TEACHER INCENTIVES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION: THE SHORTCOMINGS

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Abstract – *Based on Kemmerer's work on teacher incentives, this study examines the availability of incentives for teachers in the Middle East and North Africa region. The research results reported in this article indicate that school facilities and classrooms are in poor conditions in some of the surveyed countries, and particularly so in rural areas; classes were also found to be crowded. In addition, evaluation or supervision of instruction is almost non-existent, while in-service training was found to be ineffective. In the light of this assessment, implications are drawn to considerably reduce class sizes as well as implement instructional supervision or assessment and increase school equipment and supplies. Additional avenues for improving teacher incentives are considered and several recommendations for change are made.*

Introduction and background

Low school quality is widely recognized as a serious problem in many developing countries, not least in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (Chapman and Carrier, 1990; Lockheed *et al.*, 1990). During the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) that was convened in Jomtien in 1990, the international community committed itself to giving basic education to all children, youths as well as adults, in order to facilitate their integration into the new millennium. This conference concluded with recommendations for a framework of action aimed at covering the basic needs of learners by exploring strategies and measures to be taken at national, regional and international levels over the decade. Now, ten years later, national assessment teams, each headed by a national EFA coordinator, have prepared reports describing the progress towards the declared goal of education for all. These reports, published by UNICEF and UNESCO, clearly indicate that there has been a positive increase in student enrolment in many countries, but also highlight the severe problem of poor school quality.

One of the reasons for the lack of quality in educational provision is the poor standards of those entering the teaching profession. Needless to say, the latter problem did not appear overnight. During the 1970's and early 1980's, many MENA countries witnessed an explosive growth in student enrolment, especially at the primary level. Consequently, most of these countries were severely

pressured to employ a number of unqualified or under-qualified teachers with little or no experience (Ayyash-Abdo, 2000). Most of the teachers recruited came from a pool of low achieving students. This of course is true for many other countries, since not many people want to be teachers, and the majority of high achieving students tend to aspire for other professions (UNESCO, 1996). Several research studies highlight the fact that the teaching profession attracts students with lower academic ability as compared to those students selecting other careers (Ballou and Podgursky, 1994; Feistritzer, 1983; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Roberson, Keith and Page, 1983; Savage, 1983; Vance and Schlechty, 1982; Solmon and LaPorte, 1986; Weaver, 1979). Several socio-cultural and economic factors are also associated with this phenomenon.

Another reason for the decline in school quality is the problem of high teacher turnover; research tends to depict the teaching occupation as characterised by a high degree of turnover, particularly among the most academically able individuals (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Schlechty and Vance, 1983). One explanation for this is that the job itself not only fails in attracting high ability students, but in addition offers them poor working conditions which push them away from the profession. The mediocre entry-level requirements to teaching in the MENA region posit another problem that contribute to low school quality, as they do not equip teachers with the necessary pre-requisites for their teaching experience. These requirements vary between countries: in some cases, an individual can become a teacher on completing secondary schooling; in other cases, prospective teachers have to follow between one to four years of post-secondary training in teacher education institutes or colleges. Few countries in the region have increased the requirements to encompass a first degree or equivalent (Ayyash-Abdo, 2000), with Jordan and Oman being among these exceptions. In Lebanon, teachers are certified only through the completion of a first degree as well as a teaching diploma.

Other problems, such as low teacher morale and the quality of teacher work life have also been correlated with low school quality (Snyder, 1990). In addition to this, and taking the specificity of the MENA context, one has to keep in mind the many countries in the region that have, over the past decades, endured persistent conflicts and wars: such is the case of Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen, for instance. As a result, teachers often suffer negative consequences as a result of political unrest. This is exacerbated by the fact that almost all of the MENA countries are experiencing serious economic and fiscal problems. In such a situation, governments tend to cut back on teacher training, instructional supervision, and school construction. Most importantly, teacher's salaries in these countries have not keep up with inflation: teachers' monthly income in Yemen is equivalent to US$70, in Jordan it is US$300, and in Tunisia it is US$350. The underlying

assumption of this article is that one cannot enhance educational quality in the MENA region without also attending to the poor status and earning power of teachers.

The issue of recruitment and retention of quality teachers in the MENA countries takes on a more urgent dimension when one considers the demographic growth patterns in the region—yet another challenge to the education systems. The average population growth for the years 2000–2010 is estimated to be 1.2% for the world as a whole and 1.5% for the developing countries. For the Arab states, the rate is 2.5%. Thus, in 2010, the estimated population of the age group 5–18 year old is 110 million in the Arab States. If the enrolment rate in general education is around 80% for this age group, then the MENA region would have to ensure educational opportunities for 88 million students. In other words, it would have to provide resources for an additional 29 million students. It goes without saying that this demographic increase will exert serious pressures on educational systems (UNESCO, 2000).

Recruiting and retaining a number of qualified teachers, however, is a challenging task for policy makers and educational planners, who expressed several serious concerns in a previous study conducted by this author on the status of teachers in the MENA region (see Ayyash-Abdo, 2000). Among the concerns that were expressed are: low salaries, additional school duties other than teaching, long number of periods per day, large numbers of students in class, lack of teacher training, distant work location, inability to continue higher education, and lack of scholarships and allowances for teachers' children. All these concerns were identified as being 'pull factors' (i.e. factors that draw teachers away from the teaching profession). One of the ways to improve educational quality, retain and recruit quality teachers, reward teachers for effective performance, and increase the level of enthusiasm for the teaching process is through the implementation of effective incentives (Chapman, Snyder; Burchfield, 1993). It appears that quality of work-life has considerable incentive value to workers across a wide range of employment (Quinn and Staines, 1979; Perry, Chapman and Snyder, 1995). Teachers are likely to be in daily contact with the students; these are the group of people who can most influence students' achievement. Meeting the demand of teachers by providing them with less school administrative duties, reduced numbers of students in class, adequate in-service training, appropriate instructional support, better school facilities and other forms of extrinsic motivators may help them perform more effectively, which may in turn lead to increased levels of enthusiasm and satisfaction (i.e. increased intrinsic motivation). For example, teacher training increases teachers' efficiency, which, in turn, results in greater personal reward and job satisfaction. Training could also lead to improved community perception of teachers and, consequently, to better

community status. In addition, training enhances teachers' performance, and more effective teachers are more satisfied with teaching and themselves and are more likely to remain in teaching (Chapman, Snyder and Burchfield, 1993). There is therefore a clear and direct link between extrinsic motivators and intrinsic ones.

Since extrinsic motivators are more readily manipulated than intrinsic ones, this study explored teachers' incentives in the MENA region, especially in terms of working conditions. The research is based on Kemmerer's (1990) model for teacher incentives. Culturally relevant recommendations based on the shortcomings identified will also be discussed.

Theoretical framework

Incentive systems are grounded in learning behavioural theory, which proposes the use of rewards to shape behaviour through a process of conditioning, either classical or operant. Rewards contingent upon behaviour, using operant conditioning principles, are extensively used in the classrooms as a way to change students' behaviour. Kemmerer's (1990) model is based on two major propositions. First, teachers' performance is thought to directly affect students' learning. Second, teachers' performance is perceived to be a function of direct and indirect monetary and non-monetary benefits; these serve as incentives or extrinsic motivators which affect teacher's performance. Kemmerer has divided incentives into two main groups—remuneration, and working conditions. Each group is in turn divided into five subgroups. For example, working conditions include environment, such as school facilities, classroom facilities, and number of students, instructional support, such as teacher guides and school equipment available, supervision, teacher training, and career opportunities. In addition, remuneration includes salary, allowance, salary supplements, bonuses, and other fringe benefits. The incentives from Kemmerer's model are summarised in Table 1.

Research design and methodology

This study utilised a survey questionnaire that was previously used by UNESCO/ILO in 1966 and 1986. The instrument was adapted with slight modifications (see Dulyakasem, 1996). The sections of the questionnaire were designed to explore such areas as in-service and pre-service training, recruitment, appointment, evaluation, working conditions, salary remuneration, and obstacles and concerns of teachers. It is important to note that data relating to salary

TABLE 1: Incentives for teachers: Kemmerer's model

Teachers Recruited	
Remuneration Instructional material	Supervision teacher training Career Opportunities
Teachers retained	Teachers' performance
Remuneration	**Working conditions**
Salary	**Environment**
Beginning	School facilities
Salary scale	Classroom facilities
Regularity of payment	Number of students
Merit pay	Age range of students
Allowances	Collegiality
Materials allowance	**Instructional support**
Cost-of-living allowance	Teacher guides
Hardship allowance	Student notebooks
Travel allowance	Classroom charts
In-kind salary supplements	School equipment
Free or subsidized housing	Storage
Free or subsidized food	**Supervision**
Plots of land	Observation
Low interest loans	Feedback
Scholarships for children	Coaching
Free books	**Teacher training**
Bonuses	Classroom management
Bonus for regular attendance	Materials usage
Bonus for student achievement	Lesson preparation
Grants for classroom projects	Test administration
Benefits	**Career Opportunities**
Paid leave	Master teacher
Sick leave	Principal
Maternity leave	Supervisor
Health insurance	Post-service training
Medical assistance	
Pension	
Life insurance	
Additional employment	
Additional teaching jobs	
Examination grading	
Textbook writing	
Development projects	

Source: Kemmerer (1990), p.137

remuneration and teachers' concerns were thoroughly reported and analysed in a previous study conducted by this author (see Ayyash-Abdo, 2000). In addition, to help in collecting demographic information, a complete section consisting of eight questions was added to the original questionnaire. New items were also incorporated in every section to evaluate the reliability database of participant responses. The study was initially designed to cover all twenty countries in the MENA region. The questionnaire was sent to UNICEF country offices in the region. The UNICEF representatives, who administered the questionnaires, were asked to work with their respective Ministries of Education (MOEs) and other concerned organizations to facilitate the gathering of data. The sample was made up of administrators and policy makers. Each country was given over a six-month period to respond to the survey instrument. During this period, they were sent reminders. However, even with these reminders, only nine countries responded: Yemen, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Djibouti, Syria, Tunisia, and Iran. Part of the data collected was analysed and discussed in a previous publication (Ayyash-Abdo 2000: 192).

Findings

Class size

Significant improvements have been made to educational services in the MENA region. For example, in Oman 3,175 classrooms were added to existing school buildings and 194 new buildings were constructed from 1991 to 1997. In Tunisia, the number of pre-primary schools increased from 394 in 1990 to 446 in 1997. In Iran 54,917 classrooms were constructed for the primary level in the period between 1990-1998. In Yemen, the number of school buildings at the pre-primary and primary levels increased by 10,330 from 1990 to 1997, and in Syria the number of schools increased from 9,683 in 1990 to 10,995 in 1997.

However, there is still a lack of educational space in almost all the countries of the MENA region, which may explain the over-crowdedness in the classrooms, especially in urban areas. In terms of classroom size, the data indicate that in Yemen, the average class size in urban areas is 40 students and the maximum is about 70 students, while in rural areas, the average class size is 20 students and the maximum is about 55 students. The smallest class sizes among the nine countries are found in Oman where the primary level class sizes average 26 pupils, middle school class sizes average 19, and secondary class sizes average 16 students. In Djibouti, the average class size is 46 students and can go up to as many as 60. In Lebanon, the average class size for rural and urban schools is about 17

students but can reach as many as 46. In Jordan, the average class size is 31 students and the maximum class size is about 50 students. In Syria, the average class size is 32 students and reaches a maximum of about 40 in both rural and urban areas. In Iran and Tunisia, the average class size is 28 in rural areas and about 35 in urban areas.

International comparisons relating to class size appear to be only available in terms of Pupil-Teacher Ratios (PTR). It is important to note that PTRs are different from class size because they take no account of non-contact time, for instance. All the children on the roll are divided by all the teachers in the school. It should not be assumed that teachers entered into the calculation are teaching for all the time. Consequently, the pupil element in the PTR is a smaller figure than in the class size. When compared internationally, the PTR in the MENA region comes out poorly since most countries such as France, Spain, Australia, Japan, Canada, Greece, Switzerland, have a PTR of between 15 and 20. Most of the surveyed countries appear to have a PTR of above 20 (OECD, 1996). For example, in 1996 the pupil-teacher ratio in Djibouti was 36 compared with the OECD average of 17.5 (OECD, 1996). Other countries, such as Yemen and Oman are also facing high pupil-teacher ratio, especially at the primary level (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: Average number of pupils per teacher in the MENA region at the primary level

Country	PTR
Djibouti	36
Iraq	20
Jordan	21
Oman	26
Syria	24
Tunisia	25
Yemen	32
Lebanon	—
Iran	—

Source: UNESCO, 1996

There is continuous debate regarding the effect of large class size on students, teaching methods, and teachers. Glass, Chaen, Simth and Filby (1982) suggest that the achievement of a student taught in a class of 20 children could exceed that of 60% of the students taught in classes of 40. However, smaller classes appear to benefit children with special needs, children from minority groups, and younger

children during the first years of school (Podmore, 1998). In their study, Achilles, Nye, Zaharias and Fulton (1993) demonstrated that students from a low socio-economic background may especially benefit from a class size reduction. Similarly, teaching methods adopted by teachers are also affected by class size (Smith and Warburton, 1997). In small classes teachers engage more in questioning, ask more task-related questions, make more task statements, and are generally more involved with the task when interacting with pupils (Hargreaves, Galton, and Pell, 1998); thus, more individual attention for pupils is perceived to be salient in such classes (Bennett, 1996; Finn and Achilles, 1990).

In large classes, however, teachers need to build a highly structured environment where students adhere to routines that are understood by all (Smith and Warburton, 1997). In addition, it is evident that teachers spend more time on problems of classroom discipline and control and less on providing feedback (Hargreaves, Galton and Pell, 1998). With regard to teachers, high levels of pressure (Smith and Warburton, 1997) and lower levels of morale (Fin and Achilles, 1990; Hargreaves, Galton and Pell, 1998; Smith and Warburton, 1997) are experienced in large classes since rigorous planning, assessing, and record keeping are required from teachers for increased efficiency. Thus, every single child added to a class creates additional demands on teachers, leading to less non-contact time and greater stress levels (Hargreaves *et al.*, 1998). In addition, teachers' enthusiasm and job satisfaction may be enhanced when there are fewer students to teach; this may be perceived by the students and influence their own motivation for learning (Finn and Achillies, 1990). Since smaller classes increase teacher moral and satisfaction with the job, this must surely contribute to improved educational outcomes for children.

School and classroom facilities

More concerns are expressed over the conditions of school and classroom facilities. For example, in certain areas in Iran, about 1,600 classes are held in inappropriate spaces, such as tents or huts. In Iraq, about 85% of the total schools buildings are unsuitable and need repairs; in some areas of the country, several schools lack electricity or heating, and many children and teachers work in classrooms with leaky roofs; most of them end up sitting on the floor because of lack of tables and chairs. In Yemen, many schools, especially in rural areas, are small, mud brick structures built below educational standards; some have no roof and many are unfurnished; in some cases, classes have to be held outside, which of course prevents studying on rainy days. In addition, there is an average of one toilet per three schools in the rural areas of Yemen, and many of these facilities are out of order. Also, the major deficiency in Yemen is school furniture where,

according to UNESCO (1998), only one chair and one desk are available for every three students. In some rural areas of Syria, some of the schools are on wheels, established on moving tents that accompany the peregrinations of Bedouins. In Tunisia a lot of effort has been invested in ensuring suitable school conditions; however, in certain rural areas, some schools lack electricity, water, and even bathroom facilities. As for Oman, school facilities are in much better condition since schools consist mainly of newly constructed buildings. Djibouti and Jordan did not report any data regarding school conditions.

Instructional materials

Supplying instructional materials is one of the most helpful ways for supporting teachers and improving student achievement. The accessibility of instructional materials can be considered to be an incentive in direct as well indirect ways. As a direct incentive, good instructional materials help the teacher in choosing, arranging, and sequencing the curriculum; in addition, instructional materials decrease the amount of time needed for the presentation of knowledge and reduce the difficulty of teachers' tasks. Instructional materials could also be regarded as indirect incentives since they help in providing a methodical presentation, which in turn could positively influence students' achievement; consequently, teachers' sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction is enhanced (Chapman, Snyder and Burchfield, 1993). Such instructional or teaching aids are rarely to be found in most countries in the MENA region. Only in Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia and Oman are teachers provided with basic teaching aids. Iraq is reportedly making an effort to allow teachers to select their own teaching aids and materials. With the exception of Oman, most schools of the MENA region suffer from lack of school equipment and supplies. In Iraq, for instance, there is severe deficiency in educational requirements such as reading materials, computers, school furniture, and other educational aids; it is estimated that 700,000 library books, 58,000,000 school copy books, 20,000 computers, and several other materials are needed in the country. In Yemen, 97% of primary schools do not have libraries; in addition, many of the schools in the remote areas are not provided with school textbooks or chalkboards. Lack of books, libraries, chalkboards, chairs, and desks seems to be also a problem in many remote areas in Djibouti.

Supervision

Evaluation or supervision of instruction in the MENA region is almost non-existent. In Yemen, for instance, school supervisors, when available, issue annual reports requiring teachers to follow a specific curriculum to teach. Supervisors at the regional level pay on-site visits to ensure that teachers teach according to

instructions that are issued by their MOEs. As in many countries, instructional supervision visits are geared toward ensuring conformity with ministry regulations rather than with providing in-service training leading to the upgrading of teaching practices. As a result, neither school nor regional supervisors address the specific teaching methods that teachers use. In Iraq, on the other hand, 'thank you' notes and the percentage of students passing are a significant contributing factor in teacher evaluation.

Continuous teacher evaluation is essential in bringing about individual as well as institutional development. In some countries in the MENA region, evaluation only takes place two to four times during the first two years prior to confirmation of appointment. This is the case with Iraq, Iran, Tunisia, and Syria. In Lebanon, evaluations are carried out only once a year, and in some schools not at all. Lesson plans, class observations, individual conferences and student performance are among the criteria used for evaluation. With regards to the latter, however, it is important to point out that the majority of research findings during the 60's, 70's, and 80's that address teachers' appraisal in terms of students' performance on standardized achievement tests have been criticized. For example, Griffin (1985) was concerned that the process-product view would trivialize teaching, reducing it to its lowest denominator(s). Eisner (1985), on his part, discredited the process-product view for its inordinate stress on statistical aspects and for its disregard for the descriptive and artistic facets of teaching. Students' performance cannot be the only criteria in teacher's evaluation. In Syria, for instance, the teacher's character and his or her level of mastery of subject matter are major factors in the teacher evaluation process.

Several educators believe that knowledge of subject matter is most important if teachers are to provide rewarding and beneficial learning experiences. Some research studies depict a positive relationship between teacher's knowledge of subject matter and several other factors, such as frequency of student questioning (Dobey and Schafer, 1984) and teacher's use of complex questions (Druva and Anderson, 1983). In other research studies, however, it was found that although teacher knowledge was positively related to student cognitive outcomes (Becker, 1990), the relationship was often frail (Mac-Iver, 1989). Thus, there is some indication that teacher's knowledge of subject matter does not necessarily significantly influence student achievement.

In-service training

In-service training could be considered as an indirect incentive. It helps in improving the quality of teaching through the provision of several strategies, new ideas, and techniques that could be used by teachers. Consequently, it is thought

to improve students' achievement levels, thus leading to more job satisfaction for teachers (Chapman, Snyder and Burchfield, 1993). However, it seems that training is not required in almost all the countries of the MENA region, but rather considered as an 'add-on' activity (Greany and Kellaghan, 1996). In some countries, such as Yemen and Iraq, in-service training is almost non-existent. In Oman, Lebanon, Djibouti and Syria, it is conducted every three to four years. However, in Tunisia, teachers are required to complete 9 to 12 days of training per year. As for Jordan, training occurs more frequently (Ayyash-Abdo, 2000). Where teacher training exists in the MENA region, emphasis is more on classroom management.

Career structure

Finally, with regard to career opportunities of teachers in the MENA region, most career path movements are vertical. Teacher's mobility from the primary to secondary levels, or vice-versa, is occasional, as entry-level requirements as well as pre-service training differ at these two levels. In most of the countries surveyed, teachers' qualifications vary from primary to secondary levels (Ayyash-Abdo, 2000). Certain countries provided considerable numbers of teachers who have risen to the rank of subject specialist, head teacher, principal or inspector, moving out of the classroom in order to occupy administrative roles.

Discussion

As Justiz has noted, '...the strength of a nation depends on the high quality of its educational system, and the strength of a high-quality education system rests with high-quality teachers' (Justiz 1985: 7). Given the issues raised in the previous sections, it is of critical importance to ask: What culturally relevant strategies can be used to improve teacher's incentives, and consequently the quality of education? After students, teachers are the most important people in the school: they take the greatest responsibilities and load for securing the success of the educational enterprise. In view of the collective achievements of the countries in the MENA region in the expansion of basic education, the problem that still needs to be resolved is that of school quality. However, these countries need to have good teachers if educational planners and policy makers expect to improve the quality of education in the region. Nevertheless, in order to have good teachers, we have to acknowledge the reality confronting us—with teachers being recruited from the low end of academic achievement pool—and fine-tune their training accordingly.

We need, therefore, to face and confront this reality rather than simply dream of the ideal we long for. Thus, in order to attract or retain those who are already in the teaching profession, proper working conditions must be ensured, since these, as Kemmerer (1990) would argue, can serve as incentives or extrinsic motivators leading to better performance. Unless changes of the setting in which teachers' work take place, the provision of new techniques to individualize instruction or to manage the classroom will not help in recruiting or retaining suitable teachers. In fact, teachers will tend to drop out not only because they and their families cannot survive on their salaries but because the conditions to fully practice their profession well do not generally exist. The stress brought about by the poor conditions for professional practice inherent in the nature of the school setting is a major cause for the downfall of the teaching profession (Corrigan, 1985). In fact, it has been ascertained that teacher burnout—which results in a considerable decrease in the quality of teaching, absenteeism, and early leaving of the profession (Cherniss, 1980)—is triggered by several factors, including poor salaries, overcrowded classrooms, difficulty in advancement, and lack of equipment and support materials (Farber, 1984; Russel, Altmaier and Van Velzen, 1987). As the previous sections of this article have suggested, teachers in the MENA region have to endure relatively poor working conditions that require direct attention. Central level officials could consider the following recommendations that might attract and retain proficient teachers, train mediocre teachers, and consequently enhance school quality; however, it is important to note that the value of a certain incentive may change across locations and vary over time.

Recommendations

In terms of high-pupil teacher ratio, if crowdedness is the result of lack of space, then schools need to consider how they can provide the opportunity for students as well as teachers to consistently work in small groups. For example, in Scandinavia, the school day is divided into a morning and an afternoon session where half the class comes in the morning and half in the afternoon (Hargreaves *et al.*, 1998). That is, teaching fifteen students in a class for half a day is thought to be more effective than having 30 students present for a whole day. In addition, hiring classroom assistants could help in increasing the time devoted to instruction rather than to classroom discipline. Assistants would be able to help by working with half of the class on some curriculum areas where intensive teacher attention is not required. Assistantship could come in the form of a financial aid package to help students majoring in the education field.

Teachers in the MENA region are expected to carry out several other non-teaching activities that cut into teaching time. For example, some teachers—

Yemeni primary school teachers are a case in point—are reportedly assigned a daily average of 3 to 4 hours of additional administrative work. Eliminating these activities would increase teaching time and alleviate the negative effect of large classroom sizes. Allowing teachers to teach rather than requiring them to use instructional time to perform non-teaching duties could thus help in improving teachers' working conditions.

Educational planners need to make teacher evaluation a legal requirement for all teachers employed in the MENA region. Teacher evaluation is essential for several reasons; it not only guides decisions about hiring, retention, and promotion but also produces better quality in educational outcomes. Teacher evaluation could be seen as a way of professional development of practitioner and practice. Several research studies emphasize that many teachers find it a rewarding experience in terms of boosting confidence and self-awareness (Wragg, 1994; Hopkins and West, 1995). However, the effects of appraisal depend upon such factors as perceptions of appraisal and how it is implemented (Goddard and Emmerson, 1992).

Therefore, principals and supervisors need to carefully choose, plan and implement assessment practices and procedures and not try to determine teacher's abilities and effectiveness in performing the school's instructional and related activities based on a single 'walk through' observation. There are several considerations they need to take into account before, during, and after the appraisal procedures. First, they are required to share the forms they will use to evaluate teachers at the beginning of the school year and specify what they intend to emphasize during their observations. Second, they need to hold pre-conferences with teachers prior to scheduled observations. Third, principals or supervisors must be present in the classroom for the entire lesson to be able to use the observation for a formal evaluation. In addition, supervisors must share with a teacher everything recorded during an observation, to make the evaluation procedure an inter-active as well as a learning opportunity. For example, when identifying a weakness, principals or supervisors can plan to solve the problem by perhaps securing peer coaching or in-service training. It important, however, that evaluators generate positive rather than negative feelings about the teacher evaluation process, a process which could easily be perceived as a threat if regular communication and genuine regard for teachers' feelings are not taken into account (Black, 1993). It is of serious concern, therefore, that administrators and supervisors receive little or no training to standardize procedures or maintain acceptable competency levels. This pattern could slowly change by instituting evaluation-training programs (Buttram and Wilson, 1987).

The following are additional recommendations that countries of the MENA region should seriously consider as incentives for teachers:

— Define criteria for promotion of teachers and let teachers participate in setting up these criteria.
— Define criteria for employment, including pre-service education and in-service training.
— Improve teachers' qualifications and conditions of employment.
— Conduct continuous in-service training programs and general upgrading of teaching skills.
— Provide merit pay or bonuses contingent upon teachers' performance.
— Increase accommodation facilities because according to estimations made by UNESCO (2000), the number of students enrolled in primary education in the year 2010 is estimated to be 44.2 millions in the Arab States alone; thus, 8.1 million children at the official age will be out of school in the Arab countries.

As mentioned earlier, overcrowded classrooms and lack of support materials, training, and supervision result in teacher burnout which may lead to a decrease in the quality of teaching, and therefore in the quality of education that students of the MENA region receive. Providing teachers with effective incentives is one way to improve their performance, and accordingly improve the overall school quality. Teachers' career dissatisfaction is usually indicative of problems which, if not specifically addressed, may undermine efforts being made to raise students' educational outcomes.

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