her); how can I meet an unknown person? How can I measure and evaluate his/her abilities? The candidate may be confused at the interview, it's about his/her career future and

promotion. I am wondering, how can I determine someone's future within 15 minutes (duration of interviews)? At some interviews I did before, sometimes I met a candidate who I know very well; this makes evaluation very easy because I know him/her and I dealt with him/her before.

R: Don't you think that you may be biased as you knew him/her previously?

P: No, No, because my criteria depends on my dealing with him/her at work and this makes selection easier. But sometimes I meet a candidate I don't know at all, he/she may be better than others but I don't know that, so I undervalue him/her because I don't have enough data about him/her. So, I prefer the questionnaire, because the majority will give opinions freely, because it is always designed to be anonymous.

R: It's a worthwhile idea, but it can't be the only criteria?

P: Of course, there should be other criteria, like experience and qualifications, because my selection will focus on basic issues, like education level and experience.

R: finally, thanks for your patience.

P: It is my pleasure and good luck.

**N.B:** This interview took 55 minutes.

## Appendix 14: Interview Transcript Sample (main study)

**1- Could you please describe any differences between being a leader and being a manager in your present role?**

P: Being a manager here enabled me to take decisions more than before when I was obliged to adopt the opinion of the bosses - but now I can make a decision independently and take responsibility. And I can ask one of my employees to do the task.

R: Do you mean that this job gave you authority?

P: Yes... it gave me authority to correct what is happening.

R: can you elaborate further please?

P: We encountered problems in this administration because of appointing managers who are not specialized in ... these managers impaired the performance level of the administration (meaning those who did not have experience in the same specialization of administration undermined it), and we reached a point where they said that this administration (...) doesn't have competencies and it has no achievements. All the work was assigned to one person who is a consultant to the..., and his decisions were all wrong, but he imposed them on us. We, the older experienced people, didn't make any decisions, ... and they restricted us.

R: What are the reasons for that? Do you think it was because the director of administration was not a leader?

P: Because the specialization of the administration director was not related to administration; he did not apprentice in this administration, because the work here needs specialization and expertise; it is not administrative work, and not everyone can manage it. Furthermore, we have many issues depending on experience in the field. The most important is the plans we made. These are based on studying the current situation in the Ministry of Education and the objectives that are required to be achieved.

R: Is that still going on even though you're the director of administration?

P: No No... I am talking about the Ministry of Education in general... For example, I have kindergartens growing, at the beginning in the nineties there was a teacher and a half for each class, and now I have four teachers for each class ... I mean I have a big surplus now. The primary

level also has a surplus concerning some subjects, and other subjects have shortages but they are considered rare (referring to the number of teachers in some subjects).

R: But do you think that the poor performance previously in your administration and its impact on the field is due to the fact that there were no specialists in administration?

P: There are specialists, but they restricted our role.

R: But what is your role as a leader?

P: At that time, I was not the leader (meaning the director of administration) but now that I have become a leader, I am trying to impose administration on the Ministry of Education, I mean to carry out its main tasks.

R: You say that you became the leader of this administration. Why do you think you are a leader?

P: First, I wanted to improve the situation in the Ministry of Education; I feel I started to achieve it... Even if the advance is only 10% but I felt there is a change, our work became reliable, although it was not. They trust our data and indicators, and ask the reasons, what does that mean? And what is the reason that this indicator has become so? I met the heads of the departments in administration who are specialized in (...) in the presence of three agents. We met and discussed many issues and topics. It was difficult to provide them, but we were able to in other ways. And I felt that there is a trust in our work... We have employees with more than 20 or 25 years of experience in this administration.

R: You mean you have experiences, but they were not exploited previously... but when you became manager you changed that?

P: Yeah... I activated them.

R: Okay... But what's your understanding of a manager?

P: The manager manages the workplace and checks who is absent and who is late...

R: What about the leader?

p: a leader is the one who triggers the work and motivates people... We have been asking our former director to make an annual handbook for educational indicators for years... But he rejected it. Now I have assigned a team from inside administration to work with me on achieving that. Initially, I asked them to present suggestions for a book (for indicators) within two weeks.

And then I asked them to implement it ... and I told them that my door is always open, you can ask me about any difficulties you face and even if I don't have the answer, we can try to find it and we will. By January, the booklet will be ready. The leader must take risks, never fear anything, face challenges and have vision.

R: Do you consider yourself a leader?

P: Yes... I am dealing with and coming into contact with an agent.

R: Do you mean that you are being faced and fought?

P: Yes, not just me, I also have two of the best staff in administration.

R: You mean that your problem is that you have limited authority and prerogatives, but you try to work within the limits of your authority?

P: Yes. I'll give you an example: I am the ... for education in Kuwait, and I am required by UNESCO to form a national team; I cannot have a resolution without the approval of my agent. And he has rejected my request many times ... so I had to form a small team within my administration and I asked them to address various agencies to provide us with liaison officers, as well as the information we need to write our reports and see what we can achieve.

R: Is this required from you as a national team?

P: Yes ...we have a plan for the year 2032.

R: Do you have the ability to develop strategic plans with your team?

P: Yes, we have, and if we have everything we need, we can do it. I can manage if I have someone who comes from Kuwait University or any other place - each one has his own data.

R: Do you mean from outside the ministry because you work with parties from outside it?

P: Yes

R: Does this cooperation require the permission of higher authorities?

P: I have now adopted a different method; I took it as a paper sending to a specific destination and produced from our authority with the signature of the Undersecretary of the Ministry but until now, I am waiting for the response, and the papers signed and returned to me ... I mean I will only communicate with them by telephone or in any other way to collect the data from them.

If I cannot achieve this, I can initiate a memorandum to the deputy minister or minister and explain the problem to facilitate it.

R: What other managers have said is that each director should be in the same administration and in the same specialization and be gradually upgraded to reach this position.

P: That's important... why did we suffer? When I was employed in this administration, my boss was from the same administration; she taught us and we learned from her. I worked with her for 6 or 7 years, and then she retired. I learned many things from her. I came first as a teacher and I had no experience, so she taught me.

R: We will return to this point in Question 6, but to summarize the answer of the first question, you said that you consider yourself a leader because you are working, planning and achieving goals and...

P: Yes, because the manager just manages the work but I do more than that.

**2- Could you please describe your previous experiences and responsibilities before you were appointed to your present post? What are the effects on your present job?**

P: When I came to the (...) department, the head of our department (...) was the second support for me (meaning she was the second giving him support after the manager), we worked manually, we even would line the tables with our hands and if we made one mistake, we would repeat the work. She told me that we should convert our work from manual to electronic. Although I didn't know how to deal with the computer, we had a few members of staff who had some experience with the computer, and we benefited from them until we converted our department and another department in the same administration from manual to electronic without taking any courses. Then she took me with her to the undersecretary of the ministry and told him that I had a request. At that time, computers were bought for the middle level. He said, "What do you want?" I said we needed computers, he said how many? I said we needed 13 and he said they would be ready the next day. And we actually got our computers the very next morning. Now we have an entire computerized system.

R: Do you mean that your experience has benefited you, refined you and made you more confident?

P: Yes... and also taught me that it is not a requirement to be an academic concerning certain issues... with experience, cooperation and teamwork, it is possible to achieve anything.

R: What about the support from officials?

P: unfortunately, the support from officials...'mmm' ... But now I am familiar with my job and I have the power in my position, I ask for what the Department needs and I am stubborn when it comes to getting it... with insistence and challenge, for example: I am a (...) and did not get the approval to form a team... so I formed a team from my department and did the task without any permission from (...) (means achieved goal despite obstacles).

R: Do you think that these practices and tasks you accomplished before you became a director influenced your current role?

P: Yes, very much so... Being an employee in the same administration, I was gradually upgraded from an employee to a director in the same administration; I got the experience of the same specialization, and have practised similar tasks to the ones I do now.

**3- Did you receive (attend) training programmes to prepare you for your title (present role) as an educational leader? ... If Yes, tell me more about those programmes and what did you learn from those programmes? What are the strengths and weaknesses from your point of view? If No, why?**

P: No... I did not receive any training courses as a leader, because they were not available. But I was qualified through working in administration, but the formal preparation and attending courses were not available.

R: Didn't the Ministry of Education offer you any preparation courses?

P: No... Never.

R: Why did not you try to attend even in the private sector?

P: It was not my ambition to be a manager, because after the retirement of our previous manager and assigning new manager from outside the administration, we were frustrated, I did not expect to become a manager... We worked together privately, because each manager comes and bring his own staff, and therefore I had no ambition for this post. I applied for an observer position, with another new employee who had been in administration for two months and she admitted that I was better qualified, but she got the position despite that.

R: Since you did not attend preparation courses, you have no idea about their strengths and weaknesses, do you?

P: Yes, I do not know about them.

**4- To what extent did you participate in the professional development programmes for educational leaders after being appointed as an educational leader?**

P: Planning skills which I attended through specialized courses.

R: Did you attend them before being appointed?

P: Yes, when I was a department head, I took it as a specialization rather than preparing courses to be a leader. I took strategic planning, budgeting, analysing budgets... most of my courses are in planning because basically I (...), so I had them as a specialization and as leadership courses because basically I did not attend any preparation courses.

R: Well, what about professional development courses, did you attend them in order to develop your leadership skills?

P: Yes, I have attended them but it was a long time ago.

R: Did you attend sessions to develop your role as a leader?

P: No... I took it through self-development courses...

R: Does that mean that you sought to attend self-development courses and they were not offered by the Ministry of Education?

P: No... I sought them to develop myself.

**5- Do you think that those programmes had a significant impact on developing your leadership skills? How? Tell me more.**

P: Yes, very much...

R: Tell me more... for example, which skill have you mostly evolved?

P: First, teamwork spirit, you shouldn't think that you own all the knowledge, no, because your information can be incomplete and can be complemented by a second or third person; it is wrong to say that we know everything.

R: And what did you learn from professional development courses?

P: How to delegate roles and trust in them...I mean dealing with others.

**6- What are the most important informal learning methods that are effective in developing leadership skills from your perspective? Why? Can you explain please.**

P: This happened to me when I converted from teacher to administrative by a medical council decision. I was appointed to this administration. The director of the department had an insight. After 6 months of work in this department, my boss assigned me as a head of the (...) department. And because I do not know anything about this speciality, I went to her and told her that I could not accept the post, and she asked me why do you refuse? I said because I do not know anything about this department, she said, "first I do not want to say to me I refuse ... Secondly I chose you and you will not be alone and I will support you as well as everyone else. And she actually kept her word... and supported me like she did with everyone, but she focused mainly on me. We were three people in the department, we were active and working hard. She encouraged us to attend planning sessions, analysing indicators, budgeting, and attend other workshops. We used to attend high level discussions with specialists and assistant agents. So, we gained experience from them and we observed the responses from them and her.

R: you mean that the most influential thing you had was the presence of a strong manager who had knowledge and ability and taught you as a team and focused on you because she noticed the qualities of leadership that you had?

P: Yes... I now act in the same way and the same method because we want to raise the level of administration and the level of education. And also she was supported by the agent of the sector, and he used to treat us in the same manner and I learned much from him too.

R: Did you mean that you learned a lot from your ex-managers and they influenced you greatly?

P: Yes... And also, from working with the committees and teams...

R: What about discussing with your colleagues (managers not employees) did that benefit you?

P: mmm... in some things ... that are not...

R: Do you mean that you only discuss staff, not managers

P: Yes.

R: what about reading books and studies... do you read to develop yourself?

P: yes sure.

R: you mentioned that one of the learning methods is to learn from the manager, to discuss colleagues and to benefit from the experiences you had. Is learning from your past managers considered the best method for developing your skills?

P: Yes... And also participating in workshops with experienced people, this is the most important thing that has influenced me.

**7- Did you change your practice in any way after attending the programmes?**

**If yes, How?... Tell me more**

**If no, why? ...Tell me more about that.**

P: Yes, very much... It gave me a lot of self-confidence when dealing with bosses and employees, behaving rationally and being realistic, and it taught me to defend my viewpoint and my work if it is right, fulfils the purpose and leads to the development of work and preserving the property of the institution, and if it helps any downtrodden person in administration ... so if I noticed anyone who had ambition and potential, I helped them to enrol on courses and self-develop.

R: Well... But what did you apply to your work from what you learned from the courses?

P: I will give you an example: a month ago, the ministry nominated me to attend a course in Malaysia; we went to see the plan of Malaysia, which they applied from the eighties till now, I liked it... because the president wanted to develop his country, while it was poor and it had no potential. So, we have examined their successful experience.

R: Well, from this experience, what is the most effective for you and what did you apply here?

P: As I told you, I am a (...) thus I told them to form a committee, but they refused. So, I decided to form it alone and I did.

R: Did you do it unpaid and by your personal efforts and did you choose honest and hard-working members?

P: Yes... We will do what it takes to form a team, which motivated me. Because this time I went to Malaysia, visited the Supreme Planning Council and took a look at their plan.

R: Were you with a delegation from the Ministry of Education?

P: No ... It was a course

R: How long was it?

P: Six days with Dr. (...) we started from the morning...

R: Excuse me, who is Dr. (...) what is his job and role?

P: He is our leader (she means the leader of their team in the course) and he is the director of the (...) company.

R: You mean a private company?

P: Yes, but through a contract with the Ministry of Education, he recruits people. Like now, he is recruiting people to go to a course in Japan, and look at the Education Plan, just as we looked at the Malaysian plan.

R: Do you mean that it is a private sector course and he takes leaders and managers from the Ministry of Education and not from all ministries?

P: No... He took only two people from the Ministry of Education just like the other ministries.

R: So, this course is concerned with the entire government, not only the Ministry of Education?

P: Yes... and there is a private part too... which means there are some people who paid money to enrol on the course.

R: Did you attend lectures and workshops, or it was just a visit?

P: Everything, it was varied.

KR Do you think a week was enough?

P: Frankly, it was tiring for us because we had to visit two places each day... Malaysia is huge; we used to go to the first place and then take a break and move to the second ... from 8am till 5 or 7 pm, and we were travelling by bus in the rainy weather... exhausting... but it was very helpful.

R: When did you attend this course?

P: Recently, I mean, whilst I was a manager.

R: Do you consider it a professional development course?

P: Yes...

**8- How do you think the educational leader's preparation process can be developed?**

P: We need a special centre for preparing leaders, to establish a centre specialized in the preparation of educational and non-educational leaders, in which there are different stages, and no one can apply for the interviews unless they pass a certain stage which defined by stakeholders or officials, and the period of the courses in the centre should be at least three years.

R: What will this centre offer?

P: It should offer courses and workshops that simulate the reality of leaders in order to train managers, but some of them can't adapt (meaning they do not accept being leaders), these want only to become managers not leaders... they are not our target!! We need managers who are leaders not only managers. That is what is being applied for in Bahrain.

R: You mean they're choosing and training leaders?

P: Yes, they are, on the level of the whole government.

R: Do you mean that they choose managers and train them in a leadership development centre?

P: Yes... and for years... For example, they take the head of the department, they offer them sessions, and they choose the elite and sign them as supervisors or managers and possibly as assistant undersecretary ... I had a colleague who attended with me a lot of workshops sponsored by UNESCO I asked about her later and they told me she had become an assistant undersecretary. They were preparing and training her all that period. (She means through the centre).

R: Do you mean that you support Bahrain's experience concerning leaders' preparation?

P: Yes.

**9- To what extent do you think the present method of selecting educational leaders should be changed? Why? What are the criteria that should be taken into account when selecting educational leaders?**

P: This is a priority, in order to adapt and develop the educational system, and not to leave the random situation at the will of the current decision maker. As for the standards, they should be set by experts involved in the preparation of educational leaders.

R: Well, let's talk about the current situation, how are educational leaders being chosen?

P: I will give you an example: I have vacancies in the monitoring department... when I do interviews, I choose the ones I know will work with me and whose efficiency I know... Even the interview committee asks "the owner of the house" I mean the manager of administration: who do you want?

R: Do you mean that the manager nominates the one he wants in his administration?

P: Yes

R: Is this what's happening right now?

P: Yes... and they set grades accordingly to select that person (she means the members of the interview committee)

R: You mean cronyism and 'Wasta'?

P: Yes cronyism, Wasta... and nepotism.

R: Well if the terms of nomination for the leadership position are competence, experience, certificates and then the interview... and you mentioned what happens concerning the interviews... do you want to change this method?

P: Yes

R: Okay, but what are the standards for selecting from your point of view and through your experience?

P: For example, I am manager of the department for executive technicians and I have to have technical standards, but in other administrative departments they may have different standards...

R: I got your point, but I am speaking in general to select a leader... What are the standards?

I mean, can we suggest experience, specialization and attending a leadership preparation course?

P: Yes, yes. And the course should have a test.

R: Well, can you describe the standards from your point of view?

P: First, they do simple experimental courses...

R: But I am asking about choosing the person before attending the courses...

P: The nomination should be made by his administration according to the competencies they have, because they know them and work with them. And people might not pass the course test.

R: Why, is it because they do not have the potential to become leaders?

P: Yes ... and there are a lot of examples, a person might be good and intellectual but if they are assigned to lead a group, they fail. They are good at work but don't fit as a leader.

R: So, the first step starts with the selection of qualified people who meet the requirements and then they enrol onto courses, and through this they can be tested and after that comes the interview?

P: Yes... the ones who do the interview should have passed the course tests ... For example: at the level of supervisory positions in schools, they give the candidates a booklet, some might understand it and some might memorize it, but the test is for those who memorize it.

R: Do you mean that the test must be standardized and must measure different skills?

P: Yes, that is necessary. There must be a "trick" in order to know who the leader is and who is not.

R: Should the exam test the technical subject of specialization or should it measure leadership skills?

P: There are many people who believe that they know everything... But when we have a discussion, we don't find that... they do not have the skills, they only apply the rules and laws. It is right that they should be applied, but it is not the Quran, and even that, when applied, must be according to the current situation... unfortunately they don't get that.

R: Well, in the selection of leaders, some managers suggest conducting a referendum for the candidate through whom they dealt with, whether his officials or colleagues in work to know his performance without mentioning the name of the participant in the referendum ... What do you think about that?

P: There is no need for a referendum... because I know who is working with me. (She means to ask the candidate's manager about their performance)

R: But what is the mechanism for asking about the candidates for choosing leaders?

P: There must be a person from outside the ministry who is specialized in the preparation of leaders who can set the conditions and standards. Unfortunately, we don't have that.

R: At the end of the meeting I want to thank you, and is there anything else you would like to add?

P: Allah bless you.

## Appendix 15: Demographic Data

**Table 15.1 Demographic Data for Questionnaire Sample**

	Survey Participant Codes										
Interviewee Details	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Gender	F	F	F	M	M	F	M	M	M	F	M
Education District or Ministry of Education	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED
Permanent or Acting Manager	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
Years of Experience Since Appointment	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience as a Teacher	None	10–14	More than 15	None	None	5–9	10–14	None	More than 15	None	5–9
Years of Experience as an Administrator	More than 15	None	10–14	More than 15	More than 15	None	More than 15	More than 15	None	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience in a Supervisor Position	More than 15	10–14	10–14	More than 15	missing	10–14	10–14	10–14	5–9	10–14	missing
Years of Experience in Current Position	10–14	1–4	10–14	More than 15	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	10–14
Number of Pre-appointment Training Courses as a Manager	13	missing	None	10	5	4	3	4	9	None	50
Number of Professional Development Courses in Service in Last 5 Years	2	7	4	None	4	7	2	2	5	6	50

**Table 15.2 Demographic Data for Questionnaire Sample (continued)**

	Survey Participant Codes										
Interviewee Details	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Gender	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	F	M
Education District or Ministry of Education	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED	ED
Permanent or Acting Manager	PM	PM	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	AM	PM	PM
Years of Experience Since Appointment	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 1515
Years of Experience as a Teacher	None	5–9	More than 15	5–9	None	5–9	None	None	5–9	None	None
Years of Experience as an Administrator	More than 15	More than 15	None	More than 15	More than 15	5–9	More than 15	More than 15	5–9	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience in a Supervisor Position	10–14	10–14	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	10–14	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	5–9	10–14
Years of Experience in Current Position	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	10–14	1–4	More than 15	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4
Number of Pre-appointment Training Courses as a Manager	10	5	5	missing	None	12	More than 20	2	7	12	None
Number of Professional Development Courses in Service in Last 5 Years	2	3	More than 5	missing	25	15	More than 20	9	10	None	3

**Table 15.3 Demographic Data for Questionnaire Sample (continued)**

	Survey Participant Codes									
Interviewee Details	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Gender	F	M	F	F	M	M	F	F	M	M
Education District or Ministry of Education	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE
Permanent or Acting Manager	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	AM	AM	PM	PM	PM
Years of Experience Since Appointment	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience as a Teacher	None	missing	1–4	1–4	1–4	None	None	5–9	10–14	None
Years of Experience as an Administrator	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience in a Supervisor Position	More than 15	More than 15	missing	More than 15						
Years of Experience in Current Position	5–9	1–4	1–4	5–9	More than 15	1–4	5–9	1–4	More than 15	More than 15
Number of Pre-appointment Training Courses as a Manager	None	3	None	More than 10	3	5	2	5	None	6
Number of Professional Development Courses in Service in Last 5 Years	2	None	None	missing	4	15	4	12	3	More than 10

**Table 15.4 Demographic Data for Questionnaire Sample (continued)**

	Survey Participant Codes									
Interviewee Details	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Gender	F	M	M	F	M	M	M	M	M	F
Education District or Ministry of Education	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE	MoE
Permanent or Acting Manager	PM	PM	PM	PM	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	AM
Years of Experience Since Appointment	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15
Years of Experience as a Teacher	None	None	None	None	None	None	More than 15	1–4	None	None
Years of Experience as an Administrator	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	More than 15	None	More than 15	More than 15	5–9
Years of Experience in a Supervisor Position	missing	More than 15	More than 15	missing	10–14	10–14	5–9	10–14	More than 15	5–9
Years of Experience in Current Position	5–9	5–9	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4	1–4
Number of Pre-appointment Training Courses as a Manager	missing	3	7	3	7	3	missing	None	missing	None
Number of Professional Development Courses in Service in Last 5 Years	missing	5	1	5	7	7	missing	1	missing	1

## Appendix 16: Coding Process of the Training Programmes Impact (example)

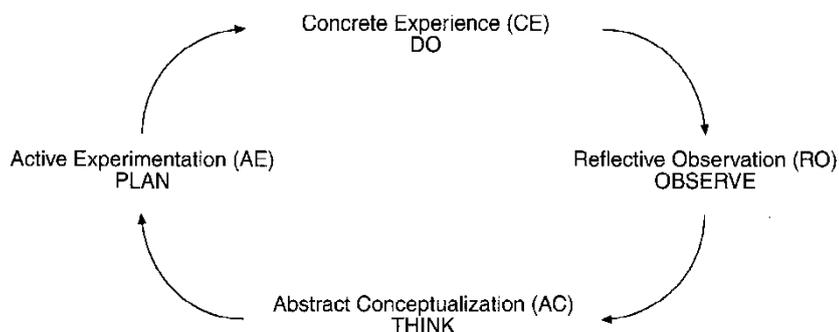
Examples of quotes used	First round codes	Second round codes	Final codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, it motivated me to make a decision in the face of any problem in the right time and provided me with various ideas.</li> <li>▪ In general, getting out from the work atmosphere, meeting others and sharing experiences are motivating to be creative.</li> <li>▪ ...having discussions and training, I generate new ideas.</li> <li>▪ I will get out from the courses without any trace of it.</li> <li>▪ Yes, I needed these courses.</li> <li>▪ I have learned how to do educational and developmental projects for me and the staff in my department...</li> <li>▪ and now I use this approach in all the schools I have supervised.</li> <li>▪ Of course, we are working on it now.</li> <li>▪ And there are other courses which also influenced me, like two courses I have attended at my own expense in Japan, they actually changed my life.</li> <li>▪ Although it does not exist but is important and it has an impact on the process of development and we need it.</li> <li>▪ Of course, I carry and implement what I have learned...</li> <li>▪ Yes ... because there are difficulties, problems and obstacles in the application process...</li> <li>▪ There is nothing called I cannot...</li> <li>▪ Yes, I have attended them but it was a long time ago.</li> <li>▪ No... I took it through self-development courses...</li> <li>▪ No... I sought them to develop myself.</li> <li>▪ Those programmes had a significant impact on developing my leadership skills...</li> <li>▪ Yes, very much... It gave me a lot of self-confidence when dealing with bosses and employees, behaving rationally and realistically...</li> <li>▪ ...and it taught me to defend my opinion and my work if it is right, fulfils the purpose and leads to the development of work and preserving the property of the institution, and if it helps any oppressed person in administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Motivation to exercise tasks</li> <li>▪ Innovation assistance</li> <li>▪ Training needs</li> <li>▪ Positive effect</li> <li>▪ Apply what has been learned</li> <li>▪ External courses</li> <li>▪ Difficulties and problems</li> <li>▪ Not directed at leaders</li> <li>▪ Effect of training in general</li> <li>▪ Specialization in the same field</li> <li>▪ Developing leadership skills</li> <li>▪ Development of professional experience</li> <li>▪ Development of managerial skills</li> <li>▪ The manager's awareness of training needs</li> <li>▪ Choose the course as well as the appropriate lecturer</li> <li>▪ Note the impact of training in the field of work</li> <li>▪ Learn to influence others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing managerial skills</li> <li>▪ Developing leadership skills</li> <li>▪ Training needs</li> <li>▪ Positive impact of training</li> <li>▪ Poor effect of training programmes</li> </ul>	<b>Impact of the Professional Development Activities</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ... so, if I noticed anyone who has ambition and potential, I help them to enrol on courses and develop themselves.</li> <li>▪ As an official or as a leader, you attend a course but you don't get any benefit because of the nature of your work and field are not compatible with the program for this course.</li> <li>▪ And there are other courses which encourage you to be a successful leader, you interact with them from the beginning and you see the results during the course.</li> <li>▪ Because you might start linking what the instructor says with events that happened to you, or you might say that this decision was right or it had been better to have done that, I mean you get experience.</li> <li>▪ The course is necessary for someone who wants to develop themselves, as for the one who says that these courses are useless, he might be somehow right, because it depends on the person himself and on the course's program or content.</li> <li>▪ As for me, through attending these four courses I learned some programmes which help me at my work as administrator or technician and I benefited from them.</li> <li>▪ ... my colleague says he himself did not benefit. Maybe because he didn't seek the course and was not interested in it, to him it was just for the sake of attending</li> <li>▪ Some courses are not useful for a certain person probably because their choice wasn't right, because they are for a particular category or certain competencies and they don't help them; an example of a technical specialist, why do I choose a teacher training course and attend it?</li> <li>▪ I have the chance to enrol onto about six courses every year, but I don't because they are not related to my specialization.</li> <li>▪ Extra knowledge, making decisions, dealing with others and I learned not to rush in making decisions...</li> <li>▪ I say that the training courses are useful but the person should know how to choose the right course, and also the right lecturer because they play a big role...</li> <li>▪ Without a doubt. Sometimes I have a problem and I discuss it with my colleagues, so one of these colleagues might remember what he heard at one of the courses...</li> <li>▪ These courses certainly have a great impact.</li> </ul>			
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### Appendix 17: Participants' Understanding of Level of Management and Leadership Criteria

Level Concept	Good understanding	Some understanding	No understanding
Management criteria	Performance of tasks and priorities, planning, implementation, and target setting	Indicates some manager tasks	Completely confused what management and/or leadership means
Leadership criteria	Has influence, values, and understanding of mission, interpersonal relationships and teamwork	Reference to some leader roles	Completely confused what management and/or leadership means

## Appendix 18: Kolb's Learning Theory



*Concrete Experience:*

Where the learner is actively experiencing an activity (e.g., a laboratory session, field class)

*Reflective Observation:*

Where the learner is consciously reflecting back on that experience

*Abstract Conceptualization:*

Where the learner is being presented with/or trying to conceptualise a theory or model of what is (to be) observed

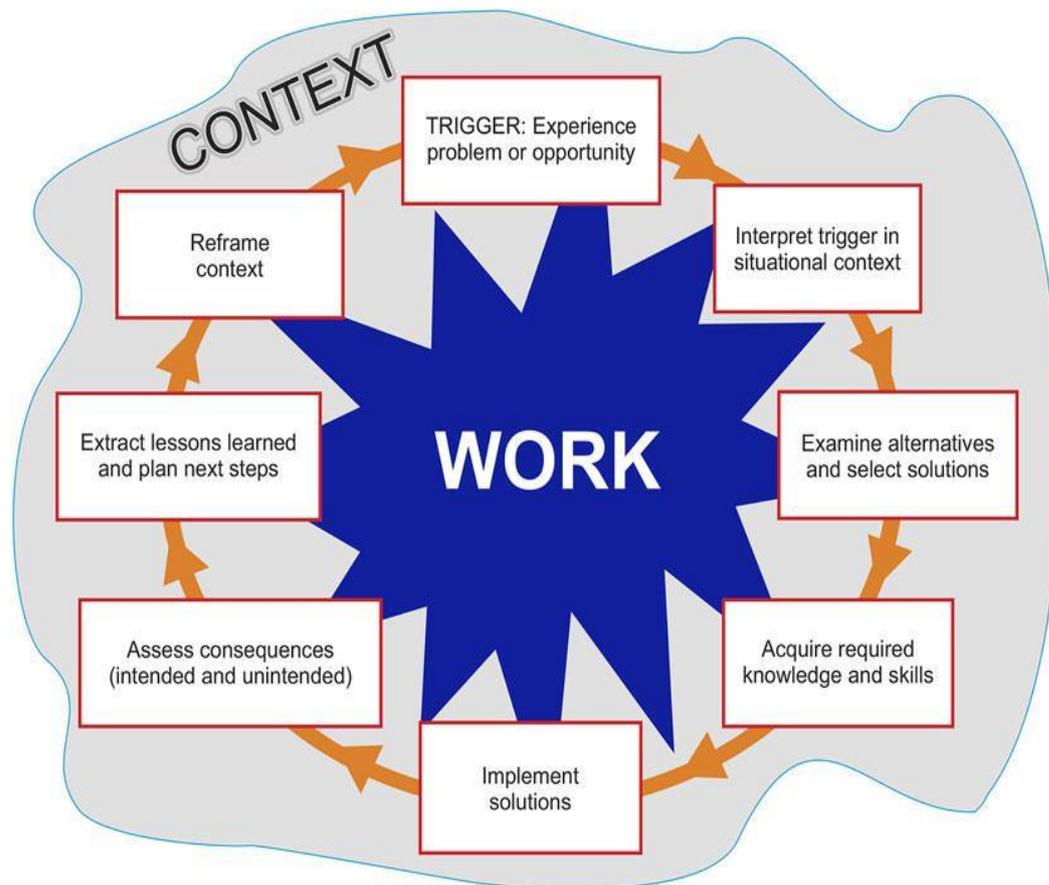
*Active Experimentation:*

Where the learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory or plan for a forthcoming experience

Figure 1. Kolb's experiential learning cycle (based on Jenkins [1998,43]).

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## Appendix 19: Marsick and Watkins' Informal and Incidental Learning Model



Source: Marsick & Watkins (2018)

## Appendix 20: Ethical Approval to conduct the study



University of Reading

Institute of Education

### Ethical Approval Form A (version May 2015)

Tick one:

Staff project: \_\_\_\_\_ PhD  EdD \_\_\_\_\_

Name of applicant (s): **Kafa Alenezi**

Title of project: **" The effectiveness of the preparation for administrators in term of their leadership and management role in the Ministry of Education and Educational Districts in the State of Kuwait"**

Name of supervisor (for student projects): Dr. Chris Turner & Tony MacFadyen

**Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf.**

	YES	NO
<b>Have you prepared an Information Sheet for participants and/or their parents/carers that:</b>	*	
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	*	
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	*	
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	*	
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	*	
e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	*	
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	*	
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	*	
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	*	

i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email . If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	*		
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants			N-A
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows:  ‘This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct’.	*		
k) includes a standard statement regarding insurance:  “The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request”.	*		
<b>Please answer the following questions</b>			
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on blackboard to ensure this).	*		
2) Will you seek written or other formal consent from all participants, if they are able to provide it, in addition to (1)?			*
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?			*
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security (which can be found here: <a href="http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx">http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx</a> )?	*		
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	*		
6) Does your research comply with the University’s Code of Good Practice in Research?	*		
	YES	NO	N.A.
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to gain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?			*
8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?			*
9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give parents/carers the			*

opportunity to decline consent?			
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data <sup>1</sup> , or if it involves audio/video recordings, have you obtained the explicit consent of participants/parents?	*		
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			*
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?	*		
12b) If the answer to question 12a is “yes”, does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?	*		
13a) Does your research involve collecting data in a language other than English?	*		
13b) If the answer to question 13a is “yes”, please confirm that information sheets, consent forms, and research instruments, where appropriate, have been directly translated from the English versions submitted with this application.	*		
14a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 5?		*	
14b. If the answer to question 14a is “yes”: My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University’s insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			*
<b>If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below</b>			

Please complete **either** Section A **or** Section B and provide the details required in support of your application. Sign the form (Section C) then submit it with all relevant attachments (e.g. information sheets, consent forms, tests, questionnaires, interview schedules) to the Institute’s Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.

<b>A:</b> My research goes beyond the ‘accepted custom and practice of teaching’ but I consider that this project has <b>no</b> significant ethical implications. (Please tick the box.)	*
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<sup>1</sup> Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.

**The total number of participants will be (53) from educational administrators, as follow:**

- **29 of managers of administration departments in the Education Ministry.**
- **24 of managers of administration departments in the Educational Districts.**

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words noting:

1. title of project
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale
3. brief description of methods and measurements
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.
7. estimated start date and duration of project

"The effectiveness of the preparation for administrators in term of their leadership and management role in the Ministry of Education and Educational Districts in the State of Kuwait"

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the effectiveness of leadership and management preparation in the Education Ministry and Districts to carry out their functions in terms of leading and managing change in Kuwait.

The researcher will collect data after a pilot study has been conducted with a small sample of administrators and the necessary approval from the Educational Research Department of the Education Ministry will be obtained. The study will be carried out in two phases to gather information. First, a questionnaire will be distributed to 53 participants. It is intended to obtain preliminary information about the administrators' preparation for their specific role. Then, according to the responses in the first phase, a series of semi-structured questions will be developed and used with an appropriate sample of administrators. The participants will be informed that they are free to participate or withdraw at any time. Furthermore, the confidentiality of information will be guaranteed and the names of all participants anonymised.

The researcher expects that the process of data collection will begin in August 2016 and end in November 2016.

**B:** I consider that this project **may** have ethical implications that should be brought before the Institute's Ethics Committee.

Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a

breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words.

1. title of project
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale
3. brief description of methods and measurements
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.
7. estimated start date and duration of project

**C: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:**

**Note:** a signature is required. Typed names are not acceptable.

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed: ..... Print Name: **Kafa Alenezi** Date: **May 2016**

**STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE ETHICS COMMITTEE**

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed: ..... Print Name **Andy Kempe** Date **9.6.16**

(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative) \*

\* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.

## Appendix 21: Risk Assessment Form for Research Activities



University of Reading

Institute of Education

### Risk Assessment Form for Research Activities February 2014

Select one:

Staff project:  PGR project:  MA/UG project:

Name of applicant (s): **Kafa Alenezi**

Title of project: "**The effectiveness of the preparation for administrators in term of their leadership and management role in the Ministry of Education and Educational Districts in the State of Kuwait**"

Name of supervisor (for student projects): **Dr. Chris Turner & Tony MacFadyen**

**A: Please complete the form below**

Brief outline of Work/activity:	<b>Questionnaires and semi-interviews with education administrators.</b>	
Where will data be collected?	<b>In the Education Ministry and Districts in the State of Kuwait.</b>	
Significant hazards:	<b>There is no potential risk.</b>	
Who might be exposed to hazards?	<b>N.A</b>	
Existing control measures:	<b>N.A</b>	
Are risks adequately controlled:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N.A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If NO, list additional controls and actions required:	Additional controls	Action by:
	-----	-----

**B: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:**

I have read the Health and Safety booklet posted on Blackboard, and the guidelines overleaf.

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm risks have been adequately assessed and will be minimized as far as possible during the course of the project.

Signed: ...  ... Print Name: **Kafa Alenezi** Date: **May 2016**

STATEMENT OF APPROVAL TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR (FOR UG AND MA STUDENTS)  
OR BY IOE ETHICS COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE (FOR PGR AND STAFF RESEARCH).

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed: Print Name Andy Kempe Date 9.6.16

\* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.

**Guidance notes for the completion of the risk assessment form****Significant hazards:**

- Only list those that you could reasonably expect to cause significant injuries or affect several people
- Will the work require the use of machines and tools? How could you or anyone else be injured? Will injury be significant?
- Will the research take place in a high-risk country?
- Will the work require the use of chemicals? Check safety data sheets for harmful effects and any exposure limits?
- Will the work produce any fumes, vapours, dust or particles? Can they cause significant harm?
- Are there any significant hazards due to where the work is to be done, such as confined space, at height, poor lighting, high/low temperature?

**Who might be exposed?**

- Remember to include yourself, your supervisor, your participants, others working in or passing through the work area.
- Those more vulnerable or less experienced should be highlighted as they will be more at risk, such as children, people unfamiliar with the work area, disabled or with medical conditions e.g. asthma.

**Existing control measures:**

- List the control measures in place for each of the significant hazards, such as machine guards, ventilation system, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), generic safety method statement/procedure.
- Existing safety measures and procedures in place in the establishment
- Remember appropriate training is a control measure and should be listed.
- List any Permits to Work which may be in force.

**Are risks adequately controlled?**

- With all the existing control measures in place, do any of the significant hazards still have a potential to cause significant harm.
- Use your judgement as to how the work is to be done, by whom and where.

**Additional controls:**

- List the additional control measures, for each of the significant hazards, which are required to reduce the risk to the lowest so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Additional measures may include such things as: increased ventilation, Permit to Work, confined space entry permit, barriers/fencing, fall arrest equipment, etc.
- PPE should only be used as a last resort, if all else fails.