**LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

# Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of Homeroom versus Subject Teachers

By

Zeinab J. Fakih

A thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in Education

School of Arts and Sciences

March 2022

© 2022

Zeinab Fakih

All Rights Reserved

LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
Lebanese American University

# THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Student Name: Zeinab Fakih I.D. #: 201202298

Thesis Title: Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of Homeroom versus Subject Teachers

Program: Education

Department: Social and Education Sciences

School: Arts & Sciences

The undersigned certify that they have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis and approved it in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

Mater's in Education in the major of Educatoin

Thesis Advisor's Name: Ketty Sarouphim-McGill

Signature: [redacted] Date: 23 / 3 / 2022
Day Month Year

Committee Member's Name: Rima Bahous

Signature: [redacted] Date: 23 / 3 / 2022
Day Month Year

Committee Member's Name: Mona Nabhani

Signature: [redacted] Date: 23 / 3 / 2022
Day Month Year

LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
Lebanese American University

## THESIS COPYRIGHT RELEASE FORM

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY NON-EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION LICENSE

By signing and submitting this license, you (the author(s) or copyright owner) grants the Lebanese American University (LAU) the non-exclusive right to reproduce, translate (as defined below), and/or distribute your submission (including the abstract) worldwide in print and electronic formats and in any medium, including but not limited to audio or video. You agree that LAU may, without changing the content, translate the submission to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation. You also agree that LAU may keep more than one copy of this submission for purposes of security, backup and preservation. You represent that the submission is your original work, and that you have the right to grant the rights contained in this license. You also represent that your submission does not, to the best of your knowledge, infringe upon anyone's copyright. If the submission contains material for which you do not hold copyright, you represent that you have obtained the unrestricted permission of the copyright owner to grant LAU the rights required by this license, and that such third-party owned material is clearly identified and acknowledged within the text or content of the submission. IF THE SUBMISSION IS BASED UPON WORK THAT HAS BEEN SPONSORED OR SUPPORTED BY AN AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN LAU, YOU REPRESENT THAT YOU HAVE FULFILLED ANY RIGHT OF REVIEW OR OTHER OBLIGATIONS REQUIRED BY SUCH CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT. LAU will clearly identify your name(s) as the author(s) or owner(s) of the submission, and will not make any alteration, other than as allowed by this license, to your submission.

Name: Zeinab Fakih

Signature: [redacted]

Date: 11/04/22

LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
Lebanese American University

## PLAGIARISM POLICY COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

I certify that:

1. I have read and understood LAU's Plagiarism Policy.
2. I understand that failure to comply with this Policy can lead to academic and disciplinary actions against me.
3. This work is substantially my own, and to the extent that any part of this work is not my own I have indicated that by acknowledging its sources.

Name: Zeinab Fakih

Signature: [redacted]

Date: 11/04/22

Dedication

To my loving parents

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENT This project would not have been possible without the support of many people. Many thanks to my advisor, Dr. Ketty Sarouphim, who read my numerous revisions and helped make some sense of the confusion. Also, thanks to my committee members, Dr. Rima Bahous, and Dr. Mona Nabhani who offered guidance and support. And finally, thanks to my parents, and numerous friends who endured this long process with me, always offering support and love.

Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of Homeroom versus Subject Teachers

Zeinab Fakih

# ABSTRACT

In elementary, two instructional models exist: the homeroom teacher model in which teachers are responsible for instruction of all subject matters and the subject-teacher model where teachers are specialists in a particular field, such as math or science and hence teach these subject-matters only. Within the Lebanese context, both instructional models exist at schools. The purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' and principals' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of both instructional models. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The participants consisted of four principals and 63 elementary teachers from private schools in Beirut. Both qualitative and quantitative results were comparable and showed that most of the participants believed that homeroom teachers have better connection with students and better knowledge of their students. They also reported that homeroom teachers have better connections with the students' parents as well. Moreover, the participants believed that the homeroom teacher is not less knowledgeable than the subject teacher and both share a similar workload. The results also revealed that the participants favored the homeroom instructional model at the elementary level suggesting that the benefits of this model outweigh its limitations. That is, the participants believed that in this model, the homeroom teachers who accompany the students during the entire school year cater better to the emotional and academic needs of students whereas the subject teachers are less in contact with the students and focus mostly on delivering the content of instruction. Further research is needed on larger scales to confirm these results.

**Keywords:** Elementary school, Homeroom teachers, Subject-matter teachers

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**I- Introduction** ..... **1**

1.1 Research Problem ..... 3

1.2 Purpose of the Study ..... 3

1.3 Research Questions ..... 3

1.4 Rationale ..... 4

1.5 Significance ..... 4

1.6 Definition ..... 5

**II- Literature Review** ..... **4**

2.1 Homeroom teachers in elementary schools ..... 5

2.1.1 Benefits of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions ..... 6

2.1.2.Limitations of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions.6

2.2 Subject Teachers in Elementary School...……...…6

2.2.1 Benefits of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions ..... 6

2.2.2. Limitations of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions . 6

**III- Methodology** ..... **13**

3.1 Type of Method/Research Design/Design of the Study ..... 13

3.2 School context ..... 14

3.3 Participants and sampling method ..... 15

3.4 Instruments ..... 15

3.5 Questionnaire ..... 16

3.6 Interview ..... 16

3.7 Validity and Reliability ..... 17

3.8 Procedure ..... 17

3.9 Data Analysis ..... 18

4. Ethical Considerations ..... 19

**IV- Results**

4.1 Quantitative Results ..... 20

4.2 Summary of Quantitative Results ..... 27

4.3 Qualitative Results ..... 27

4.4 Homeroom Instructional Model ..... 28

4.5 Subject Teacher Instructional Model ..... 32
4.6 Summary of Qualitative Results ..... 35
4.7 Comparison between Qualitative and Qualitative Results ..... 36

**V- Discussion**

5.1 Homeroom Instructional Model based on the Research and Literature ..... 37
5.2 Subject Instructional Model based on the Research and Literature ..... 39

**VI- Recommendation for Practice ..... 40**
6.1 Recommendation for Future Research ..... 40
6.2 Assumptions/Limitations ..... 41

**References ..... 42**

**Appendix ..... 48-58**

# Chapter One

# Introduction

Education is a significant discipline since it prepares and shapes the students for the future (Treska, 2016). Teachers have a major role in the school, which is to transmit the knowledge through diverse methods and resources (Aco, Bibic, Dukicin & Jovanov, 2019). The teacher should understand the climate of her classroom in order to manage the class accordingly and properly (Kashy-Rosenbaum, Kaplan, & Israel-Cohen, 2018; Meyer & Turner, 2006; Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White, & Salovey, 2012). In addition, research has shown that a good relationship with the teacher can improve students' motivation and engagement (Klem & Connel, 2004; Goldhaber et al., 2013).

In elementary, there are two types of teachers, the homeroom teacher and/or the subject teacher. The homeroom teacher teaches students core subjects: math, English and science in a self-contained classroom. The role of the homeroom teacher is to deliver knowledge as well as to nurture students' and fulfill their needs (Ye et al.,2021). Homeroom teachers also create a community where students feel a sense of belonging (Akiba, Shimizu & Zhuang., 2010). On the other hand, subject teachers are responsible for teaching students one specific subject-matter; typically, either math or English or science. Subject teachers are specialized in their field and are experts in the material that they are teaching whereas homeroom teachers teach three core subjects and are not necessarily specialists in all three.

Some studies showed that elementary school should be like high school in its structure for several reasons. One main reason is that the same teacher cannot be an expert in all subjects (Okumura, 2017). Moreover, some teachers are not comfortable teaching a subject that they have not mastered. They may also transfer their frustration to their students.

For example, a specialist teacher in English may dislike math, which might affect the students' academic behavior/performance in the classroom. Therefore, in this view, the rationale is that it is best for the teachers to teach only a specific subject that they master instead of teaching all subjects offered to elementary students, namely English, math, science, and/ or history. Moreover, one study showed that a homeroom teacher should have the passion to teach a specific subject otherwise s/he will not deliver a good lesson (Okumura, 2017). Similarly, in another study the results showed that a homeroom teacher may focus more on math and English and less on science because of the pressure to finish the curriculum in math and English (Poland, Colburn, Long, 2017). Therefore, homeroom teachers might not be well prepared in science classes (Epstein & Miller, 2011). However, some teachers see the specialist role as boring because they have to repeat the same lessons over and over again (Poland et al., 2017). Another study showed that the teacher should have an opportunity to bond more with his/her students by doing more activities with them or meeting with students in small groups (Propper-Giveon & Shayshon, 2017). As such, homeroom teachers have the opportunity to create a better connection with students since they spend more time with them. Teacher-student relationship is very important for students' academic, emotional and social development (Forkosh-Baruch, & Hershkovitz, 2018).

Along the same lines, some educators believe that it is important to have one teacher per class at the elementary level who teaches all subjects (Markworth et al., 2016). The rationale is that the relationship with students will be more solid with only one homeroom teacher. Students will get used to one teacher only rather than struggle to bond with several ones.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned factors, the current study investigates teachers' and school principals' perceptions of homeroom versus subject teachers. The study

followed a mixed-method approach; that is, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Teachers and principals were interviewed and questionnaires were distributed for data collection. Details about the questionnaire and the interview questions are further discussed in the method section.

### 1.1 Research Problem

In Lebanon, some elementary schools follow the homeroom-teacher model and others have adopted the subject-teacher model. In this study, the focus is on exploring the reasons behind the choice of one model over another from the perspective of principals and teachers. Another focus is on examining how principals and teachers view the effectiveness of each model. The aim is to determine principals' and teachers' perceptions as studies have shown that their views have a significant impact on the effectiveness of instruction and the teaching methods used in the classroom (Okumura, 2017).

### 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers at the elementary school level.

### 1.3 Research Questions

Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to provide answers to the following questions:

1. From the teachers' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in elementary private schools?
2. From the principals' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in elementary private schools?

## 1.4 Rationale

Elementary school is the foundation of the middle and high school years as it sets the basis for students' school success (Wood & Moore, 2008). Therefore, selecting the most effective model of instruction is vital at the elementary school level. Two models dominate at the elementary school setting: homeroom teachers vs subject teachers. Few studies have investigated the benefits of these two models, especially in Lebanon where this study was conducted. This is important because most of the schools in Lebanon follow the one homeroom teacher model at the elementary school level without much consideration as to whether a subject-teacher model might be more appropriate. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine teachers' and principals' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers at the elementary level.

## 1.5 Significance

The study's purpose was to contribute to both theory and practice, in order to assist in filling a gap in research. Studying the teachers' and principals' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers at the elementary level can help provide answers to the question of why some schools choose to have homeroom teachers and others subject or specialist teachers. There is a gap in the literature on this topic in Lebanon. The researcher was unable to find relevant articles that address this area of research. Therefore, this study enriched the literature by shedding light on the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of the two models of instruction addressed in this investigation.

**1.6 Definition:**

- Homeroom Teachers:

Homeroom teachers are responsible for facilitating the learning from grade 1-6. S/he has a certain class assigned to him/her. S/he also must create lesson plans, incorporate technology, administer praise and constructive criticism, completing student progress reports, managing classroom activities and student behavior, instruct and inspire students in academic subjects like mathematics, Science and English. S/he also communicates with parents and must attend professional development classes and program.

- Subject Teachers:

Subject teachers are responsible for a specific subject such as Mathematics, English or Science. S/he is an expert in a specific field, and her or his role is to create lesson plans, deliver the knowledge and complete student progress reports regarding this specific subject. Subject teachers teach more than one class/ grade level per year.

# Chapter Two

# Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the literature on the perceptions of teachers and principals on the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers and subject teachers. It is divided into two parts, the first tackles literature on the perceptions on homeroom teachers and the second addresses the perceptions on subject teachers. The researcher used the following databases for the literature search: Google, Google scholar, EBSCO, SAGE, Springer Link and Library databases at the Lebanese American University.

## 2.1 Homeroom teachers in elementary schools

Homeroom teachers are responsible for teaching core subjects; English, science and math. The job of homeroom teachers is to create or edit lesson plans, transmit knowledge, observe and assess students' performance (Okumura, 2017). They also have to give feedback on homework and tests. Teachers have to keep parents updated on their children' behavior and performance through parent-teacher conferences, weekly newsletters, emails and messages. Additionally, homeroom teachers have a responsibility to inspire, motivate and encourage students (Treska & Treska, 2016)

### 2.1.1 Benefits of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions

From the teachers' perspective, being a homeroom teacher has positive aspects. Research shows that students feel more comfortable if they spend the school day with one teacher who knows them very well (Kashy-Rosenbaum, Kaplan, & Israel-Cohen, 2018). Moreover, homeroom teachers connect content with students' experiences (Park, Byun, Sim,

Han, & Baek, 2016). Okumura (2017) conducted a study to determine the most efficient model of language instruction at the elementary school level. The results showed that one benefit of homeroom teachers teaching English is that they are able to link language with other subject-matters. They do not have to teach English as a standalone subject (Okumura, 2017).

Another benefit of the homeroom teacher model is classroom discipline. Homeroom teachers know their students well, therefore, they are more efficient at managing the students and dealing with discipline issues. The role of the homeroom teacher is to identify the classroom climate and to recognize students' interest and difficulties (Treska & Treska, 2016)

### 2.1.2 Limitations of Homeroom Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions

On the other hand, homeroom teachers face many challenges. One important drawback of being homeroom teachers is that they do not have time to prepare creative lesson plans since they are busy planning for several subjects simultaneously. In the article, "Are you ready to platoon", a teacher stated that he was not able to prepare well for his science classes because he did not have enough time to investigate new instructional strategies as he had to teach reading and math as well (Okumura, 2017). Another drawback of a homeroom teacher is the relationship with students(Springborn, 2017). Not all students will feel comfortable with one specific teacher (Fink, 2017), and they get stuck with the same teacher for the entire school year, which might create a difficult learning environment for the student. Moreover, another challenge that homeroom teachers face is that they are not experts in one specific discipline, which affects negatively their confidence in their own skills (Ardzejewska, McMaugh & Coutts, 2010).

A study was conducted in Japan to investigate teachers' perception on whether the homeroom or a specialist teacher should teach English. Most teachers reported that a specialist teacher should teach English. The reasons given were that the specialist teachers are

experts in English and that homeroom teachers are overloaded with work and administrative duties. Some teachers do not feel comfortable teaching a subject in which they are not proficient (Yorozuya, 2019; Okumura, 2017). Similarly, a study was conducted to determine how elementary teachers feel about teaching physical education (PE). The results showed that elementary teachers did not feel confident and qualified to teach PE to their students. They believed that a teacher specialized in PE should teach this subject, especially that students can harm themselves if they are taught to make the wrong movements (Morgan & Bourke, 2008). In other studies, the results showed that the confidence of homeroom teachers depends on their previous experiences. Homeroom teachers are more confident if they have positive teaching experiences and less confident if their previous experiences were negative. Teachers who are less confident tend to focus on games that involve little teaching and learning (Morgan & Bourke, 2008). Another study also showed that music and science should be taught by subject teachers (Australian Government, 2005; Jones & Edmunds, 2005). In the same token, a study was conducted to examine how teachers' perceptions of teaching science and technology affect students' attitude towards science and technology. This study involved 91 teachers and 1822 students. Results showed that male teachers liked to teach science and technology more than female teachers. Moreover, female students tended to develop less positive attitudes toward the subject-matter when they perceived their female teachers as being unhappy teaching science and technology (Denessen, Vos, Hasselman & Louws, 2015)

Principals observe teachers in order to give feedback on their performance and help teachers improve their teaching skills. One challenge is the assumptions that principals have when they observe teachers. For example, a principal observed a homeroom teacher in grade 4 during a math session in order to determine how students engaged and how the teacher delivered the lesson and managed the classroom. The principal noticed that the teacher was circulating among students to assist them and answer their questions, so she determined that

the teacher was able to manage the classroom and deliver the lesson efficiently (Cohen, Ruzek,&Sandilos, 2018). In this case, the principal judged the homeroom teacher positively based on one observation related to one subject- matter. However, the same homeroom teacher in the same classroom may struggle with an English lesson. This teacher might be more at ease with teaching math than another subject matter, which renders the principal's assessment lacking in comprehensiveness. Thus, the principal might make a false judgement about the teacher because she may not be as confident teaching English as she is teaching Math.

## 2.2 Subject Teachers in Elementary School

### 2.2.1 Benefits of Subject Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions.

Typically, subject teachers teach one specific subject to a number of classes. Based on teachers' perceptions, being a subject teacher has positive aspects. One benefit is the qualification and expertise of the subject teacher. Subject teachers use their specialized content knowledge to empower students to produce high quality of work (Wilson, Macdonald, Byrne, Ewing, & Sheridan, 2008). Research shows that when a teacher is an expert in a specific subject, s/he will flourish and excel in this topic. Students will feel that the teacher is passionate about this subject, which will encourage them to work and stay focused (Okumura, 2017).

In a study conducted in Japan, the results showed that specialist teachers teaching English had higher English proficiency and better teaching skills than homeroom teachers. They also had more experience in planning enriching lessons (Okumura, 2017). The researcher concluded that subject teachers should teach English in Elementary schools in Japan because language skills should be taught correctly to empower students in middle school where English is used as the dominant language of instruction.

In addition, another advantage of subject-matter teachers is that students in this model have the opportunity to be in contact with several teachers; having several teachers is beneficial because students are exposed to different teaching styles. Students will have the chance to “click” with at least one teacher. Teachers will also have the opportunity to work with a large variety of students (Fink, 2017).

Moreover, subject teachers feel more confident teaching a specific subject that they love. Butler (2015) states that teachers should be confident in teaching English as a second language in order to help students feel comfortable learning a foreign language and encourage them to participate in the classroom. Subject teachers will be more motivated and enthusiastic than homeroom teachers because they are functioning within their area of expertise. In a study conducted at a Canadian elementary school that had for purpose to explore and compare generalist and specialist physical education teachers, the results showed that generalist teachers perceived more barriers related to teaching PE and believed that specialist teachers were more efficacious in their skills (Truelove et al., 2019). In other words, subject teachers bring confidence to the classroom (Ardejewka et al., 2010).

Another advantage related to subject teachers is that they have more time to plan for the specific subject they are teaching. Thus, they enjoy teaching in their area of expertise and they devise creative ways to transmit knowledge to students. In the article “Are you ready to platoon” (2005), a teacher reported that when he focused on teaching science only, he had more time to plan creative lessons which allowed him to include in his teaching a lab session at least once per week. On the other hand, subject teachers should be careful about maintaining an open communication with the other teachers. Thus, they need to communicate with each other to learn about their students’ strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, they should have after school meetings and events to get to know one another and create a bond together (Fink, 2017).

### 2.2.2 Limitations of Subject Teachers Based on Teachers and Principals' Perceptions.

Subject teachers face many challenges. One main reason is that the personal development of students is as important as their learning of the subject matter. The focus should not only be on the teaching and learning process, but also on the student as a whole in order for him or her to succeed in the future. In the subject teachers' model, the focus is more on learning a specific subject than the development of the student as a whole.

Additionally, switching classes can be disruptive for students' learning. It takes time to go back to the "learning mode". In the article "Are you ready for platoon", research shows that a school that implemented the subject teacher model in third grade switched back to the homeroom teacher model because the administration determined that the transition was too disruptive for the students whereas staying in one classroom made students feel more relaxed and happier (Fink, 2017). In addition, in the subject-teachers model, students have to change rooms and get all their materials with them; for some students in elementary, this may constitute a struggle with logistical challenges (Fink, 2017).

In the current study, the perceptions of teachers and principals about homeroom vs subject teachers was assessed via interviews and questionnaires in four schools in Beirut. The data collected, although limited, shed light on how principals and teachers in Lebanon viewed the benefits and limitations of the two models addressed in this study.

## Conclusion

As per the reviewed literature, students in grades one to three should spend time with one homeroom teacher for sound learning and development. Subject teachers can be introduced in grades four and five where learning the subject-matter content becomes more important and prepares students for middle and high school. In particular, teaching English in elementary has been the focus of research with regards to the two models of instruction

addressed in this study. English teachers have many tasks including teaching pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, reading, writing and speaking. Researchers have debated the benefits and drawbacks of homeroom teachers versus specialist teachers with regards to language instruction. For example, MEXT (2006) argues that specialist teachers in English are crucial in upper elementary to prepare students for middle school. Moreover, subject teachers are experts in their field, therefore they will develop proper and creative lesson plans and be more competent in delivering the material. In addition, homeroom teachers have much work and many duties which makes it harder for them to give teaching English the appropriate focus needed for effective instruction. The need for replacing homeroom teachers with subject-matter teachers in elementary has been investigated worldwide (Ardzejewska, McMaugh & Coutts, 2010).

# Chapter Three

# METHOD

A mixed-method sequential research design was implemented in this study to investigate teachers' and principals' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of homeroom versus subject teachers in four private elementary schools in Beirut. This chapter aims at presenting a description of the procedures followed in this study. It provides a detailed explanation of the research design, sampling method, participants, the context of the study, data collection, and instruments.

The aim was to gather quantitative and qualitative data to provide answers to the following research questions: (a) From the teachers' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of having homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in four elementary private schools in Beirut? (b) From the principals' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of having homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in four elementary private schools in Beirut?

As mentioned, this study followed a mixed-method sequential design. The mixed-method sequential design consisted of two phases: quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative data collection and analysis. The qualitative data was collected and analyzed in the second phase to help explain the quantitative data. This study was conducted in four private schools located in Beirut. The elementary teachers and principals of these schools were invited to participate in the study. Below is a detailed explanation of all procedures related to the research design.

### 3.1 Type of Method/Research Design/ Design of the Study

This study used a sequential mixed- method design via administering two field studies where data was collected in natural environments, as opposed to labs and experimental settings. The sequential mixed method design was chosen as it allows for the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the analysis of qualitative data (Tashakkori & Teddlie,2003). This research design comprised the use of: (1) a survey that gathered quantitative data followed by (2) interviews that gathered qualitative data. The quantitative data collected provided results that have been used to accentuate the qualitative analysis. Quantitative data was collected via a questionnaire that included close-ended questions answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The qualitative data addressed the research questions via semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions conducted with both the teachers and principals of four private schools.

### 3.2 School Context

The study took place in four private schools in Beirut that cater to students from high socioeconomic status. The schools were chosen because private schools with high socioeconomic status have the choice to follow the model of either homeroom teachers or subject teachers as opposed to public schools in Lebanon that are compelled to adopt the model mandated by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The participating schools provide four cycles: preschool, elementary, middle and senior high. They offer different programs: Lebanese, American, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. Students learn Arabic, English and French starting at the preschool level and non-English speaking learners have the opportunity to learn English as a second language.

### 3.3 Participants and Sampling Method

A convenience and purposive sampling procedure was used to recruit participants. Convenience sampling is a type of purposeful sampling, where the sample is selected based on convenience and accessibility (Merriam, 2009). Four private schools, located in Beirut were selected for this study based on convenience and accessibility. Accordingly, participants were recruited from the selected four private schools, which are known to have homeroom or subject teachers. A non-probability sampling is a sampling method in which the number of participants is limited due to time consideration. There are five types of non-probability sampling, which are: convenience sampling, voluntary response sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling (Alvi, 2016). In this study, the voluntary response sampling was used. The researcher invited the school principals or department heads to participate in this study. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from the four schools that consented to take part in this study. Four principals (head of elementary and head of school) agreed to participate in this study.

A total of 63 teachers were selected from the four private schools. For this study, the researcher focused on both homeroom teachers and subject-matter teachers who teach core subjects (Math, English and Science).

### 3.4 Instruments

According to Baxter and Jack (2008), using more than one source of data collection improves the credibility of the study. Credibility "deals with the question of how research findings match reality" (Merriam, 2009, p. 213). The first data collection instrument employed in this study was a questionnaire and the second was interview.

Qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews and quantitative data via a questionnaire. Interviews give the participants the opportunity to elaborate on their answers

and questionnaires provide close-ended data about the participants' views of the two models addressed in this study by agreeing or disagreeing with the statements in the questionnaire.

**3.5 Questionnaire.** The first instrument used in this study is a questionnaire (see appendix A). A questionnaire is a document that includes structured items to which a person's responses indicate his/her opinion toward a certain issue (Seward et al., 2017). Questionnaires serve the purpose of the study because this kind of instrument lends itself to investigating participants views. Participants reacted to 10 closed-ended items related to their perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers. Some of the items are built on a 5-point scale that ranges from "not at all" to "extremely" such as "homeroom teachers are less knowledgeable than subject teachers"; "homeroom teachers have less time to plan than subject teachers" and "homeroom teachers have better connection with students". It is important to choose the appropriate standardized instrument to ensure validity and reliability of the results. As such, the chosen questionnaire items were valid and reliable (Attia, 2017)

All participants remained anonymous. When the questionnaires are anonymously completed, they increase the comfort of participants who will be more motivated to provide truthful answers rather than being pressured with face-to-face questions (Decorte, 2010). A consent form was given to the participants that states the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the data (see appendix B).

**3.6 Interview.** The second instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview. Interviews can be structured, semi structured and unstructured. In this study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview because it fits the purpose and research questions of this study. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method used to explore perspectives and opinions of participants, through a pre-determined set of open-ended questions (Lapan,

Quartaroli & Riemer, 2012). During the interview, the interviewer asks probing questions and the questions can be modified for further probing if necessary (Cohen et al., 2018).

The interview used in this study consisted of five questions that targeted principals' (see appendix C) and teachers' (see appendix D) perceptions of the positive and negative aspects of homeroom versus subject teachers in the elementary school cycle. Participants answered questions such as "What are your perceptions of the instructional model that favors having subject or specialist teachers in elementary? "and "In your opinion, is the workload of homeroom teachers and subject teachers comparable and equally distributed? If not, which model requires a heavier workload? Why?"

Participants were given the freedom to talk about their experiences freely and each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. The semi-structured interviews were recorded after securing the consent of the participants. Prior to conducting the interviews, a consent form was given to the participating principals and the teachers (see appendix E) that states the purpose of the study and the procedures followed to maintain confidentiality of the data. Then, the recorded interviews were transcribed for data analysis and all recordings were destroyed after transcription.

### 3.7 Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire items were developed based on an instrument used in a previous thesis (Attia, 2017), in addition to some original items included for the purpose of this study (see appendix A). Before data collection, the questionnaire was piloted with two teachers to ensure its content validity. A pilot study is a strategy where a small sample is given the questionnaire to test for any mistakes or misunderstandings that might occur. The purpose was to make modifications before distributing the questionnaire to the participants to eliminate obstacles that they might face while responding (Wyse, 2017; Cohen et al., 2018).

### 3.8 Procedure

The researcher contacted the four schools to make sure that they agree to be part of this research. Then, an email was sent with all the information and the link to the questionnaire was sent to the teachers.

Following quantitative data collection, the teachers who were interviewed were chosen randomly from the total sample of 63 teachers. Random sampling guarantees that results from the sample will approximate what should have been obtained if the entire population had been assessed (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Moreover, random sampling will eliminate sampling bias. The researcher interviewed four principals in total and four teachers from each school; that is a total of 16 teachers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were held through zoom and lasted about 30 minutes each for both teachers and principals.

Methodological triangulation is a technique that increases validity by using at least two different methods to collect data (Lapan et al., 2012). In this study, the researcher used two methods for data collection, questionnaires and interviews to answer the research questions. Hence, having equivalent results from both methods ensured validity and reliability.

### 3.9 Data Analysis

Analysis of the quantitative data was performed using SPSS. Frequencies and percentages of the participants' responses to the questionnaire were calculated. Descriptive statistics of the data consisted of means, frequencies and percentages related to each item of the questionnaire.

The data collected through the interviews was analyzed through the interpretative phenomenological analysis method (IPA). This method enabled the researcher to examine in detail how participants are making sense of their personal experiences and their perceptions

(Smith & Osborn, 2007). At first, the researcher transcribed each interview. Then, the researcher read the interviews and identified the codes using common themes. The researcher grouped the codes into categories. Next, the categories were organized under general themes. All recordings were destroyed after transcription.

Finally, quantitative and qualitative data were compared and contrasted for solid conclusions.

**4 Ethical Considerations**

This study abided by the standard ethical guidelines of research. To conduct this study, several ethical considerations that ensured the safety of participants were taken into consideration. The major ethical considerations were participants' confidentiality, anonymity, and consent. First, the researcher secured the approval of the Institutional Research Board (IRB). Next, prior to data collection, participants were contacted for participation in this study. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and sought the school's approval to participate through a consent form. Upon receipt of the approval, participants were contacted for participation in this study. The consent form protected and respected the participants' right to refuse to take part in the study or withdraw at any time from the study without penalty. In addition, it ensured the confidentiality of the information and the anonymity of the participants and explained the procedures followed in the study. All data collected via interviews were anonymized by replacing the participants' names with code numbers to ensure that the identity of the participants is protected (see Appendix F for IRB approval letter).

This chapter presented the methodology in terms of the design of the study, school context, participants, instruments, and the validity and reliability of the study. The following chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results of this study.

# Chapter Four

# Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of the following two models of teaching: (a) homeroom teachers and (b) subject teachers at the elementary school level. Consequently, this study followed a mixed-method sequential research design, through which quantitative and qualitative data were gathered by administering a questionnaire and conducting interviews.

After data cleansing, 63 responses (n=63) from elementary teachers were retained. In addition, twenty (N=20) interviews in total were conducted with the participants as follows: four interviews with school principals, eight interviews with homeroom teachers and eight interviews with subject teachers. This chapter presents the results from each method separately followed by a summary of the overall results. The primary focus of this chapter is to answer the following research questions:

1. From the teachers' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of having homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in elementary private schools? (Questionnaire and Interview)
2. From the principals' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of having homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in elementary private schools? (Interview)

**4.1 Quantitative Results**

The software SPSS was used for quantitative analyses of the 63 questionnaires completed by teachers. Frequencies and means were computed. Descriptive analyses yielded the results presented below.

**Demographic data and related variables**

This subsection presents the demographics and other related data of the 63 participating teachers who completed the questionnaire. It includes the following demographic variables: (1) gender, (2) age, (3) grade levels, (4) experience (homeroom teacher vs subject teacher).

***Gender.*** Results from the teacher demographic data revealed that of the 63 teachers who responded, 61 (96.8%) were females, and only two (3.2%) were males. This gender imbalance is aligned with the gender representation within the teaching profession in Lebanon, whereby most elementary teachers (86.4%) are females (Center for Educational Research and Development CERD, 2014). Figure 1 and Table 2 outline the gender percentages of participants and their frequencies.

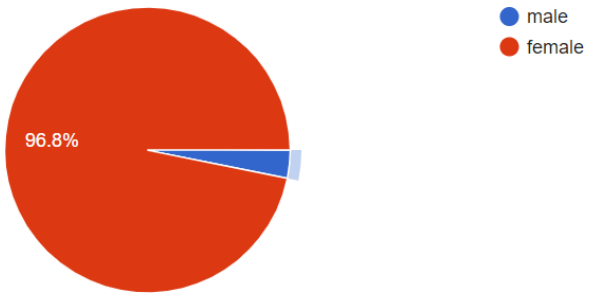



Figure 1. Gender proportion of participant teachers

| Gender | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Male** | 61 | 3.2% |
| **Female** | 2 | 96.8% |
| **Total** | 63 | 100 |

Table 2. Gender frequencies/ percentages

***Age.*** Data analysis of the participants' age showed a reasonable response rate distribution across age groups. The highest percentage (41.3%) corresponded to participants between 30-40 years old, 22.2% corresponded to participants between 25-30 years old, 14.3% corresponded to participants between 40-50 years old and 17.5% corresponded to participants above the age of 50 years. The lowest percentage (4.8%) corresponded to participants between the ages of 20-25 years. Detailed percentages are outlined in Figure 2 and Table 3 with a range of 10 years in each age group.

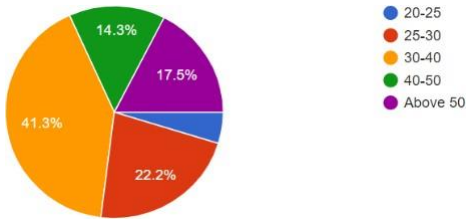



Figure 2. Age distribution of participant teachers

| Age | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 20-25 | 3 | 4.8% |
| 25-30 | 14 | 22.2% |
| 30-40 | 26 | 41.3% |
| 40-50 | 9 | 14.3% |
| Above 50 | 11 | 17.5% |

Table 3. Age frequencies/ percentages

**Grade levels.** Participants were asked to indicate all grade levels they are teaching. Data analysis showed that about half of the participants (50.8%) were teaching grade 2, 29 participants (46%) were teaching grade 3, 27 participants (42.9%) were teaching grade 1, 21 participants (33.3%) were teaching grade 4 and 20 participants (31.7%) were teaching grade 5. Finally, only 10 participants (15.9%) were teaching grade 6. Detailed percentages are outlined in Figure 3 and Table 4. Typically, subject teachers teach more than one grade level.

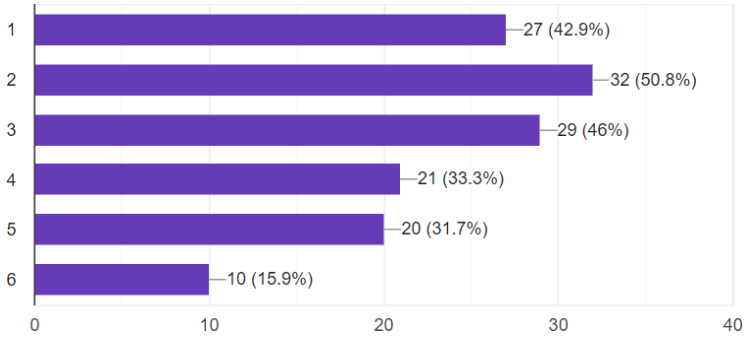



Figure 3. Grade level of participant teachers

| Grade level | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 27 | 42.9% |
| 2 | 32 | 50.8% |
| 3 | 29 | 46% |
| 4 | 21 | 33.3% |
| 5 | 20 | 31.7% |
| 6 | 10 | 15.9% |

Table 4. Grade level frequency/percentages

***Homeroom teachers and subject teachers.*** Data analysis showed that 20 participants (31.7%) were working in a school where the model of homeroom teaching is applied, and 43 participants (68.3%) were working in a school where the subject teachers model is applied. Figure 4 and table 5 illustrate the percentages and frequencies.

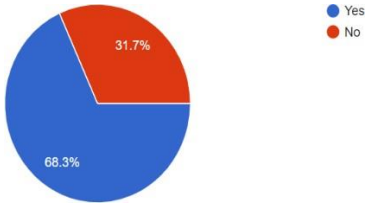



Figure 4: Schools where subject teachers model is applied

| Homeroom and subject teachers | Frequency | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| School with homeroom teachers | 20 | 31.7% |
| School with only subject teachers | 43 | 68.3% |

Figures 5: School's model frequency/percentages

***Homeroom teaching.*** Participants working in a school where homeroom teaching is not applied were asked to indicate whether they have worked as homeroom teachers in a previous school. The results showed that 16 participants have worked previously as homeroom teachers whereas 15 participants have always worked as a subject teacher only. Figure 5 and Table 6 outline the percentages and frequencies of these results.

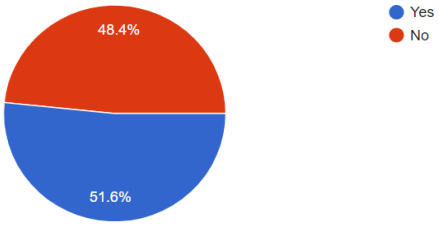



Figure 5: Subject teachers who experienced being a homeroom teacher

| Homeroom and subject teachers | Frequency | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| Worked as a homeroom teacher | 16 | 51.6% |
| Only worked as a subject teacher | 15 | 48.4% |

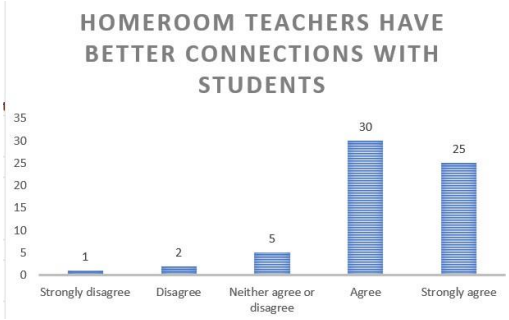
Figure 6: Homeroom teachers frequency/percentages

### 4.1.2 Teachers beliefs about benefits and limitations of the two models

This subsection provides answers to the first research question "From the teachers' perceptions, what are the benefits and limitations of having homeroom teachers versus subject teachers in elementary private schools? "These answers were extracted from the responses to the items of the questionnaire.

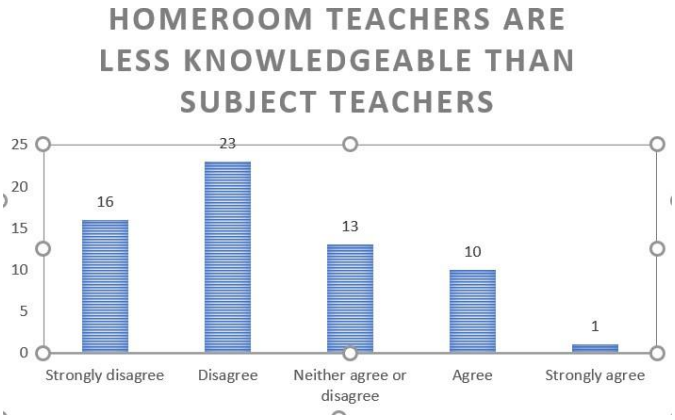
A. Connection with Students
   Responding to the question that homeroom teachers have better connections with students, almost all the participating teachers perceived that homeroom teachers have better connections with students. That is, 30 participants responded "Agree" to the item about homeroom teachers having better connections with students and 25

participants responded with “strongly agree” to the statement in that items. Only three teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that homeroom teachers have better connections with students.



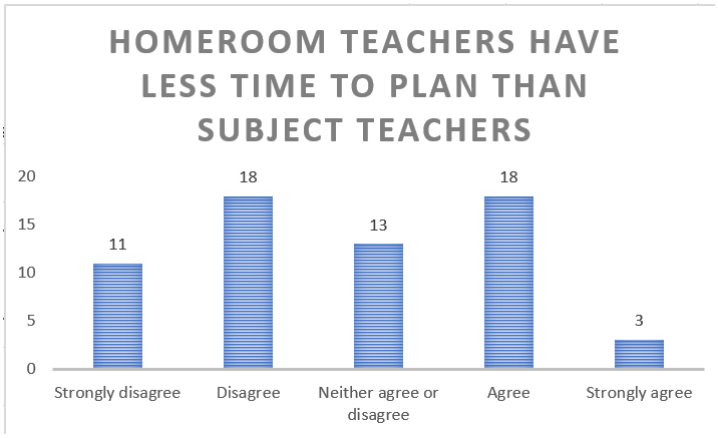

B. Knowledge and Expertise

Responding to the question that indicates that homeroom teachers are less knowledgeable than subject teachers, the results showed that the participating teachers did not perceive homeroom teachers as less knowledgeable than subject teachers. Based on the data analysis, 16 participants strongly disagreed, and 23 participants disagreed with the statement that homeroom teachers are less knowledgeable than subject teachers. However, 13 participants neither agreed or disagreed, 10 participants agreed and only 1 participant strongly agreed.



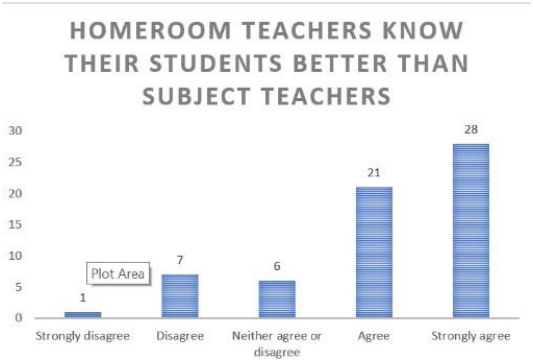

C. Workload

When participants were asked if homeroom teachers have less time to plan than subject teachers; 18 participants disagreed and 18 participants agreed. However, 11 participants strongly disagreed while only 3 participants strongly agree. In other words, the results showed that the majority of participants perceived that homeroom teachers don’t have less time to plan than subject teachers.



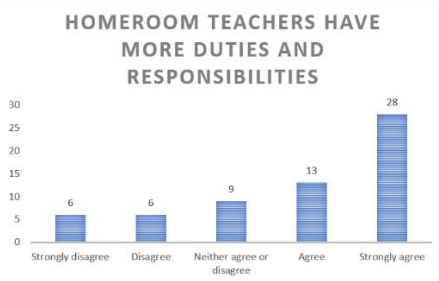

D. Knowledge of Students

The majority of the homeroom and subject teachers in the sample (n=39) agreed or strongly agreed that homeroom teachers know their students better than subject teachers. Only 8 participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

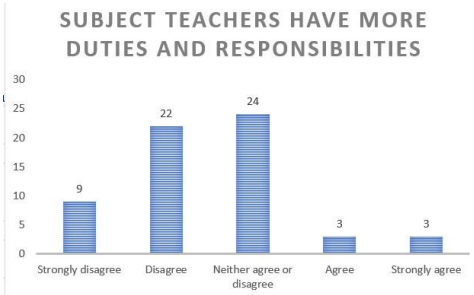



E. Duties and Responsibilities

The results showed that 41 participants , which is more than half of the participants, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that homeroom teachers have more duties and responsibilities whereas the remaining participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement.

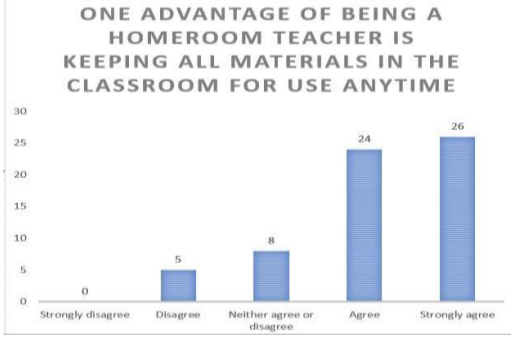


Confirming the above results, when asked whether subject teachers have more duties and responsibilities, only 6 participants agreed and strongly agreed. However, the majority of participants disagreed with this statement or had neutral results.



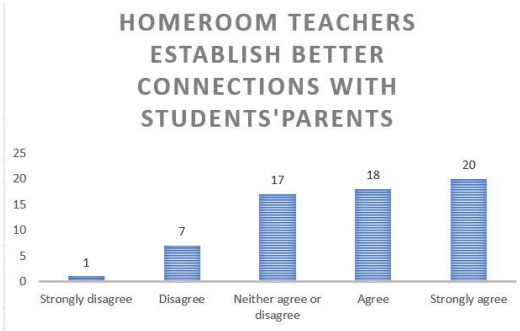

F. Benefits of the homeroom teacher model

The results showed that the majority of the participants (n=50) agreed or strongly agreed that one advantage of being a homeroom teacher is keeping all materials in the classroom for use anytime. Whereas, eight participants had neutral views and five participants disagreed.




G. Connections with students' parents

About half of the participants believed that homeroom teachers establish better connections with students' parents. That is, 18 participants agreed, and 20 others strongly agreed with this statement. However, 7 participants disagree and only 8 strongly disagree with the statement in this item.



### 4.2 Summary of quantitative results

Based on the quantitative data, the majority of the participants whether homeroom teachers or subject teachers believed that homeroom teachers have better connection with students and that they know their students better. Moreover, the participants reported that homeroom teachers have better connections with the students' parents as well. Also, the participants believed that the homeroom teacher is not perceived as less knowledgeable than the subject teacher at the elementary level. In addition, homeroom teachers have more responsibilities and duties but both subject teachers and homeroom teachers share a similar workload. According to the participants, one advantage of homeroom teachers is that they can keep all the materials in one place where they can access it anytime. In sum, both subject teachers and homeroom teachers perceived that the advantages of following the homeroom instructional model at the elementary outweigh the barriers.

### 4.3 Qualitative Results

Qualitative results were extracted from the interview data conducted with 20 participants (principals and teachers) at the four participating schools. In total, 16 participants were teachers (8 homeroom teachers and 8 subject teachers) and 4 were principals. The data collected through the interviews was analysed through the interpretative phenomenological analysis method (IPA). First, the researcher transcribed each interview. Then, she read the interviews and identified the codes using common themes. Next, the codes were classified into categories. Finally, the categories were organized under general themes. The general themes for both instructional models included the following: general description of the model, teachers' and principals' perceptions of the benefits of each model, and teachers and principals' perceptions of the barriers of each instructional model.

### 4.4 Homeroom Instructional model

The researcher interviewed eight teachers and two principals recruited from two private schools in Lebanon to collect data on the homeroom instructional model. The two schools followed the homeroom instructional model; that is, teachers teach all subject matters in each grade level at the elementary cycle. The homeroom teachers' responsibilities included developing lesson plans for all subject-matters, incorporating technology, and assessing students' performance. The homeroom teachers also completed student progress reports, managed classroom activities and student behavior, instructed and inspired students in academic subjects, such as mathematics, science and English. Moreover, homeroom teachers communicated with parents routinely/occasionally and attended professional development classes and programs.

In the following section, the benefits and barriers of the homeroom instructional model are presented based on the interview data from the principals and homeroom teachers.

**Benefit of Homeroom Model**

Analysis of the data collected from interviews with the eight teachers and two principals on the benefits of the homeroom instructional model showed that the participants identified several benefits and barriers of this model for both teachers and students.

**a) Benefit for students**

Data from the interviews conducted with the two principals revealed that both principals perceived homeroom teachers as crucial for elementary students. For instance, one principal mentioned: "They have an important role because they focus on the whole wellbeing of the students, and not only on academic matters.". The other principal confirmed that "Homeroom teachers are role models. Their role is to shape the whole being of each student". According to one principal, homeroom teachers "create connection between the subjects". Creating connection between subjects was perceived as very important for students' success.

Moreover, one principal perceived that following the homeroom model “allows the teacher to develop an understanding of the whole child as opposed to focusing only on the subject-matter”. The other principal added that having a better understanding of each student will help homeroom teachers “support and differentiate for the students when necessary”.

Similarly, most of the participating teachers stated that a major benefit of this model is that homeroom teachers were able to form strong relationships with all students, which allows them “to get to know the students well, their unique personalities, and their interests”. Teachers perceived that through the homeroom model “teachers really know where the students’ strength and weaknesses are so they can work on these and help the students.” Moreover, they also perceived that one advantage to students who have a homeroom teacher is that “they get used to one routine, one teacher, and this creates a smooth flow”.

In addition, homeroom teachers perceived that one benefit to the homeroom model involves making connections between the different subject-matters which encourages students to think critically. STEAM education is an educational approach that connects Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics and encourages students to inquire and think critically. Making connections between the different subjects encourages students to think critically (Lee et al., 2013).

Moreover, homeroom teachers perceived the advantage of the homeroom model involves allowing teachers to “connect the subject and do the integration plan”. As one teacher affirmed that this will help students “think on a wider scope”. Another teacher stated that integration helps students feel that they are more connected to the subject matters, and it means more to them. Students can also “apply it more on their life experience”. Students will learn different things while being in one specific context. Integration is much easier for students and teachers in the homeroom model.

### b) Benefit for teachers

Based on the teachers' perceptions, being a homeroom teacher has many benefits. In addition to making connections with the students, other benefits for teachers included better flow and order to their lesson plans. Participating teachers agreed that the transition that occurs between the class sessions are smoother in the homeroom model. For instance, one teacher indicated that "students know what to expect from one session to the next and only one teacher is responsible for organizing the entire schedule". Moreover, another teacher confirmed that "the rules are set by one specific teacher which makes it easier for students to understand and follow these rules." Similarly, one participating teacher stated: "students are used to a smooth flow and classroom management rules are smoother".

## Barriers of the Homeroom Model

Principals' perceptions of the barriers of the homeroom model were twofold: (a) barriers for students, and (b) barriers for teachers.

### a) Barriers for students

The two principals perceived that one of the most common barriers of the homeroom model for students is the shift between elementary and middle school. For instance, one principal mentioned that " it [the shift] is always difficult because suddenly a child with a homeroom teacher will end up with several adults." The other principal added that the role of teachers is crucial in the adjustment of students, stating that "teachers should take care of this adjustment in order to make this transition as smooth as possible." Yet, both principals agreed that these barriers are manageable compared to the benefits of the homeroom model. With regards to barriers, most of the participating teachers stated that the barriers of having a homeroom teacher in elementary are minor or almost non-existent. The barriers or disadvantages are mostly related to the students' attitudes towards the teacher. That is, if a student dislikes the teacher, he or she finds themselves stuck with that particular teacher for the entire school

year. One teacher affirmed that being stuck with one teacher "might affect the overall performance of the student".

**b) Barriers for teachers**

The two principals perceived that one of the most common barriers for homeroom teachers is their lack of specialization in a particular field. For instance, one principal stated that "some teachers need more training specially to teach science and math because most of the teachers have humanities background". Yet they both provided some recommendations to overcome these barriers. These recommendations included "trainings, personal development and support".

Also, homeroom teachers have to plan for several subjects, meet with parents and abide by a heavy schedule. Therefore, one of the perceived barriers of being a homeroom teacher was the workload. Many participants stated that it is a big responsibility to be a homeroom teacher. Learning should be fun and engaging. Teachers should meet the learning objectives by planning for each activity. Some participants perceived that homeroom teachers are "not really knowledgeable in all the subject areas and they do not give enough time for all the subjects". Also, one participant stated that homeroom teachers may "not have enough time to prepare for all the subjects". In addition, homeroom teachers have a heavier workload as one teacher mentioned that "they [homeroom teachers] spend more time preparing and have more responsibilities than just teaching a subject." Another affirmed that "they have more responsibilities; not only academically but also emotionally and socially towards the students". In addition, homeroom teachers are responsible for teaching different subjects and some teachers do not feel comfortable teaching all the different subject-matters. This might affect the teacher's attitudes negatively although for optimal students' learning, teachers should have a positive attitude and they must enjoy to be challenged. One principal added that "the teacher attitude may be a barrier for students' learning". However, she

believes that this is not really a major barrier because teachers can be trained to teach different subject, especially for grades 1,2 and 3. However, the age of the teacher play an important role. One principal believes that "teachers who are young and new to the job will not struggle a lot because they are more willing to learn; they are also full of energy and ready to change", as opposed to older and more experienced teachers, stating that "a 45 years old teacher, teaching for almost 20 years will have difficulty to adapt to this model especially if they are teaching grades 4 and 5."

## 4.5 Subject Teacher Instructional

## Model Benefits of Subject Teacher

Subject teachers teach one specific subject to several grade levels at the elementary school cycle. They are experts in their field and their teaching focuses on teaching one subject-matter only. The researcher interviewed eight subject teachers and two principals. Six of them whose career was based exclusively on being subject teachers and who were never homeroom teachers. The benefits and barriers of the subject-teacher instructional model are presented in the section below.

### a) Benefits For Students

Based on the interview data, the results showed that the participating teachers considered being exposed to a variety of teachers as being the most important benefit of having subject teachers at school. As one participant stated: "Students who have subject teachers have the opportunity to deal with different characters". Another one confirmed that "Students are also exposed to different methodology and strategies". One principal also believes that one advantage of having subject teachers is "students are exposed to a variety of methodology, strategies and teaching style"

### b) Benefits For Teachers

Teachers agreed that since subject teachers are responsible for focusing on only one specific subject, they are experts in this specific subject. One participant stated that "being expert in the subject can make the teacher more confident to teach the topic". In addition, some participants believed that subject teachers have less planning to do since they develop lesson plans for only one subject-matter. For instance, one teacher stated that "my [her] duties are restricted to preparing lesson plans for one subject-matter only". One principal believes that it is better to have subject teachers for upper elementary because "the teacher should have a solid background regarding the content matter". Having a solid background will make the teacher more comfortable to answer all the students' questions.

## Barriers of the Subject Teachers Instructional Model

### a) Barriers For students

The results showed that one of the most important barriers to the subject-teacher instructional model is the lack of consistency and stability in the classroom. Students who have subject teachers are exposed to different rules and regulations. Participants perceived that students in the subject-teachers instructional model do not have a consistent flow of rules and regulations. In the same vein, one principal added that "there is not a natural flow and it becomes very segregated for children". Similarly, another principal stated that being a subject teacher involves "a lot of planning, a lot of adults dealing with students at a young age and a lot of segregation of the subject". Another principal believes that subject teachers "very rarely will be able to integrate all the subjects together". She also believes that having subject teachers "take away from the journey and development of the skills that become critical for other subjects later on". Along the same lines, one principal added that "today we don't learn for content, we learn for skills and applications, we want to be able to explore and identify. It

is not about going and telling them [the students] to memorize the multiplication tables it is all about how you use that and where you use that and why you use it that way". Moreover "information can be accessible at your fingertips, information changes so fast that it is not even worth asking kids to just memorize".

### b) Barriers For teachers

Based on the collected data from interviews, participants believed that the connection between students and subject teachers is not as strong as that found in the homeroom instructional model. Subject teachers teach only one subject and their main focus is to transmit the knowledge rather than make meaningful connections with students. Another barrier perceived by teachers is the repetition of lesson plans which creates boredom for the teacher. As one participating teacher stated: "although I prepare only one lesson plan, the fact that I teach the same information to many class sections can be boring and repetitive".

Similarly, the interviewed principals reported that the barriers related to the homeroom model outweigh by far the benefits. Moreover, the connection between parents, students and teachers is very important for the child' growth. The four principals believe that "homeroom becomes a relationship and partnership with parents". In addition, "the parents know the homeroom teacher; therefore, the communication is easy to track and there is a continuous communication between the homeroom teacher and parents. Contrary to subject teachers, "it is very different because parents have to communicate with ten different people". Regarding the workload, two principals at schools that follow the homeroom model and one principal at a school that follows the subject teachers model concurred that the workload between subject teachers and homeroom teachers is the same. They believed that "the workload is almost the same because the homeroom teacher has 27 kids but 4 different subjects to prepare and teach and the single subject teachers have 4 classes but you need to prepare for 2 different grade level and it is the same regarding the grade reports. So 'they are

pics for one and pics for the other, but I really do not believe that there is more work in a specific model".

### 4.6 Summary of Qualitative Results

The qualitative results showed that both principals and teachers believed that homeroom teachers are crucial for elementary students. In their opinion, homeroom teachers don't focus only on the subject but also on the whole wellbeing of each student. Thus, they can differentiate the teaching method to fulfill the unique needs of each student. at the elementary level, homeroom teachers are perceived as the students' role models. Moreover, the connection with parents is crucial for the students' growth and this is more achievable with homeroom teachers. Another important aspect of having a homeroom teacher is that s/he can connect all the subjects together, which is very important for the students' success. Moreover, the flow in a class with a homeroom teacher is smoother since students follow only one set of rules and one routine.

The results also showed that despite the advantages, the participants perceived some minor barriers associated with the homeroom instructional model in elementary school. Firstly, the shift from elementary to middle school can be harder on students who follow the homeroom model. The second barrier is the lack of a specialization of homeroom teachers in a particular field, but the participants added that this can be resolved by attending workshops or a specialized training in case they need to advance their knowledge in a specific subject-matter. Most of the participants agreed that the workload of homeroom and subject teachers are comparable, but homeroom teachers have more responsibilities than subject teachers, including the emotional wellbeing of the students.

On the other hand, the participants reported that one of the advantage of the subject-teacher model is related to the exposure of students to different individuals with different

teaching styles, methodologies, strategies and characters, which can be very beneficial to students. However, one important challenge that the participants reported concerning the subject teacher model is the students' lack of stability and consistency in the classroom due to the different rules and regulations established by each teacher.

In sum, the results showed that the participants perceived advantages and disadvantages to both instructional models. However, the participants agreed that at the elementary level, especially in lower grades, students need to have a strong relationship with the teacher, which gives advantage to the homeroom instruction model. In addition, the participants stated that the teachers should stay in touch with the parents to help the student grow as much as possible. Furthermore, teachers should know their students holistically to differentiate and help each student grow and develop their full potential. Also, students in elementary should be able to follow one set of rules and regulation, which is also an advantage of the homeroom instructional model.

### 4.7 Comparison between qualitative and quantitative results

Both qualitative and quantitative data yielded similar results. Most of the participants viewed that homeroom teachers made better connection with students and parents. Moreover, teachers and principals did not perceive the homeroom teachers as less knowledgeable than subject teachers at the elementary level. In addition, the workload of homeroom teachers and subject teachers was perceived as the same, but homeroom teachers were viewed as having additional duties and responsibilities. In conclusion, the participants perceived that the benefit of the homeroom instructional model at the elementary level outweigh the benefit of the subject-teacher instructional model.

# Chapter Five

# Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of the homeroom versus the subject-teacher instructional models at the elementary school level. The study followed a mixed-methods approach; that is, a survey and an interview were employed to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. The quantitative data collected provided results that were used to accentuate the qualitative analysis. The qualitative data was used to address the research questions via semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions conducted with both the teachers and principals at four private schools in Lebanon. Findings of this study revealed that the participants favored the homeroom instructional model over the subject-teacher model at the elementary school level.

This chapter discusses the major findings of this research in light of the relevant literature. Furthermore, it presents the theoretical and practical implications of the study. Assumptions, limitations, recommendations for future research and practice and a conclusion are outlined.

## 5.1 Homeroom instructional model based on the research and literature

The results of this study align with the literature in several ways. First, the quantitative findings reinforced the importance of the homeroom instructional model. Also, both qualitative and quantitative findings are compatible with previous studies that investigated similar issues. That is, homeroom teachers were found to have the ability to make connections between the different subjects taught and to connect content with the student's

experiences. Moreover, the results showed that homeroom teachers knew their students holistically and therefore, were able to differentiate and cater to each student's unique needs. They were also more efficient at managing the students and dealing with discipline issues (Park, Byun, Sim, Han, & Baek, 2016, Okumura,2017).

In addition, the findings of this study are compatible with previous research that showed that homeroom teachers may not be confident teaching a subject in which they are not proficient (Yorozuya, 2019; Okumura, 2017). However, as in previous research, the participants reported that this barrier can be overcome because homeroom teachers often attend to this disadvantage by attending workshops to increase their knowledge in a certain subject-matter.

On the other hand, some of the results in this study were incompatible with previous research. For example, previous studies (Yorozuya, 2019; Okumura, 2017) have highlighted that homeroom teachers must plan for several subjects, thus compromising their ability to develop creative lesson plans. However, in this study, the participants did not share this view and asserted that homeroom teachers have the capability to develop lesson plans as creative as those outlined by subject-teachers.

In addition, participants believed that students have a better connection with homeroom teachers and they perceived their teachers as role models. In the literature, Fink (2017) stipulated that the relationship between students and their homeroom teacher can be challenging as students are stuck with one specific homeroom teacher all year long, thus possibly creating a difficult learning environment for the students.

In this study, the participants believed that a good teacher could teach successfully different subject-matters. However, Cohen, Ruzek, and Sandilos (2018) found that principals might develop a negative judgement of teachers, thus doubting their capability to navigate successfully between different subject-matters.

### 5.2 Subject instructional model based on the research and literature

The results of this study align with the literature in several ways. One of the most important aspects is that homeroom teachers focus on the child holistically. However, subject teachers tend to focus more on the delivery of a specific content. The focus should not be solely on the teaching and learning process because the comprehensive development of students in elementary is crucial.

Another common point is the transition between classes. In this study, teachers and principals agreed that the transition in schools that follow the subject instructional model is less smooth than schools that follow the homeroom instructional model. Transitions may be disruptive for students as they try to navigate between different contexts and subject-matters. Fink's (2017) research supports this point.

On the other hand, some results in this study were incompatible with previous research. Participants believe that at the elementary level, homeroom teachers can teach different subjects as successfully as subject teachers. However, Wilson, Macdonald, Byrne, Ewing, and Sheridan (2008) found that subject teachers were more competent at using their expertise and passion for the subject they teach to empower students to produce high quality work. Finally, in this study, participants perceived that homeroom teachers and subject teachers had similar workloads. However, in previous research (Fink,2017), the results showed that subject teachers had a lighter work load, thus had more time to plan creative lessons.

In conclusion, this study aligns with the literature in support of the benefits of the homeroom instructional model. Homeroom teachers focus holistically on each student, which supports the comprehensive development of students, especially in lower elementary. In addition, the results of this study and previous research support the claim that subject teachers

can be introduced in upper elementary, specifically upper elementary grade levels where learning subject-matter content becomes more significant to prepare students for a smoother transition to middle school.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Recommendation 1. Professional development and training on different instructional models should be provided for teachers.

Recommendation 2. Courses in education major in universities should emphasize both instructional models and offer detailed description about each model.

**6.1 Recommendations for Future Research**

The recommendations that stem from the results of this study are:

1. Further studies should investigate students' perceptions to obtain further insight into the effectiveness of both instructional models.
2. Further research should also explore the parents' input on their views concerning the homeroom and subject-teachers models.
3. In further studies, larger samples representative of the population should be used for generalization of the results.
4. In future research, other instruments should be used for data collection such as the students' records and compare them to the students' views on both models.

## 6.2 Assumptions/ Limitations

In this study it was assumed that the participants responded honestly and truthfully to the items in the questionnaires and to the interview questions. Another assumption was that the researcher was not biased towards any aspect of the topic while designing the questionnaire and deciding on the interview questions. Limitations of the study include:

1. Small and non-randomized sample size of principals and teachers. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the entire Lebanese population of principals and teachers.
2. Instruments used lend themselves to possible distortion of the truth, especially interviews that might lead participants to withhold or distort information to put themselves in good light.
3. The length and scope of the study were limited due to resources and time restrictions.
4. The interviews were planned to be in-person and to take around 30 minutes, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the interviews were held via Zoom and took much less time than planned due to technical issues (such as electricity outage and poor internet connection).

## References


Akiba, M., Shimizu, K., & Zhuang, Y. (2010). Bullies, Victims, and Teachers in Japanese Middle Schools. *Comparative Education Review, 54*(3), 369-392. doi:10.1086/653142

Alvi, M. (2016). A manual for selecting sampling techniques in research.

Ardzejewska, K., McMaugh, A., & Coutts, P. (2010). Delivering the primary curriculum: The use of subject specialist and generalist teachers in NSW. Issues in Educational Research, 20(3), 203-219

Attia, N. (2017) Teachers' Perception on the Relationship Between Subject-Specialized Teaching and Students' Achievement in Elementary Classrooms. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

Australian Government. (2005). *National review of school Music education: Augmenting the diminished*. Retrieved July 30,2009, from http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/C9AFAE54-6D72-44CC-A346-

3CAF235CB268/8944/music_review_reportFINAL.pdf

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. The Qualitative Report, 13(4), 544-556.

Butler, Y.G., (2015). Shoogakko eigo kyokaka-no arikata [Concerning English Education at Elementary School as an Academic Subject]. Kyoiku-to Igaku. Education and Medicine, 63(12): 20-27.

Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD). (2014). Statistical Report. Retrieved from http://www.crdp.org/ar/desc-statistics/25707-2013%20-%2020

Cohen, J., Ruzek, E., & Sandilos, L. (2018). Does teaching quality cross subjects? Exploring consistency in elementary teacher practice across subjects. *AERA Open*, *4*(3), 2332858418794492.

Decorte, T. (2010). Small scale domestic cannabis cultivation: An anonymous web survey among 659 cannabis cultivators in Belgium. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, *37*(2), 341-370.

Denessen, E., Vos, N., Hasselman, F., & Louws, M. (2015). The relationship between primary school teacher and student attitudes towards science and

technology. *Education Research International, 2015*.

Epstein, D., & Miller, R. T. (2011). Slow off the mark: Elementary school teachers and the crisis in STEM education. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review, 77(1),* 4–10

Fink, S. B. (2017). *Teacher, parent, and administrator perceptions of social responsibility at the elementary school level*. Northern Illinois University.

Forkosh-Baruch, A., & Hershkovitz, A. (2018). Broadening communication yet holding back: Teachers' perceptions of their relationship with students in the SNS-era. *Education*

*and Information Technologies, 23*(2), 725-740.

Goldhaber, D., Cowan, J., & Walch, J. (2013). Is a good elementary teacher always good? Assessing teacher performance estimates across subjects. *Economics of Education Review, 36*, 216-228.

Jones, M.G, & Emunds, J. (2005). Models of elementary science instruction: Roles of Science specialistl teachers. In K. Appleton (Ed.), Elementary Science teacher education: *International perspectives on contemporary issues and practice* (pp.317-344). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kashy-Rosenbaum, G., Kaplan, O., & Israel-Cohen, Y. (2018). Predicting academic achievement by class-level emotions and perceived homeroom teachers' emotional support. *Psychology in the Schools, 55*(7), 770-782.

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74,* 262– 273.

Lapan, S. D., Quartaroli, M. T., & Riemer, F. J. (Eds.). (2012). *Qualitative research: An introduction to methods and designs.* Jossey-Bass/Wiley.

Lukić, A., Ivanović-Bibić, L., Đukičin-Vučković, S., Milanković-Jovanov, J., Ivkov-Džigurski, A., & Konečnik-Kotnik, E. (2019). The role of homeroom-and geography teachers in the obligatory administration in elementary schools. *Journal of the Geographical Institute" Jovan Cvijic", SASA, 69*(1), 67-74.

Markworth, K. A., Brobst, J., Ohana, C., & Parker, R. (2016). Elementary content specialization: Models, affordances, and constraints. *International Journal of STEM Education, 3*(1), 1-19.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

MEXT, 2006b. Kyoikukatei bukai "Shingi keika houkoku" (Heisei 18nen 2gatsu 13nichi). [Curriculum Sub-Committee „The Progress Report" (2006/02/13)]. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo3/siryo/07061432/003.htm

Meyer, D. K., & Turner, J. C. (2006). Reconceptualizing emotion and motivation to learn in classroom contexts. *Educational Psychology Review, 18,* 377– 390

Morgan, P., & Bourke, S. (2008). Non-specialist teachers' confidence to teach PE: the nature and influence of personal school experiences in PE. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy, 13*(1), 1-29.

Okumura, S. (2017). Homeroom teachers or specialist teachers? : considerations for the workforce for teaching English as a subject at elementary school in Japan. *Asian Journal of Education and Training*.doi: 10.20448/journal.522/2017.3.1/522.1.1.5

Park, H., Byun, S. Y., Sim, J., Han, H. S., & Baek, Y. S. (2016). Teachers' perceptions and practices of STEAM education in South Korea. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, 12*(7), 1739-1753.

Poland, S., Colburn, A., Long, D. (2017). Teacher perspectives on specialization in the

elementary classroom: implications for science instruction. *International Journal of Science* Education. *39:13*, 1715-1732, doi: 10.1080/09500693.2017.1351646

Popper-Giveon, A; Shayshon, B. (2017). Educator versus subject matter teacher: the conflict between two sub-identities in becoming a teacher. *Teachers and Teaching*. *23:5*, 532-548, doi: 10.1080/13540602.2016.1218841

Reyes, M. R., Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., White, M., & Salovey, P. (2012). Classroom emotional climate, student engagement, and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 104*, 700– 712

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference/William R. Shedish, Thomas D. Cook, Donald T. Campbell*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Seward, K., Wolfenden, L., Wiggers, J., Finch, M., Wyse, R., Oldmeadow, C., ... & Yoong, S. L. (2017). Measuring implementation behaviour of menu guidelines in the childcare setting: confirmatory factor analysis of a theoretical domains framework questionnaire (TDFQ). *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, *14*(1), 1-9.

Smith, J. A., & Osborn, M. (2007). Pain as an assault on the self: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of the psychological impact of chronic benign low back pain. *Psychology and health*, *22*(5), 517-534.

Springborn, T. (2017). *The importance of Teacher/Student relationships*

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2003). Issues and dilemmas in teaching research methods courses in social and behavioural sciences: US perspective. *International journal of social research methodology*, *6*(1), 61-77.

Treska, L. (2016). The Role, Responsibilities and Duties of the Homeroom Teacher in Albania Education System During the Communist Regime (1945–End of'60-S). *European Journal of Social Science Education and Research*, *3*(4), 49-57.

Truelove, S., Johnson, A. M., Burke, S. M., & Tucker, P. (2019). Comparing Canadian generalist and specialist elementary school teachers' self-efficacy and barriers related to physical education instruction. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, *40*(1), 10-20.pol

Wilson, G.B., Macdonald, R.A.R., Byrne, C., Ewing, S., & Sheridan, M. (2008). Dread and passion: Primary secondary teachers' views on teaching the arts. Curriculum Journal, 19, 37-53.

Wood, C., & Moore, J. (2008). Introduction: Elementary School Counseling—Interventions and Programs. *The Elementary School Journal*, *108*(5), 358-361. doi:10.1086/589466

Ye, W., Zhu, L., & Ye, W. (2021). Motivation and morality to manage a class: perceptions of homeroom teachers in China's Tianjin city. *Educational Studies*, 1-19.

Yorozuya, R. (2019). Elementary School Teachers' Preference on Homeroom Teachers and Specialist Teachers for English Classes.file:///C:/Users/z/Downloads/Are%20you%20ready%20to%20platoon.pdf

## APPENDIX A

## Questionnaire

1. Indicate your age range:
   a. 20-25
   b. 25-30
   c. 30-40
   d. 40-50
   e. Above 50

2. Check ALL grade levels you teach:
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5

3. Check your gender:
   a. male
   b. female

4. Is homeroom teaching applied in your school?

   a. Yes
   b. No

5. If your answer is no, have you tried working as a homeroom teacher in your previous position/school?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Check the box that best reflects your views on the following statements:

| | Strongly disagree | disagree | Neither agree or disagree | Agree | Strongl y agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Homeroom teachers have better connections with students** | | | | | |
| **Homeroom teachers are less knowledgeable** | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **than subject teachers** | | | | | |
| **Homeroom teachers have less time to plan than subject teachers** | | | | | |
| **Homeroom teachers know their students better than subject teachers** | | | | | |
| **Homeroom teachers have more duties and responsibilities** | | | | | |
| **Subject teachers have more duties and responsibilities** | | | | | |
| **One advantage of being a homeroom teacher is keeping all materials in the classroom for use anytime** | | | | | |
| **Homeroom teachers establish better connections with the students' parents** | | | | | |

**APPENDIX B**

# *Consent to participate in a Survey*

*I would like to invite you to participate in a research project by completing the following survey. I am a student at the Lebanese American University and I am completing this research project as part of my Master's in Education degree requirements. The purpose of this survey aims to* investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers at the elementary school level.

*There are no known risks, harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. The information you provide will be used to enhance and improve our knowledge on the perceptions of teachers and principals toward homeroom teachers versus subject teachers. You will not directly benefit from participation in this study. The study will involve 64 participants. Completing the survey will take 20 minutes of your time.*

*By continuing with the survey, you agree with the following statements:*

1. *I have been given sufficient information about this research project.*
2. *I understand that my answers will not be released to anyone and my identity will remain anonymous. My name will not be written on the questionnaire nor be kept in any other records.*
3. ***When the results of the study are reported, I will not be identified by name or any other information that could be used to infer my identity.*** *Only researchers will have access to view any data collected during this research however data cannot be linked to me.*
4. *I understand that I may withdraw from this research any time I wish and that I have the right to skip any question I don't want to answer.*
5. *I understand that my refusal to participate will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which I otherwise am entitled to.*
6. *I have been informed that the research abides by all commonly acknowledged ethical codes and that the research project has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Lebanese American University*
7. *I understand that if I have any additional questions, I can ask the research team listed below.*
8. *I have read and understood all statements on this form.*
9. *I voluntarily agree to take part in this research project by completing the following survey*

*If you have any questions, you may contact:*

| *Name (PI)* | *Phone number* | *Email address* |
|---|---|---|
| *Zeinab Fakih* | *76002341* | *Zeinab.fakih@lau.edu* |
| | | |

*If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or you want to talk to someone outside the research, please contact the:*

*Institutional Review Board*
*Office, Lebanese American*
*University*
*3rd Floor, Dorm A, Byblos*
*Campus Tel: 00 961 1 786456*
*ext. (2546)*
*irb@lau.edu.lb*

**This study has been reviewed and approved by the LAU IRB:**

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Questions (Principals)

1. How long have you worked as a school principal?

2. What are your perceptions of the instructional model that favors having homeroom teachers in elementary? Kindly elaborate on your answer with regards to the following:

a. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to students.

b. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to teachers.

3. What are your perceptions of the instructional model that favors having subject or specialist teachers in elementary? Kindly elaborate on your answer with regards to the following:

a. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to students.

b. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to teacher.

4. With regards to communication and making connections (with students and parents), which model in your opinion is more favorable?

5. In your opinion, is the workload of homeroom teachers and subject teachers comparable or equally distributed? If not, which model requires a heavier workload? Why?

## APPENDIX D

### Interview Questions (Teachers)

1. How long have you worked as a teacher and for which grade level?

2. Describe your relationship with your students.

3. What are your perceptions of the instructional model that favors having homeroom teachers in elementary? Kindly elaborate on your answer with regards to the following:

a. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to students.

b. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to teachers.

4. What are your perceptions of the instructional model that favors having subject or specialist teachers in elementary? Kindly elaborate on your answer with regards to the following:

a. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to students.

b. Indicate some of the benefits and barriers related to teachers.

5. In your opinion, is the workload of homeroom teachers and subject teachers comparable and equally distributed? If not, which model requires a heavier workload? Why?

**APPENDIX E**

# *Consent to participate in an Interview*

*I would like to invite you to participate in a research project by completing the following interview. I am a student at the Lebanese American University and I am completing this research project as part of my Master's in Education degree requirements. The purpose of this interview aims to* investigate the perceptions of teachers and principals about the benefits and limitations of homeroom teachers versus subject teachers at the elementary school level.

*There are no known risks, harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. The information you provide will be used to enhance and improve our knowledge on the perceptions of teachers and principals toward homeroom teachers versus subject teachers. You will not directly benefit from participation in this study. The study will involve 64 participants. Completing the interview will take 30 minutes of your time.*

*By continuing with the interview, you agree with the following statements:*

10. *I have been given sufficient information about this research project.*
11. *I understand that my answers will not be released to anyone and my identity will remain anonymous. My name will not be written on the questionnaire nor be kept in any other records.*
12. ***When the results of the study are reported, I will not be identified by name or any other information that could be used to infer my identity.*** *Only researchers will have access to view any data collected during this research however data cannot be linked to me.*
13. *I understand that I may withdraw from this research any time I wish and that I have the right to skip any question I don't want to answer.*
14. *I understand that my refusal to participate will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which I otherwise am entitled to.*
15. *I have been informed that the research abides by all commonly acknowledged ethical codes and that the research project has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Lebanese American University*
16. *I understand that if I have any additional questions, I can ask the research team listed below.*
17. *I have read and understood all statements on this form.*
18. *I voluntarily agree to take part in this research project by completing the following interview*

***Do you wish to be audio recorded?***
*Yes,* I agree to being recorded.
No, I do not agree to recording and request note-taking only.

*If you have any questions, you may contact:*

| *Name (PI)* | *Phone number* | *Email address* |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Zeinab Fakih* | *76002341* | *Zeinab.fakih@lau.edu* |
| | | |

*If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or you want to talk to someone outside the research, please contact the:*

*Institutional Review Board*
*Office, Lebanese American*
*University*
*3rd Floor, Dorm A, Byblos*
*Campus Tel: 00 961 1 786456*
*ext. (2546)*
*irb@lau.edu.lb*

**This study has been reviewed and approved by the LAU IRB:**

Appendix F

LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
Lebanese American University

*Institutional Review Board (IRB)* لجنة الأخلاقيات

# NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **To:** | Ms. Zeinab Fakih<br>Dr. Ketty Sarouphim McGill<br>School of Arts & Sciences | **APPROVAL ISSUED:** 29 March 2021<br>**EXPIRATION DATE:** 29 March 2022<br>**REVIEW TYPE:** EXPEDITED – Initial |
| **Date:** | March 29, 2021 | |
| **RE:** | ***IRB #:*** *LAU.SAS.KS5.29/Mar/2021*<br>***Protocol Title:*** *Teachers and Principals Perceptions of Homeroom Teachers versus Subject Teachers* | |

The above referenced research project has been approved by the Lebanese American University, Institutional Review Board (LAU IRB). This approval is limited to the activities described in the Approved Research Protocol and all submitted documents listed on page 2 of this letter. **Final reviewed consent documents or recruitment materials and data collection tools released with this notice are part of this determination and must be used in this research project.**

---

## *APPROVAL CONDITIONS FOR ALL LAU APPROVED HUMAN RESEARCH PROTOCOLS*

***LAU RESEARCH POLICIES & PROCEDURES:*** *All individuals engaged in the research project must adhere to the approved protocol and all applicable LAU IRBResearch Policies & Procedures. PARTICIPANTS must NOT be involved in any research related activity prior to IRB approval date or after the expiration date.*

***PROTOCOL EXPIRATION:*** *The LAU IRB approval expiry date is listed above. The IRB Office will send an email at least 45 days prior to protocol approval expiry - Request for Continuing Review - in order to avoid any temporary hold on the initial protocol approval. It is your responsibility to apply for continuing review and receive continuing approval for theduration of the research project. Failure to send Request for Continuation before the expiry date will result in suspension of the approval of this research project on the expiration date.*

***MODIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS:*** *All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.*

***NOTIFICATION OF PROJECT COMPLETION:*** *A notification of research project*

*closure and a summary of findings must be sent to the IRB office upon completion. Study files must be retained for a period of 3 years from the date of notification of project completion.*

***IN THE EVENT OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ABOVE CONDITIONS, THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR SHOULD MEET WITH THE IRB ADMINISTRATORS IN ORDER TO RESOLVE SUCH CONDITIONS. IRB APPROVAL CANNOT BE GRANTED UNTIL NON- COMPLIANT ISSUES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED.***

---

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact the IRB office by email at irb@lau.edu.lb

*The IRB operates in compliance with the national regulations pertaining to research under the Lebanese Minister of Public Health's Decision No.141 dated 27/1/2016 under LAU IRB Authorization reference 2016/3708, the international guidelines for Good Clinical Practice, the US Office of Human Research Protection (45CFR46) and the Food and Drug Administration (21CFR56). LAU IRB U.S. Identifier as an international institution: FWA00014723 and IRB Registration # IRB00006954 LAUIRB#1*

***Dr. Joseph Stephan*** Chair,

Institutional Review Board

**DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED:**

| | |
|---|---|
| IRB Exempt Protocol Application | Received 9 March 2021 |
| Proposal | Received 9 March 2021, amended 22 March 2021 |
| Informed Consent | Received 9 March 2021, amended 22 March 2021 |
| Letters to schools: International College – LeLycee National – LWIS CIS – Rawdah High School) | Received 9 March 2021 |
| Link to online survey | Received 9 March 2021 |
| **IRB Comments sent:** 18 March 2021 | **PI response to IRB's comments dated:** 22 March 2021 |

| | |
|---|---|
| NIH Training – Ketty Sarouphim | Cert. # 1961841 Dated (21 January 2016) |
| CITI Training – Zeinab Fakih | Cert.# 34426420 Dated (3 December 2019) |

Institutional Review Board
Lebanese American University
29 MAR 2021
APPROVED